



# **Redefining Progress**

## **Consultation**



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## Introduction

The SDC engaged with its stakeholder panel through a pilot online consultation to gather a wide range of in-depth views on redefining progress to help inform our own views and advice to government.

There were two main sessions to the consultation which are covered in this report. The first session focused on how the panel perceived redefining and measuring progress. Comments were collated qualitatively to allow us to draw out the key themes emerging - (please note the collated groups do not represent a statistical breakdown of participants' views but are used to help with our analysis of the questions).

The second session was a further set of questions for members which were more tightly focused on measuring wellbeing. Again, the comments were collated, and due to the question format gave us both qualitative and quantitative data. As well as highlighting common themes, our in-depth analysis of both sessions allowed us to single out compelling individual arguments from panel members.

This report outlines the main findings from the panel responses. It will be used to:

- ∞ inform our recommendations to government and position to the Whitehall Indicator Group on wellbeing indicators, which will be released to members in early 2007
- ∞ advise on wellbeing policy across government departments
- ∞ contribute to our final report 'Redefining Prosperity Two' due in autumn 2007

A list of the consultation questions and breakdown of participants are available in the appendices at the end of the report. All the results from the consultation and more information on how the panel works are available on our website:

[www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/sd\\_panel.html](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/sd_panel.html)

## 1. What should progress mean? <sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 Sustainable Society

Many respondents began by discussing the importance of moving away from current understanding of progress as predominately economic, towards a new moral philosophy of progress more conducive to sustainable development. Economic growth was seen to be one-dimensional. Redefining progress was therefore seen as vital to start the *"deconstruction [of] the impoverished, myopic, dualistic understanding that underpins our dominant 'economic' conceptualisation."*<sup>i</sup> One stated that *"until crude, undifferentiated measures such as GNP/economic growth are integrated with more qualitative measures we will not make much progress towards the transition to a sustainable society, world or economy."*<sup>ii</sup>

Some responses also highlighted the many perverse impacts of our existing understanding of progress which were felt to be *"anachronistic and inappropriate in a post-industrial society."* *"The observable consequences of this model are increasingly pernicious; ill-health and disease, violence and*

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<sup>1</sup> Panel members were asked: 'Before we can consider how to measure progress, we first need to define what it means to us. What would demonstrate to you that the nation is getting better or progressing? And to what extent would this differ if you consider it from a global perspective? What should progress mean?'

*aggression, falling educational standards, unfulfilled and undervalued individuals, damaged natural and social environments.”<sup>iii</sup> The consequence of our pursuit of economic growth is seen as, “we chase dreams fuelled by advertising and media that are quite devoid from the real pleasures and essentials for life.”<sup>iv</sup>*

Others respondents pointed out that, inspite of their political importance, economic growth and markets are **methods** for maximising utility (or wellbeing) and are not and should not be goals in themselves. *“Progress should imply that we’re moving towards a goal; ‘progressing towards’ rather than just ‘wandering around’. The problem with economic growth is that it’s not a goal.”<sup>v</sup>*

Another member felt the issue was our partiality for easy measurement *“Progress is a clouded concept. We are lazy, we look for the easy way not the best way. Progress is synonymous with economic performance because economic performance measures appear tangible and easy to track.”<sup>vi</sup>*

Many respondents explored the problems with the political system and Government’s entrenched approach to the electorate. One member quoted MP Colin Challon in an *Independent* from the previous year<sup>2</sup> *“Climate change means that business as usual is dead. It means that economic growth as usual is dead. But the politics of economic growth and business as usual live on... We are imprisoned by our political Hippocratic oath: we will deliver unto the electorate more goodies than anybody else.”<sup>vii</sup>* The vicious circle of elections and political over-promising was felt to have lead to a crisis in politics and political leadership. *“The Nation is not at peace with itself and honesty and leadership*

*are no longer admired or even required.”<sup>viii</sup>*

Currently, many respondents felt that very little progress was being made towards a sustainable society. Indeed many felt that progress was still going in the wrong direction. *“Making appropriate changes to reduce the global footprint to less than one earth (currently 1.2 earths) and to provide an acceptable quality of life to the inhabitants of the world. Clearly this is an ideal that can never be attained, but the current direction is away from that goal, so a reversal from regress to progress would be a good start.”<sup>ix</sup>*

Others felt that the complexity of the issues around progress required a fundamental assessment and clarification about the direction of the future before any path should be embarked upon. *“So progress is identification of what the issue is, thus identification of what needs to be done, then unified action in the aim of an agreed outcome.”<sup>x</sup>*

The question also asked respondents whether their visions of progress would differ if they took a global perspective. Most concluded that issues in a global context were the same, but were potentially more acute and may require a different emphasis.

The members of the panel addressed the question about what progress should mean in two main ways. Members either responded with critiques and explanations for the existing understanding of progress and offered their own visions and conceptions of the future. Others responded within the context of sustainable development. Of the second group, the vision was often the mainstream adoption of sustainable development principles with responses highlighting more specific actions, tipping points and measures that would reassure them that progress had been made.

<sup>2</sup> 28 March 2006 ‘The Independent’  
<http://comment.independent.co.uk/commentators/article354051.ece>

## 1.2 Conceptions of progress

Some respondents put down a number of preconditions about how progress should be conceived and defined. These tended to highlight the complexities of such a task. *"Progress must be defined in such a way as to acknowledge and reflect the complexity of human interactions with both human society and the natural environment."*<sup>xi</sup>

*"The idea of progress must be understood as a series of compromises between competing aspirations, in which the long term good should outweigh short term and individual gains."*<sup>xii</sup>

One respondent pointed out that progress is not teleological. *"Progress is something that needs to be regarded as something chosen rather than ordained, and if it is to be sustainable, needs to be biased towards resolving decades long environmental decline and increasing global inequality."*<sup>xiii</sup>

### Visions of the Future

The responses contained many implicit and explicit personal conceptions and definitions of progress. The words most commonly mentioned were those such as wellbeing, social equity (international and inter-generational), community, fulfilment, health and happiness.

An aspirational vision of the future society supported by everyone in that society was felt to be the first step in defining progress; the next step was devising how as a society we wanted to get there. *"To achieve social progress, we need to think about what kind of people we want to be and what kind of society we want to live in, and then mobilise our knowledge, forces, powers and resources to aim for a better society."*<sup>xiv</sup>

Others attempted to describe that vision in terms that would have mass appeal. Progress *"is a world that is clean and*

*free from pollution. It conserves limited resources and provides widespread natural landscapes and open spaces. It is safe, and prosperous and celebrates cultural identity and diversity. It allows its citizens to achieve all that they want to achieve, and be who they want to be without inhibiting others to do the same. And it is supportive when things go wrong."*<sup>xv</sup>

### Progress & Growth – dynamic or static

A number of respondents had an instinctive distrust of the word progress because of the current association of progress with growth.

*"The pursuit of progress is a human condition. We need progress to provide meaning or distraction from the reality that we are mortal; it's our connection to the immortal. We have to assume that we will always seek progress, the myth that the next generation will be better, bigger and faster than the last. Progress until now has been easily associated with accumulation of wealth because that is what brings power."*<sup>xvi</sup>

*"Society has taken the view that progress always has to mean more. I would argue that progress means better."*<sup>xvii</sup> Another saw human action not as a need, but as a duty.

*"Man is a responsible creature of God and has the duty to see the betterment of all world systems."* Or in humanist terms, *"Progress should mean some form of positive advancement in the processes that allow us to be stewards of the earth's resources such that we pass on to future generations a world no less worse than the one that we ourselves inherited."*

There was some disagreement amongst respondents as to whether the goal of progress was continuous improvement or whether it should be to reach a static end point. *"Progress would be moving towards a 'stationary state'"*<sup>xviii</sup> *"Theoretically at least, there then comes a point when progress is no longer*

*necessary; the focus is on maintaining those conditions to maximise individual, collective, and non-human flourishing. That corresponds with the notion of sufficiency - we would know when enough is enough.*"<sup>xxix</sup>

Progress for a good number of respondents was felt to be the end of the materialism that has shaped the most developed societies for many centuries. Progress means *"the link between social status and material wealth is broken, and affluence is no longer the carrot for innovation and enterprise."*<sup>xxx</sup> For one person, the idea of progress is that *"success is no longer viewed simply in terms of material acquisition, but rather in terms of ones ability to live lightly and intelligently in the world."*<sup>xxxi</sup>

### **Happiness & Wellbeing**

Concepts of greater wellbeing and happiness in society were endemic in many of the panel responses and conceptions of progress. *"The standard should be the same globally. How happy people are, or the percentage of people who class themselves as 'happy'."*<sup>xxxi</sup>

However, happiness was most often spoken about within the context of environmental limits. People getting happier but without needing more stuff. One respondent felt that progress would be harnessing technology to support wellbeing. *"The word progress is loaded. It conflates three concepts — 'movement forward', 'increase in technological ability' and 'improvement of the human condition', so that any one of these is assumed to engage the others. There is no intrinsic connection between technological advance and human wellbeing."*<sup>xxxi</sup> As a result, *"Progress should be towards a society in which the economy and the technology which sustains it are the servants of the people, not their masters."*<sup>xxiv</sup> *"Progress and development manifest themselves when the inhabitants of a society are more healthy, better*

*educated, and have a better standard of living than before. But perhaps these should be seen simply as symptoms of 'happiness' or 'well-being' (which would include environmental and social aspects in addition to the economic); that is, progress occurs when society becomes happier."*<sup>xxv</sup>

### **Tolerance & Respect**

A priority goal for many of the panel was for progress that fostered tolerance and respect around the world. One respondent highlighted global conflict as the cause of much of the unhappiness in the world, not least poverty, and therefore felt that *"progress could be measured in terms of harmony between people and cultures."*<sup>xxvi</sup> Essentially peace brought about by mutual concern and understanding. *"Progress should mean greater tolerance, empathy and compassion."*<sup>xxvii</sup>

One respondent felt that holistic health was also an indicator of balance and tolerance in society. *"Greater numbers of people in society displaying higher levels of mental, emotional and physical health. This would demonstrate higher levels of tolerance, understanding and appreciation of the diversity of people and the wider environment."*<sup>xxviii</sup>

There was some level of disagreement about whether or not we needed to embrace cultural differences, or whether in fact it was more constructive to move society away from culturally-defined measures of progress towards a more holistic and global understanding of human health and happiness. Globalisation or localisation? As in many cases, the best result was felt to be a combination of the two. *"Progress should mean moving into the 21st Century enjoying the benefits of the global community and technology whilst remaining local in our priorities."*<sup>xxix</sup>



### Equity & Basic Needs

Equity was another key concept. Progress was felt to be the end of extreme poverty, and the ability of all people to meet basic human needs and rights. Many placed equity within the context of the efficient and equitable use of the planet's resources, now and in the future. *"Progress would actually mean a levelling of life styles so that people find contentment/satisfaction without the need to strive for more and more."*<sup>xxx</sup>

Progress was therefore convergence or equalisation. *"We need to recognise that progress as we conceive of it is a privilege, not a right."*<sup>xxxi</sup> *"If we accept that resources are finite then we need to pay as much if not more attention to equalising down as to equalising up through growth."*<sup>xxxii</sup>

Another way of conceptualising equity was through security, or the absence of issues that undermine security. Progress is *"moving towards the absence of fear, of war, crime etc, and also the absence of fear for our children and future generations."*<sup>xxxiii</sup>

### Knowledge & Fulfilment

The final concept raised by many of the respondents was that of personal development, ability and knowledge. *"Progress should be a continual journey towards the maximum individual and collective realisation of potential."*<sup>xxxiv</sup> Meaningful participation was another theme, we should be aiming for *"a society where everyone feels able to engage meaningfully in civic life and political process, at local, national and international levels."*<sup>xxxv</sup>

Greater critical thinking and empathy with others was seen to be key to changing individual priorities and the direction of travel. *"To engage with these kind of problems, progress must also occur at an individual level to improve the ability of people to accept the need for change and modify their*

*behaviour appropriately. This necessarily requires people who are motivated to understand the views of others and to accept that they are sometimes might be wrong. Progress might therefore be seen as improving the critical thinking ability of individuals in addition to increased awareness of the social-environmental problems facing our society."*<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Knowledge was also perceived as a tool rather than as a goal in itself; with society unable to agree at present where our end point is, or what our vision of society should be, the proxy for progress should be knowledge. *"Knowledge is the tool we need to develop in order to be able to define long-term progress."* *"One of the greatest assets the human race has is its pool of knowledge. This is not simply recorded in computers and books (that is information), but largely held within the complex interplay of productive systems and human cultures. Knowledge and wisdom are hugely valuable and set one culture above another. So any measure of progress must also embrace evolution of these key elements individually, in groups, countries and globally."*<sup>xxxvii</sup>

### Societal Values

A large number of respondents mentioned the critical position of culture and values in determining a vision and setting the path for progress. Our existing values were, in general, not felt to be conducive to living within environmental limits or to creating a just healthy society. *"It seems to me that what is needed is a cultural change: the development of an awareness (one might call it enlightenment) that 'well being' is more important than 'economic prosperity'."*<sup>xxxviii</sup> It was then noted that this goal was made far harder to realise if individuals had to choose to put themselves at a disadvantage by swimming against the tide of consumerism.



One respondent felt that it was our yearning for collective and group identities that undermined any agreement on a more 'mature' approach to progress. *"Taking a strategic view of our current path, we live quite immaturely. We're technologically very advanced, able to satisfy almost any need through our ingenuity and innovation. However, we put the technology to uses that are based on immature impulses like immediate gratification of senses or tribal responses to resources and territory protection. If progress is to move along a different path we need to concentrate on growing up and maturing as a society, creating an identity of ourselves that does not rely on the groups we're part of or the communities we live with, but is an internal picture of ourselves, largely independent of our immediate identifiable group."*<sup>xxxix</sup>

### Environmental Limits

Almost all of the responses included a dimension dealing with natural resources or environmental limits. A few panel members also prioritised environmental issues; the state of the planet, and living within the capacity of the planet - above all else. Maximisation of human wellbeing was an important but secondary issue after planetary survival. *"Progress means ensuring survival for Gaia thus survival for ourselves and our descendants."*<sup>xl</sup> *"Progress means moving towards balance, equilibrium, with nature. Thus progress is a journey towards understanding and knowing nature and her vital role as life-support system."*<sup>xli</sup>

In order to achieve this, the overarching imperative was felt to be *"redressing the detachment of western culture from the natural world, to enhance the sense of spiritual meaning in peoples lives and reduce the increasing ecological debt burden - Replacement of human arrogance with humility vis a vis the natural world."*<sup>xlii</sup>

A minority felt that the concept of sustainability was not necessarily helpful given the enormous issues we need to address. *"The sustainability approach to measuring success may unfortunately serve to over-complicate matters and weaken political resolve to tackle what are undeniably the major threats to human progress in the medium and long term - climate change, global overpopulation, and the energy crisis caused when fossil fuels run out. Progress should instead be seen in terms of critical path analysis - i.e. the extent to which we have slowed and halted our journey towards these compelling threats to global wellbeing."*<sup>xliii</sup>

### 1.3 Progress as sustainable development

As well as the more philosophical visions of progress, a good number of the panel members responded with their vision of progress within the context of sustainability and short-term concrete actions. *"SD is a process, and a goal, but cannot be measured directly. Movement towards SD is what we need to measure, and progress should measure that - being closer to sustainability than we were before."*<sup>xliv</sup>

Although one respondent also noted that as well as short term aims, in the longer term *"progress should mean redefining economic mantras that have been with us, more or less unchanged, since the industrial revolution."*<sup>xlv</sup>

### Efficient Use of Resources

Progress for many was about resources and the most efficient use of them. One respondent felt that progress was *"the holy grail of a decline in the consumption of energy, goods and resources without a corresponding decline in the economic health of the nation."*<sup>xlvi</sup> A more personal conception of progress for one respondent was *"to me, progress would mean that it's not so hard to be sustainable. I waste time,*

*energy and money trying to dispose of things properly.”<sup>xlvi</sup>*

### **Experiences of the vulnerable**

Another member felt that progress would be an improvement in the experiences of the most vulnerable people in society, children, elderly and disadvantaged and how well, as a society, we are working to improve those experiences. *“Progress will begin to be demonstrated when deprivation measures begin to show positive movement towards closing the deprivation gap.”<sup>xlvi</sup>*

### **Governance**

Given the topic and the organisation holding the panel debate, it was unsurprising that a good number of respondents felt that progress would involve sustainable development being better integrated in government action and policy-making, locally, nationally and internationally. *“Progress should mean that the principles of sustainable development are intrinsic within economic and social policy;”<sup>xlix</sup>* *“Significant progress can be made in the public sector by providing clear guidance, without conflicting agendas, planning joined up strategy and policy and having accountability that will be monitored on a regular basis.”<sup>li</sup>*

Other suggestions for changes in style of governance included proactive and preventative policy as opposed to reactive response to issues and cross-party consensus. *“It is of the utmost importance for us to decouple political short-termism from what is necessary to bring about a sustainable future in the UK. All parties should agree on strategies of essential action which will be tackled consensually irrespective of which party is in power now or in the future, and opposition parties must agree to support such action. Planet earth does not discriminate on the basis of political belief.”<sup>li</sup>*

Others felt that progress would be the deepening of democracy and subsidiary decision making. Progress should happen at the local level. *“Progress should be a lively and participatory democracy where people really felt they have control over the decisions that affect their lives.”<sup>lii</sup>* Another felt that *“at the heart of progress should be community involvement and a sense of participation and ownership.”<sup>liii</sup>*

### **Individual Responsibility**

Closely aligned to progress within government was progress in the role of as a facilitator or enabler of individual responsibility. *“Government is not directly responsible for the well being of its citizens, but for developing the opportunity those citizens have to take responsibility for their lives and better themselves.”<sup>liv</sup>*

Individual responsibility for progress towards a sustainable society was felt by many to be key to progress. This involved primarily taking a perspective that was wider than ourselves and our own self-interest. *“Progress is about changing attitudes - instilling a sense of the common good, rather than every man for himself.”<sup>lv</sup>* The absence of this attitude was blamed firmly on the media by one member. *“The enormously influential popular media output aims at contented stupification rather than empowered thinking. It is this submission by national media to pander to a perceived desire for such numbing of the intellect that has partly contributed to the dislocation from society both local and global. Raising the expectation of the individual's responsibility to society both locally and globally, could surely be seen as progress.”<sup>lvi</sup>*

A more responsible attitude went hand in hand with *“public recognition and acceptance that economic growth as we currently know it is not progress / will lead to greater inequalities.”<sup>lvii</sup>*

Thus progress would be instilling in individuals a greater understanding of sustainability, awareness of their own environmental impact and the changes they could make that would make a difference and, most importantly, a desire to do something about it.

However, one respondent challenged the Government to take more coercive action with reluctant individuals. *"Progress therefore means moving beyond 'preaching to the converted'. Anyone who is concerned about the environment and who is going to take active steps to do something about it is already doing so. Now it is time to deal with the people who do not care enough to act on their own."*<sup>lviii</sup>

### Consumption

The main activity in individual responsibility was consumption. *"A shift in the definition of progress needs to recognise that there is an absolute limit to consumption."*<sup>lix</sup> One respondent stated that this would revolve around the pursuit of quality over quantity.

*"Progress in my mind would be made if the national consumption mindset moved away from its obsession with price and volume (pile them high, sell them cheap and buy it even if you don't really need it) to one based on the quality of the product and producer. This would be demonstrated through a shift in the brand positioning of major companies and in the proliferation of more micro operations and specialist producers. Advertising, the great barometer of the collective psyche, would reflect this as campaigns driven by pricing were replaced with those that featured quality and individualism above all else - encouraging the mass market to aspire, not to conspicuous consumption based on volume, but to selective, necessity driven buying behaviour."*<sup>lx</sup>

The concept of choice was also raised and its relationship to awareness,

responsibility and ultimately indicators. *"Informed choices need to be made by all sectors of society, government, business, individuals. That would be real progress."*<sup>lxi</sup> Progress was felt to be the ability and freedom of individuals and communities to make choices, but with the recognition that this freedom comes with responsibility. A prerequisite for that responsibility is sufficient understanding of the impacts of that choice and thus ubiquitous indicators enable that understanding.

### Education

Respondents felt that the role of education and learning was also central to progress. Sustainable development needed to be at the heart of any curriculum. Engagement of the whole population in learning about SD. *"Better quality of public dialogue, more informed debate, more people engaged in learning."*<sup>lxii</sup> Or more sternly, *"education and awareness in order to temper our greed and help us question our acquisitive habits."*<sup>lxiii</sup>

One respondent conceptualised the question about what we would want for our children as a proxy of our conceptualisation of national progress. *"I want them to have a sense of social responsibility, in a personal, a national and a global sense. Similarly this is how I want our country to progress."*<sup>lxiv</sup>

### Conclusion

An overarching conclusion of the panel responses to what progress should mean was that the task was one of enormous complexity but that this complexity was no reason for not stepping up to the mark and attempting to redefine how we currently conceive progress.

## 2. Economic growth as progress

### 2.1 Economic progress<sup>3</sup>

There was a significant minority of panel members that cautioned the dismissal of all ideas of using economic growth as a proxy for progress. *"There is more to economic activity than selling throwaway products. My feeling is that environmentalists are beating up economic growth in frustration at the absence of a convincing sustainable economic model."*<sup>lxv</sup>

A few respondents felt that our pursuit of growth is nature and not nurture, as a result, growth was not felt to be something from which we could naturally turn away. *"A desire for growth in consumption (in its various forms) appears to be a universal human condition and therefore seems an appropriate baseline measure of progress."*<sup>lxvi</sup>

It was also noted that *"economic 'growth' is not based upon some fixed absolute external aspirations,"*<sup>lxvii</sup> it is essentially a value neutral model, the direction of travel simply reflects what is valued by that society. The conclusion being that these values needed to shift away from consumptive growth to preservative growth, and valuing sustainability more highly.

Another concern about sidelining economic growth was losing international comparisons and the element of competition. *"We do not as a nation exist in isolation and the world is a competitive place. I cannot conceive a model which does not have national economic growth as a central driver in the foreseeable future. I know of no examples where the alternative of*

<sup>3</sup> Section A is a collation of responses from session 1, Q1 that mentioned economic growth specifically

*economic stagnation or decline has benefited the indigenous population."*<sup>lxviii</sup>

It was also noted that the *"benefits of GDP growth in terms of basic human welfare are particularly clear to see in the developing world."* Furthermore, the expansion of the UK economy was a driver of knowledge and technology transfer that, as Stern highlights, are key to tackling climate change in the less developed world.

Most of the respondents did however state the need or use for some sort of modification or supplement to existing measures of GDP in terms of globally agreed goals on finite natural resources. Essentially decoupling the negative impacts of growth. *"Progress should mean where economic growth, wealth creation or success is decoupled from consumption of finite resources, damage to the environment, society and human health."*<sup>lxix</sup>

### 2.2 Outdated Economics<sup>4</sup>

When asked specifically about economic growth as a measure of progress in the second question to the panel, a large number of respondents felt that economic growth was an outdated concept of progress for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Economic growth gave an indication of material wealth but not, most crucially, its uses or its distribution within society.

*"For at least the last 20 years it has been the single greatest distraction from, and obstruction to, pursuit of genuine progress. Economic growth is no longer necessary for, or even positively correlated to, any element of genuine progress. Indeed it is now undermining*

<sup>4</sup> Panel members were asked in the first session, Q2. What do you think about the use of economic growth as a measure of national progress? And Q3. What other measure(s) of progress would you like to see emphasised within UK governments? Many of the answers Q2 and Q3 overlapped or overlapped in responses to other questions. Section B to E collate these responses.

*many of them. Growth is jeopardising environmental sustainability and with it human security, at home and abroad; it is impoverishing the public realm and crowding out mutual and co-operative endeavour; it is eroding trust and solidarity and pushing people into the aridity of commoditised, depersonalised, competitive relationships. And it isn't even helping meet basic needs because its fruits are going not to the needy but to those already glutted with over-consumption. Even its claim to maintain stability is bogus: it entails continual dislocation and insecurity for workers communities, and drives increasing geopolitical insecurity.*"<sup>lxx</sup>

Economic growth "says nothing about the distribution of wealth, or what the wealth actually buys in goods and services, or the multitude of benefits that are provided by individuals and voluntary organisations. It appears insolubly linked to classical economics, which discounts future costs and benefits to an insignificant net present value. It struggles and fails miserably to include non-financial capital and transactional value, such as a healthy environment, and de-humanises society by treating human capital as an exploitable resource. In short, economic growth is a measure of the rate (and not necessarily efficiently) people, animals and the environment all serve the economic system, rather than the other way round."<sup>lxxi</sup>

Other respondents were slightly less scathing but still felt the emphasis on economic growth was deeply flawed. *"The use of economic growth is a false barometer of the nation's health and progress. It is based on the assumption that bigger is always better, greed is good, less is most definitely not more and that volume is always king."*<sup>lxxii</sup>

There was broad agreement that economic growth should not be the goal of progress although many people and policy makers still conceptualised it as

such. *"We are making important what can easily be measured, rather than measuring what is important."*<sup>lxxiii</sup>

The purpose of progress should be defined as wellbeing or sustainability. The economy was a subset of the environment and once the purpose and goal of progress was decided, the role of economic growth would be delivering it.

*"To define progress by reference to GDP and economic growth is to place method before substance. Factors that lend themselves to quantitative analysis tend to be given greater weight than those which cannot so easily be counted. It is easier to count than it is to evaluate or appraise."*<sup>lxxiv</sup> There was also appetite from the panel for the development of a more accurate alternative measure of progress. *"It is an indictment both of economists that it [economic growth] is nearly the best they can do, and of the rest of us that we can't come up with anything better."*<sup>lxxv</sup>

One respondent felt that a new conception of progress was increasingly overdue as *"I think more people are becoming suspicious of economic growth statements because the concept often doesn't match up with their experience or with how they feel or perceive the current state of the nation to be."*<sup>lxxvi</sup> Evidence from the World Values Survey was cited as evidence against a close correlation between growth and wellbeing.

The panel responses fell into two main categories, the first felt that economic growth and the methodology for its calculation needed to be amended to take into account of externalities and un-costed goods and services. The second felt that a more balanced view of progress within sustainable development could be possible if policy makers considering economic growth together with top level environmental and social 'growth' indicators.



### 2.3 Decoupling growth from impact

One respondent mentioned how systems thinking can illustrate how economic growth mutated from a measure to a goal, resulting in a reliance on 'meaningless' numbers.

*"Systems thinking shows how attempts to isolate a target or activity outside their context results in a distorted understanding of a situation.*

*Anthropological research has shown how the 'audit culture' has come to dominate to the extent that the measures put in place to understand effectiveness have now become the goals of a project. How do we decouple the attachment of scientists and economists to numbers from the decisions made in government which are never about numbers. Statistics are meaningless, they can be used to say anything. People manipulate statistics to achieve their own goals."*<sup>lxxvii</sup>

Another noted that *"Any modern CEO worth their salt would not use a performance metric that tells you so little about what is actually happening, either for reporting or decision-making."*<sup>lxxviii</sup>

The current 'orgy' of consumption that modern developed societies have perpetuated was blamed on a number of things, not least the measure of economic growth itself. *"I think its [economic growth] use probably arises from the fact that most of us are inherently greedy and selfish, wanting to increase their own wealth and that of their families. While this attitude remains at the basis of people's motivations this measure will continue to be important."*<sup>lxxix</sup> Our greed has been transferred into a race of consumerism. *"Survival of the fittest" has been translated into having more than the person next door."*<sup>lxxx</sup>

*"Nations like Britain have achieved sustained economic growth through an*

*orgy of consumer spending which has kept the economy buoyant but which has also produced a culture where we are 1) overworked so we can afford to 'keep up', and 2) heavily indebted. This has produced a culture where we increasingly emphasize the importance of acquiring the latest ipod, laptop, car, holiday abroad, and so on. The consequence for the planet of this consumerism is profound."*<sup>lxxxi</sup>

Dampening this culture of materialism is therefore of enormous importance, but is a challenge that politicians were felt to have hindered rather than helped. *"I believe that once people have security as regards the basics of life, such as food, shelter, energy and healthcare as examples, the importance of wealth acquisition diminishes, unless society attaches an importance to it that is culturally based as a status symbol. Unfortunately I believe that society's regard for the importance of wealth is a direct consequence of the importance successive politicians and political systems have attached to it."*<sup>lxxxii</sup>

Another felt that beneath this materialism lay another circle that perpetuated our need for economic growth. *"We think we need growth to pay for increasing health spending to allow us to pay for the new medicines/treatments developed to tackle the illnesses/problems that may have been caused by the economic growth."*<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

Given the damage inflicted by our consumerism, a number of respondents then tackled the question about whether or not it was possible to decouple the damaging impacts of our excessive material consumption and energy use from economic growth. *"'Weightless growth', i.e. economic growth which has been decoupled from growth in energy use and material consumption, will have to play an important role in our approach to environmental stability."*<sup>lxxxiv</sup>

The implications of decoupling for our patterns of work, travel, business and leisure are profound but may be not enough to be 'sustainable' unless levels of absolute consumption have also reduced. *"Measures to improve environmental performance (e.g. through greater efficiency, etc) are continuously gobbled up through greater consumption levels."*<sup>lxxxv</sup> Services, rather than goods, would therefore need to play a key part in a 'weightless' economy.

Despite our existing reliance on economic growth to stabilise our economy, increasing levels consumption was not necessarily felt to be a prerequisite for economic stability in other cultures. *"There are many communities which are in fact stable socially, economically and environmentally without increasing consumption, particularly, but not exclusively, in the developing world."*<sup>lxxxvi</sup>

Economic stability was felt to be a useful alternative goal to economic growth. One respondent felt that the need for consumption growth was a feature of an unstable economy in itself. *"An economy which can only function by continuous growth in the cycle of production and demand is inherently unstable... We all know that we are on a highly dangerous roller coaster ride which may well derail if the brakes are applied."*<sup>lxxxvii</sup>

The key to shifting our culture of materialism was seen by one respondent to be communication. *"Progress is actually about learning to manage with less. No doubt we would all be healthier as a result. So we need to work at definitions and understandings of progress and communicate them in a way that means they are not seen as vote losers by the politicians."*<sup>lxxxviii</sup>

## 2.4 Adjusted gross domestic product

Despite a strong sense that GDP and economic growth were deficient to the task of acting as a surrogate of progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, many of the responses were permeated with a mood of political pragmatism. *"GDP is a cheap and cheerful measure of which there are few alternatives."*<sup>lxxxix</sup> *"We cannot expect to wean ourselves off popular and political expectations of growth quickly, nor off the economic role which growth plays in maintaining employment and in enabling us to cope with rising demands on public services, particularly in an aging population."*<sup>xc</sup>

A number also pointed out the correlation (albeit indirect) between economic growth and environmental improvement. *"One of the (many!) counter arguments is that more growth = more jobs = more housing needed = loss of high quality landscapes, but I think that in overall terms the environment fairs better when economic growth is high."*<sup>xc</sup>

Many of the pragmatic supporters of economic growth did however highlight that firstly there was a general need for a better understanding of what GDP does and does not measure, and secondly that ultimately the measure needed to be modified and adjusted to account for un-costed environmental and social goods and services. *"I have no problem with this measure - so long as it can include a monetised value for such matters as health, well being, clean air, access to a pleasing environment etc."*<sup>xcii</sup>

Other responses mentioned the need to adjust GDP more accurately the inputs required to create wealth, such as time and skills. One suggested that *"the financial methodology used for mines and quarries should be used for the calculation of pollution i.e. a depleting resource."*<sup>xciii</sup>



One respondent felt that turning away from GDP as a measure of success would alienate those in businesses that are trying to work within the sustainability agenda and a more constructive debate was required. *"It is therefore perhaps more useful to consider the use to which growth is put, rather than measuring growth for its own sake."*<sup>xciiv</sup> A modified indicator might therefore take a view of desirable (renewable energy) or non-desirable (weapons) outputs in terms of sustainability. *"It is important not to demonise trade but to change its terms and conditions so that they are integral to progress and wellbeing. Were trade balances improved through large contracts for sustainable energy R&D we might be proud of our exports activity."*<sup>xciiv</sup>

Others did though feel that, ultimately, given our level of development had now breached environmental limits, we should be looking to move away from GDP.

*"Thus, simplistically put, economic growth is progress when the nation is underdeveloped; i.e. its eco-footprint is less than its bio-capacity. Conversely, for developed nations whose eco-footprints exceed their bio-capacity, progress is the reduction of either population or per-capita consumption to bring economic activity into balance with indigenous resources."*<sup>xciiv</sup>

## 2.5 Additional measures of progress

Given the complications in replacing GDP, only a relatively small proportion of the panel argued for its abandonment as a key indicator. A common approach was therefore to suggest that several indicators of progress were needed to create a more accurate picture of progress and act as a supplement GDP. There is a relationship to GDP but it is not absolute *"Measuring only economic growth as a determinant of success is like measuring shoe size to see how tall*

*someone is."*<sup>xciiv</sup> *"It is the best proxy we have at the moment for "progress" - however broadly defined that is. A good proxy has to be understandable, objective, measurable, and comparatively valid across nearly all countries and societies on the globe. Devising a better proxy will not be easy. Probably we should devise several independent proxies."*<sup>xciiv</sup>

Sustainability for many of the panel was a concept synonymous with balance and consideration of wider objectives.

Sustainability required social, environmental and economic objectives all going in the right direction. *"Why do politicians have a desire to reduce everything to a single number? Is it because they don't think the rest of us are clever enough to deal with a variety of measures? Or are we all, including the politicians and some experts, too lazy to care?"*<sup>xciiv</sup> *"Perhaps we need to develop a similar measure of environmental and social 'growth' which would be given equal status as GDP when considering national progress."*<sup>c</sup>

*"It is a reflection of our times and of our problems that there are only two addresses in Downing Street that are thought to have any importance: No. 10 and NO. 11. The environment and social bosses should be in No. 9 and No. 12."*<sup>ci</sup>

The role for the sustainable development community was felt to be therefore *"keep providing alternative measures and demonstrating how they can be used."*<sup>ci</sup> As well as to *"make people aware of what these measures are and why they matter."*

A good number of respondents did however mention the extra complexities of dealing with these issues in an international context. The conclusion being for many that it is impossible for one nation to act unilaterally in modifying the conception of progress. *"I think that the problem is, if a small number of countries begin to reduce their economic growth in order to act*

*more responsibly to the environment, the unscrupulous ones will just stamp all over them.”<sup>ciii</sup>*

Others saw the role for the UK to act as an international leader and coordinator in changing the focus from quantity to quality. *“We have to think big. The current model of economic growth means we are aiming for volume, when we should be aiming for quality at this stage in the nation's development. This would allow us to be truly a world leader and make a difference to the quality of life in other countries.”<sup>civ</sup>*

### 3. The concept of wellbeing<sup>5</sup>

Wellbeing was felt by some to signify the ‘ultimate stage of human development’<sup>cv</sup> and therefore was the only valid measure of progress. One response suggested that wellbeing was part of our genetic programming *“We seek fulfilment through developing a sense of wellbeing. Having wellbeing allows us to be the best we can be and achieve our potential.”<sup>cvi</sup>*

*“What could possibly be the point of any economic or technological ‘progress’ if it does not improve human wellbeing? The fact this question appears to be meaningful shows what a warped idea of ‘progress’ we have drifted into.”<sup>cvi</sup>*

#### 3.1 Usage of wellbeing as a concept

##### Understandable

Unlike sustainability, which can cause confusion more often than clarity, panel members felt that many people

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<sup>5</sup> This section is a collation of panel responses from questions 4A & 4B of first panel debate. To what extent is the concept of ‘wellbeing’ a useful way of thinking about progress? Do you think ‘wellbeing’ is a useful measure of progress?

instinctively understand what wellbeing and life satisfaction means for them, though they may have an issue defining it.

As one respondent stated, wellbeing *“puts the idea across very simply, in a way that can be easily understood, that we should be aiming for something other than ever greater consumption. A fair, just, more equal, more cohesive society which is living within its environmental limits will exhibit high levels of wellbeing, regardless of its income levels.”<sup>cvi</sup>*

##### Improving Social & Support Networks

One of the key concepts arising out of the responses was the importance of relationships in wellbeing and rediscovery of the value of social and support networks. *“The concept of wellbeing provides an opportunity to repair the support networks within society that have been damaged by the pursuit of material wealth, which in itself has left us ship-wrecked, and alone. It is tragic to think we sacrifice relationships with friends and family in order to create a sense of security.”<sup>cix</sup>*

One panel member concluded *“To begin to achieve a sense of “Wellbeing” we must give serious consideration to socially re-engineering society through the power of television and media.”<sup>cx</sup>* Another felt that the rise of the transient society in modern society was responsible for breaking fundamental social links.

##### Questioning Material Aspirations

Whether or not it was possible to define or measure wellbeing, it was felt to be a concept that opened out discussion and debate about where society was heading and what sort of society the UK should be aspiring to. Many respondents pointed out that although money can make life easier, it doesn’t necessarily make us happier. One respondent felt that expectations for quality of life were

manipulated and constantly increased by technology and more specifically, the marketing of new technology.

*"The general public bury their heads in the sand and continue on their personal treadmills regardless, which are oiled by aspiration marketing and influences. It is deceptively easy to be blind to the degradation of one's own well-being for the sake of purely financial gains and this can be mirrored by using only financial measures for judging prosperity."*<sup>cxix</sup>

The concept of wellbeing *"describes an internal and intrinsic state rather than external and extrinsic acquisitions."*<sup>cxii</sup> And, consequently encourages individuals to re-evaluate the vicious cycle of materialism.

*"Economic growth cannot function if our desires are satisfied, so the job of capitalism is to create desire, which we fulfil through material consumption. The concept of wellbeing creates a space within which we can analyse the cycle we are in, and question the results."* and, as a result, *"refocuses value on relationships, natural heritage and our physical and mental health, opening our eyes again to the real costs of production."*<sup>cxiii</sup>

### **Empowering Individuals and Businesses**

Individual empowerment was felt to be key factor in promoting individual wellbeing. Do people feel that they have any control or agency over the direction their lives progress towards? One respondent made the point that *"People undoubtedly would feel happier not knowing what environmental problems are around the corner which will affect their future quality of life or that of their children. However, a deeper sense of wellbeing can come from a real understanding of issues, and what choices individuals have, in order*

*to feel empowered to contribute to making a difference."*<sup>cxiv</sup>

Only a few panel members drew our attention to the crucial role of businesses. One noted that it may be easier to define and measure wellbeing and take action to improve it within a business than on an individual or Government level. *"Within business it is easier to set frameworks which measure wellbeing and sustainable progress in terms of flexible working policies, improved CSR reporting, reduced environmental impact, particularly reduction of travel."*<sup>cxv</sup>

### **Encouraging Sustainability**

The capacity for a focus on wellbeing to instigate questioning of material aspirations was the primary reason that sustainability and wellbeing were felt to be intricately linked.

One person usefully summarised wellbeing as a measure of progress because *"It encourages an outlook which can more easily adopt a sustainable lifestyle."*<sup>cxvi</sup> Wellbeing was felt to persuade people to explore the potential gains from non-consumption based activities to *"get the progress ball rolling in a sustainable direction"*<sup>cxvii</sup> and challenging the assumption that the absence of 'stuff' means people are unhappy.

Within this, wellbeing was felt to work towards resolving *"the conflicts between what we want and what we need. It poses the age-old question: what does it profit a person if they gain the whole world, but lose their soul? So it is at the heart of discussion about the environment and sustainability."*<sup>cxviii</sup>

Individual wellbeing within our existing culture and society was felt to be about the satisfaction of false needs where consumers were manipulated into wanting things that do not make them happy, that economic consumption *"sucks us into a web of materialism."*<sup>cxix</sup>

Given that most respondents agreed that the current economic model has not created a society in which real 'wellbeing' can be fostered, it raises further questions about the sort of society we actually want to live in. Wellbeing must not be *"considered in isolation but through the prism of the kind of people we want to be, the social values we want to cultivate and sustain."*<sup>cxx</sup>

Another member pointed out that we should be looking to re-learn from other cultures, such as Bhutan, what the correct balance of priorities should be (between economic, social and environmental) within a society that is conducive to maximising the wellbeing of its citizens.

### 3.2 Issues with wellbeing concept

Despite a fairly high level of support for the concept of wellbeing, many respondents stated qualifications or concerns in its actual application and use. *"I remain to be convinced that the concept is strong enough to bear the pressures that you are intending to lay upon it."*<sup>cxxi</sup>

The responses varied as to whether or not they felt that these issues, particularly with definition and measurement, posed an insurmountable challenge. *"In theory - it makes sense. In practice - a terrible concept. Just as we criticise GDP for not being an accurate or reflective measurement, wellbeing would mean different things to different people"*<sup>cxxii</sup>

#### Individual v. Social Wellbeing

As well as cultural homogeneity, panel members also raised the issue of conflicts between individual wellbeing and societal wellbeing. In many cases individual freedoms were felt to have the potential to impose externalities on society. Should the state prioritise the interests of those that have not taken

personal responsibility for fostering their own wellbeing? What should be done about situations where people do have a real choice, but choose not to take it, and are effectively externalising costs on others. One example being the cost of healthcare for those choosing an unhealthy diet.

Respondents stressed that individual wellbeing should not be the sole measure and that the wellbeing of society and the wellbeing of future generations should be an important part of the concept. One member concluded *"we have to look at what might characterize wellbeing so that it benefits the most and detracts the fewest. Ultimately it comes back to progress being about social equity."*<sup>cxxiii</sup> Another highlighted that without a dimension of individual ethics and responsibilities, wellbeing was not necessarily a useful concept to consider progress.

#### Compatibility with Sustainability

One of the main concerns about wellbeing was its implied anthropocentrism and that this focus may be incompatible with the huge challenges of sustainability.

Wellbeing *"is more useful than GDP, for example, but it is too narrow. Well-being is too anthropocentric. It considers only what benefits humans even if this is to the detriment of the world around us. This is a highly dangerous discourse. We should consider not just 'how well we are' in some absolute sense, but also 'how well we fit' with the world around us."*<sup>cxxiv</sup>

One respondent asked whether - as we feel loss more keenly than gain - a concentration on wellbeing measures during the transition to a more sustainable society would be counterproductive by breeding disillusionment and a sense of failure. A number also ranked non-human wellbeing and the environment above

that of human wellbeing given the urgency of the issues facing humanity. *"Progress, in terms of sustainability, at this time can be easily measured by reductions in carbon emissions. This is the crux of the matter, other matters, such as can we keep people happy at the same time as we introduce change, are peripheral."*<sup>CXXV</sup>

As stated earlier, true pursuit of 'wellbeing' was felt to be compatible with sustainability, however, many respondents felt that for wellbeing to be defined as anything other than as modern lifestyle aspirations, required a huge, and perhaps overdue, cultural shift. Respondents again differed over whether this was possible or in fact useful.

*"Sadly I suspect that people would not necessarily have a higher index of wellbeing even if some of the world's most pressing problems were resolved."*<sup>CXXVI</sup>

### The Economy and Wellbeing

A significant minority of respondents took issue with the implication of replacing the existing economic model and cautioned that doing so risked losing some of the virtues of the existing model. *"Do not underestimate the importance of a reasonably strong economy to be able to lead other nations in delivering progress in environmental and social agendas."*<sup>CXXVII</sup>

Wellbeing was felt to be something that is hard to measure and address *"So we tend to fall back on economic growth as something we can measure and (within limits) influence..."*<sup>CXXVIII</sup>

*"The gritty satisfaction that our nation is worth more than yours stimulates those of us in money making to do more of it. A replacement for Gross Domestic Product must provide a similar impetus and allow individuals to, at least in theory, take satisfaction from their contribution."*<sup>CXXIX</sup>

Others felt that despite its faults, economics was what would ultimately deliver sustainability and therefore efforts should be concentrated on improving the existing economic model. *"Well-being is an issue because the current economic model is so ropey. Get the economic model right and most of the work on wellbeing will be done. In other words, you appear to be stuck on a symptom when it is the system that needs change."*<sup>CXXX</sup>

Within this there were also issues about the relationship between wellbeing and economics. One member felt the concept of wellbeing would make the existing economic model work better and ensure workforces are operating to maximum profitability. *"If people are disaffected and unhappy then they will probably be highly unmotivated which will have an effect on our progress, in all manner of areas, such as economically, socially and education."*<sup>CXXXI</sup> Whereas others saw the issue from a different perspective *"The economy was made for man, not man for the economy."*<sup>CXXXII</sup> *"Economic progress at the expense of personal wellbeing is simply slavery."*<sup>CXXXIII</sup>

Finally some respondents also raised the equity issue. *"For many people I guess it depends on where individuals are in their own "economic" cycle. It is all very well for middle class intellectuals to talk about wellbeing and to intimate that perhaps economic sacrifice may improve overall wellbeing but I think that the majority of the population would find this hard to accept."*<sup>CXXXIV</sup>

### Static or Dynamic?

Mirroring the issue raised in some responses to the first question about progress, the panel also disagreed over whether the concept of wellbeing implied that societies should aspire to reach a point where people considered they had 'enough'. Progress has the implication of dynamism and the pursuit



of more and better, whereas wellbeing can be seen as more inherently static. Which one is it 'human nature' to pursue'?

The question was then raised as to which was preferable for sustainability. One member concluded that *"the real question is how to shift attitudes away from 'must have more, bigger, better' to 'enough for what I need.'"*<sup>cxxxv</sup> One member also questioned whether it was possible to develop further at all without detriment to others. *"Real life is more often zero-sum game in which those who win do so at the expense of others who lose out."*<sup>cxxxvi</sup>

One member stressed the importance of understanding *"wellbeing as something active as opposed to passive or simply a 'state' of being."* In that it *"relates to an understanding of wellbeing as ability to realise one's potential."*<sup>cxxxvii</sup>

## 4. Defining wellbeing<sup>6</sup>

### Defining wellbeing

For many panel members, a definition of wellbeing was felt to be fundamental in order to measure and compare it across time and geographically. However, the issue raised most often in the responses was the whether or not it was possible reach a universally acceptable definition of wellbeing, both within different societies and globally. Wellbeing was felt to be culturally determined, value-laden and ethnocentric. In defining and measuring wellbeing, Government would need to embody particular cultural values, but whose values would those be? Though a minority disagreed, believing that *"definitions of wellbeing are almost universal across different faiths and cultures."*<sup>cxxxviii</sup>

There was however wide agreement that establishing components of

wellbeing needed lengthy debate and consideration. Only after a truly pluralistic discourse should government agree on a tight and appealing definition and measure. *"If we are to promote this concept we need to use words that could come out of Chantelle's mouth and I can't ever hear her saying 'I am in a state of wellbeing'. We need to appeal to the masses. What would sound right on Big Brother? It is not patronising to reshape our approach but realistic."*<sup>cxxxix</sup>

In conclusion, one respondent felt that looking at wellbeing will necessarily require a better understanding of societal culture and values. *"It will not be an easy task, that is no reason not to attempt it."*<sup>cxl</sup>

### Members Definitions of Wellbeing

Within the panel responses to questions about the concept of wellbeing there were many stated and implied definitions and conceptions. Many focused on subjective measures and individual perceptions that implied an acceptance about where you are and rather than a striving for more, or an envy of others. Others questioned whether or not wellbeing and health should be strongly linked, as it is in some existing policy. Another member noted that the historic meaning of wealth was in fact a combination of wellbeing and health.

*"Wellbeing, to me, suggests a contentedness, not too extreme, but just right. It means an equilibrium in your life that you are happy with. It does not automatically mean that everything makes you happy, but that on reflection things are generally good."*<sup>cxli</sup>

*"Helping people to constantly make connections between their immediate and distant environment."*<sup>cxlii</sup>

*"My own view is that as social apes 'homo sapiens' we are as much defined*

<sup>6</sup> Section collated from responses to questions 4a & b in first panel session.

*by our relationships and social networks as we are as individuals."*<sup>cxlili</sup>

*"Comfortable, healthy and happy in a natural environment free from undue stress and strain."*<sup>cxliv</sup>

*"Fundamental human needs - a sense of belonging."*<sup>cxlv</sup>

*"Wellbeing is the feeling of worth a person has of his/her life and contribution to society as a whole."*<sup>cxlvi</sup>

*"Being comfortable with one's life and achievements."*<sup>cxlvii</sup>

*"The environment that we all perceive as the ideal to live a happier and healthy life."*<sup>cxlviii</sup>

*"My wellbeing is, to a large extent, linked to the wellbeing of my surrounds - people and the environment."*<sup>cxlix</sup>

*"Well-being can be related to the sense of community around one and the positive interactions within that community... But that doesn't mean a return to the narrow bigotry and idiocy of medieval village life, where pigs were put on trial for blasphemy..."*<sup>cl</sup>

Sustainable development should be defined *"in terms of ensuring wellbeing for current and future generations."*<sup>cli</sup>

*"Progress should mean improvements in society, the environment and the 'happiness' of the individual."*<sup>clii</sup>

Some respondents did however reject the word 'wellbeing and' suggested the following:

- ∞ *"Prosperous is a word that has emerged that might get closer to what we mean."*<sup>cliii</sup>
- ∞ *"Vitality is another useful word; it is more active than the resting state of wellbeing."*<sup>cliv</sup>
- ∞ *"It could still be interpreted in broader society as having a primarily individualistic*

*emphasis.... Would quality of life be a better phrase?"*<sup>clv</sup>

Some respondents noted other definitions of wellbeing that already existed in various institutions including:

- ∞ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment: security, basic material for good life, health, good social relations, with freedom of choice and action
- ∞ The United Nations Declaration on Social Progress and Development – wellbeing as part of social progress.
- ∞ World Health Organisation "health" being: *"a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."*
- ∞ (Felce and Perry 1995) *"[Wellbeing]...comprises objective descriptors and subjective evaluations of physical, material, social and emotional wellbeing, together with the extent of personal development and purposeful activity, all weighted by a personal set of values."*<sup>clvi</sup>
- ∞ HH Dalai Lama 'The Art of Happiness'. *"Happiness in this sense is more to do with training the mind. It seems that our modern life style is rooted in discontentment and avarice."*<sup>clvii</sup>

## 5. Measuring wellbeing

### Introduction<sup>7</sup>

A number of responses however believed that in order for things to count in society at present – they first need to be measured. Many felt that defining and measuring wellbeing was a difficult but essential process. The hope being that once existing Government

<sup>7</sup> Introduction collated from responses to question 4a&b of first panel debate



indicators, such as economic growth, were changed to become more representative of what people really want, then attitudes and values of society may follow suit and become more balanced.

Others disagreed. Measuring wellbeing is 'barking up the wrong tree'<sup>clviii</sup> *"What is needed is new thinking on economic models which can rival unsustainability. We need to reinvent capitalism and inspire the public with the elegance of the solution. New collections of statistics won't cut it."*

*"To use wellbeing in a scientific way to measure progress seems a bit like trying to explain a joke - the point of it could get lost in the process."*<sup>clix</sup>

Although assessing wellbeing impacts of policy would be a useful tool, there also needs to be *"some degree of quantification which policy makers and funders often require, unfortunately."*<sup>clx</sup>

A number raised issues about correct analysis of measures. For example, are increased incidences of crime demonstrating that there is more violence or better reporting? Should you classify treatment for drug use a good or a bad thing? Is it good to live longer if we are unhealthy? Is a cultural change good or bad? Does a high divorce rate *"reflect unhappiness in human relationships, or perhaps just a weakening of the traditional bonds of marriage, and so a change of culture."*

Whether or not it was possible or useful to define and measure wellbeing was one of the contentious issues arising out of the first round of the panel process. As a result, the second panel session asked members about wellbeing measurement specifically.

## 5.1 Illbeing or wellbeing?<sup>8</sup>

### Illbeing

*"If we prioritise stopping 'bad stuff', then we are bound to be on the right path, even if we are not 100% clear what 'good stuff' we want."*<sup>clxi</sup>

A significant minority of respondents to the second panel debate (21%) emphasised illbeing measures in order to focus on social justice and meeting the basic conditions and needs on which wellbeing depends. *"Measuring 'illbeing' is a powerful way of showing up the underbelly of 'business of usual' growth."*<sup>clxii</sup> One respondent felt that illbeing indicators made people more grateful for what they had as opposed to wellbeing, which may highlight deficiencies and encourage competition. *"Sustainability requires equity and balance, rather than escalation and competition, and the focus of measurement can have an influence on this."*<sup>clxiii</sup>

Political pragmatism was again a key feature in responses. Measuring illbeing implied relatively easy and uncontroversial measurement. As a result, illbeing measures would be more useful in geographical comparison and benchmarking. *"ill-being is something shared by all nations, regardless of how developed they are."*<sup>clxiv</sup> The greater robustness of illbeing measures was also felt to be critical for credibility if findings were to be used to inform policy.

### Wellbeing

*"We should measure progress by the prosperity, happiness and wellness it creates, rather than the negatives that have been mitigated. It's simple psychology."*<sup>clxv</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Section A collated from responses to question two of the second panel debate. Which is more appropriate for governments to try to measure; ill-being or wellbeing?

Direct wellbeing measures had nearly double the level of support than indirect measures of illbeing. Many of the respondents remarked on the psychology of concentrating on the positive rather than dwelling on the negative. *"If you ask questions about how bad people think things are, you won't be surprised to find they tell you that things are bloody awful."*<sup>clxvi</sup> The current focus on negatives, particularly by the media, disempowered individuals and spread de-motivating fear through society.

Focusing on wellbeing rather than illbeing was also felt to engender a radically different approach from Government. The implication being policies that progress towards a positive objective, rather than being focused on getting away from a negative. *"We want to be happy, not not unhappy."*<sup>clxvii</sup>

### Illbeing and Wellbeing

*"All I know is that if this were a market research job you'd want to get both quant and qual to get a rounded picture...."*<sup>clxviii</sup>

Although some respondents felt that illbeing and wellbeing were simply two sides of the same coin, others pointed out that the relationship is more complex and the correlation between is not absolute. As a result, 45 respondents felt that both illbeing and wellbeing were important and appropriate to measure. *"An absence of ill-health does not necessarily mean that society and people are functioning well and happily; equally, poor health does not mean that you have low life-satisfaction and are unhappy."*<sup>clxix</sup>

The conclusion being that both illbeing and wellbeing need to be measured and treated differently in policy terms. *"I don't believe that we can measure one without the other in a meaningful way. It is obviously important that we start with the positive i.e. what gives*

*people a sense of wellbeing and how governments can help create a climate of wellbeing. We also need to measure the ill-being to establish the nature and scale of the problem."*<sup>clxx</sup>

One respondent replied that the absolute measure is irrelevant and can be misleading, *"What's important is the change of that measure over time and how this correlates with other changes in society."* Another stressed the importance geographical comparisons in order to highlight areas of deprivation and to measure increasing equality or inequality over time. Another raised the issue of relativity and with comparisons in an increasingly unequal leading to dissatisfaction.

However, a few members also emphasised the need for action rather than expending energy on lengthy debates about an indicator. *"We need to pursue greater wellbeing (and reduced ill-being - what a horrible phrase) and make rapid progress towards environmentally sustainable consumption levels at the same time - we have to get more happiness and relieve more suffering by consuming much, much less. That's the real challenge."*<sup>clxxi</sup>

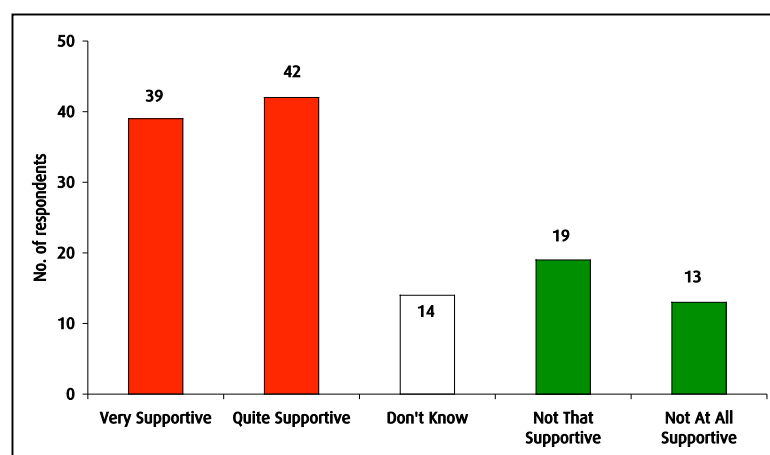
## 5.2 Subjective measures of wellbeing?<sup>9</sup>

As Einstein says *"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."*

Respondents were asked for their level of support for a subjective or self reported measure of wellbeing on a five point scale. The results show that the majority of respondents were very or quite supportive of such a measure.

<sup>9</sup> Collated from responses to question three of the second panel debate. How supportive would you be of governments using subjective (self-reported) measure(s) of wellbeing? What advice would you give to make this measure as useful as possible?

**Table 1: Support for a subjective or self-reported measure of wellbeing**



### Support for Subjective Measures

There were a number of stated reasons for support of subjective measures including the potential of a wellbeing measure to act as a balance for policy makers' over-reliance on 'scientific' measures. *"I support this concept as it encourages government to look behind statistics and begin to understand why social problems occur rather than simply looking at the black and white of targets and performance."*<sup>clxxii</sup>

A good number of respondents simply had no problem with subjectivity as a concept and suggested that it needed to be extolled rather than hidden. One noted that numerous companies already used subjective information in market research and that even in ostensibly objective measures such as money should not be seen as such. The value of money is in fact subjective in that it differs between individuals and changes over time. *"All other methods are subjective to the people creating the questionnaires - somewhere along the way, subjectivity will be introduced, you might as well make it obvious."*<sup>clxxiii</sup>

A few respondents also pointed out that subjective indicators are already in use by Government. Fear of crime is a

recognised and respected indicator by the public, media and Government. As is consumer confidence. One respondent pointed out that *"It has been demonstrated many times (see the work of Layard and others) that subjective measures of concepts as vague as 'are you happy?' can give repeatable, meaningful results."*<sup>clxxiv</sup> Another pointed out that recent neural experiments into happiness and wellbeing have reinforced and legitimised the use of subjective measures.

### Qualifications for a Subjective Indicator

Irrespective of a positive or negative response, most answer included qualifications and suggestions to ensure the robustness of a subjective wellbeing measure. Many felt that wellbeing would both be difficult to collect and to make meaningful. It would be easy to introduce bias into a subjective measure or to incorrectly interpret causality in results. One member answered that their support was relative to their dislike of GDP as a wellbeing proxy. *"But I wouldn't exactly be shouting from the rooftops. So I suppose that's a 'quite supportive' but with a hefty dose of scepticism mixed in."*<sup>clxxv</sup>

## Triangulate with Objective Measures

A popular method suggested by the panel for improving the usefulness of subjective wellbeing measures was to triangulate findings with objective measures. One member noted *"How people feel about crime is just as important a measure as how many crimes are reported to the police. Government actually needs both types of metric to identify issues within wider society."*<sup>clxxvi</sup> Looking at both types of measure was also thought to allow the Government to measure and validate correlations between objective factors and self-reported wellbeing over time.

A number of respondents felt that subjective measures should therefore been seen in the context of a basket of measures that included GDP and ecological footprint. As one respondent highlighted however *"In a straight fight between a subjective measure and a quantitative one like GDP, the quantitative one will ALWAYS be given more weight. That's the subjective way that people view different types of measures."*<sup>clxxvii</sup> Whether or not subjective and objective measures could be legitimately aggregated was another issue raised in the responses.

## Sampling & interpretation

A good number of respondents also stressed the importance of large, representative samples and transparent candidate selection. Any quantitative data needed to be supported by a programme of qualitative research such as focus groups or a broad public consultation. One suggested aggregating a number of subjective measures. It was also felt important to ensure that the questions were as open as possible and not loaded, for example in favour of green space.

The 'subjectivity' of the measure meant that members were concerned with the interpretation of results and how wisely

the findings would be used. A number stressed that results would require qualification, careful understanding and continuous adjustment. Concern was expressed about the competency of the analysis by journalists and the media. *"The key thing is what is done with the result, the standard of analysis undertaken. Relationships between data do not indicate causality and therefore all measures of wellbeing will need to most rigorous and professional analysis."*<sup>clxxviii</sup>

A number of respondents felt that due to subjectivity the wellbeing measure was only valid and informative if undertaken at a local or community level. This local level measure should then be matched by policy powers and local level initiatives.

## Issues with Subjective measures

Where the concept of wellbeing was felt to be culturally determined, issues were raised about international comparisons and comparisons over-time. A number of respondents felt that any measure of wellbeing need to be continuously tested and triangulated overtime in order to control for changing perceptions and expectations.

One issue raised was the need to compare like with like. Not simply controlling for individual characteristics such as age and income, but also to ensure intersubjective verifiability – or ensuring that individuals have a comparable understanding of the wellbeing concept and are answering on an equivalent basis. *"We rely so much on external forces to tell us whether we are happy or not - according to size or quantity of belongings, or financial strength, or social clout. We are not able to give isolated responses to this."*<sup>clxxix</sup>

A fairly significant minority of the panel respondents however did not support a subjective measure. *"The main question for me would be what is the function of this indicator and whether a subjective indicator would be fit for purpose."*<sup>clxxx</sup>

One panel member pointed out that there was a gap between what the government chose to measure and what the government takes action on.

*"If they are used as a resource to build understanding of the systemic/ecological conditions within which people experience well-being, then I'm 'very supportive'. If they are used as an indicator of 'successful government', then I'm 'not that supportive'."*<sup>clxxxi</sup>

### Contribution to Sustainable Development

One reason for lack of support for a subjective wellbeing measure was concern about how the indicator could contribute positively to sustainable development. This point was linked to existing individual values and expectations. *"If people are asked about their circumstances they will paint as poor a picture as possible in the hope and expectation of conditions improving. This may be to an unsustainable level."*<sup>clxxxii</sup>

Similarly, forcing subjective comparisons of quality of life between individuals and globally, may also not be appropriate and could breed dissention and dissatisfaction.

Others felt that the intention of using a wellbeing indicator in policy was necessarily flawed because of the transitory nature and 'greed' of people's wellbeing. The conclusion being that the only legitimate focus of the state should be on improving objective measures. *"If wellbeing is defined as such [progress] then I believe it would lead to policy initiatives focusing on managing people's perceptions of progress rather than in creating any genuine progress. The purpose of this whole initiative is to establish indicators that enable policy*

*formation to be directed to things that make a difference to people's lives."*<sup>clxxxiii</sup>

One clear issue with a wellbeing indicator was the level of trust in Government. *"I believe that there are large segments of society that no longer trust government nor believe that it has any concern for their wellbeing."*<sup>clxxxiv</sup>

A subjective measure was seen to be too open to manipulation and positive spin. *"Politicians have a way of doing what appeals, or what lobby groups convince them to do, and then look for supportive evaluation to justify their choices."*<sup>clxxxv</sup>

Within the responses there were also some suggested example methodologies and strategies for developing a wellbeing indicator. These included:

- ∞ Q- Methodology
- ∞ Experiences of Public Health Observatories
- ∞ HQI, Housing quality Indicators
- ∞ BREEM methodology – measurable factors rated on relative importance by interest group panels.
- ∞ Max-Neef - Fundamental human needs - Being; Doing; Having and Interacting

### 5.3 One or many measures of wellbeing?

The panel were asked to choose one measure for wellbeing from a list of 20 wellbeing related indicators formulated from responses to the first round of the discussion. These were intended to be as discrete as possible although many did overlap to some extent. They were then asked to choose a set of measures for wellbeing, limiting to five or less if possible:



**Table 2: Measures of wellbeing**

ONE MEASURE	NO	FIVE MEASURES	NO
Happiness & Life Satisfaction	.36	Happiness & Life Satisfaction	.51
Self Worth & Fulfilment	14	Physical Health (wellness)	48
Social Capital & Community	10	Education & Skills	48
Physical Health (wellness)	9	Mental Health	41
Mental Health	7	Social Capital & Community	41
Inequity, Poverty & Social Exclusion	6	Political Freedom	33
Political Freedom	6	Housing & Local Environment	31
Education & Skills	4	Inequity, Poverty & Social Exclusion	31
Physical Health (Illness)	3	Insecurity, Crime and Discrimination	31
Housing & Local Environment	3	Self Worth & Fulfilment	29
Family & Work/Life Balance	3	Family & Work/Life Balance	24
Ethical Behaviour	3	Physical Health (Illness)	20
Insecurity, Crime and Discrimination	3	Ethical Behaviour	19
Health Inequalities	2	Work & Employment	19
Local Services	2	Local Services	14
Voluntary, Cultural & Spiritual Activity	2	Food & Diet	13
Divorce Rates & Domestic Violence	2	Voluntary, Cultural & Spiritual Activity	12
Work & Employment	2	Health Inequalities	10
Food & Diet	1	Worklessness	6
Worklessness	1	Divorce Rates & Domestic Violence	5
Concerns/Not Applicable	2	Concerns/Not Applicable	5
Required more than one	25	Five is too few	8
		Other Measures	4

### One Measure<sup>10</sup>

Many of the panel stressed that they were answering the question under duress and that one indicator was far too few to reflect the complexity of the issue. As a result, most respondents suggested indicators that were felt to capture all the other indicators within them. Respondents also generally approached this from the perspective of wellbeing rather than illbeing.

**Happiness and Life Satisfaction** clearly came out at the top as it was felt to be a good measure of all other things. One respondent stated *"Simply because if people feel unhappy - then it does suggest that something is wrong."*<sup>clxxxvi</sup> Again, issues of subjectivity, instability and cultural bias were also noted a number of times.

<sup>10</sup> Collated from responses to Q4a of the second panel session. If you were to choose one measure for wellbeing which one would it be?

**Self-worth and fulfilment** had the second most mentions although some respondents felt that this overlapped with happiness and life satisfaction. One response noted that *"Esteem is fundamental to so many behaviour patterns."*<sup>clxxxvii</sup>

The levels of **Social capital and community** were felt to reflect when people were confident, empowered and happy with their lives. Social measures were suggested where individual level indicators were believed to be too changeable. It was noted however that strong communities can also create barriers as well as supporting wellbeing.

**Physical health** was felt to be a good overall proxy and most readily recognisable as already being a 'wellbeing' measure. **Mental health** got the next highest number of votes due to the fact it was felt to reflect all other factors and has the potential to be more

realistic and measurable substitute for a measure of happiness and life satisfaction. It was also felt to more accurately reflect sustainability issues. *"The rise in mental health ill-being matches the rise in the economy and the unsustainability of the UK."*<sup>clxxxviii</sup>

The following justifications were given for other measures:

**Health inequalities** as an indicator was felt to reflect equity and balance in society, which were felt by many to be critical elements of sustainability.

**Housing and local environment** was another predominately social justice indicator and believed to be a pivotal given the significant numbers of people still living in poor accommodation and local environments.

**Education and skills** was chosen by one respondent on the basis that *"education is key to enabling both individuals and societies to make progress towards achieving a better and more sustainable quality of life."*<sup>clxxxix</sup> Similarly, **ethical behaviour** was also felt to be part of sustainability and would measure actual actions and behaviour as well as values.

**Insecurity, crime, and discrimination** were believed to be prerequisites for freedom to live your life and maximise wellbeing. **Political freedom** similarly was felt to underpin everything else.

**Family and work/life balance** were suggested as being a good indicator of overall balance in the economy such as the cost of housing versus salaries.

## A Set of Measures<sup>11</sup>

Respondents were happier to be limited to five indicators of wellbeing, although again this was felt to be too few in some cases. One respondent said selectivity was inconsequential as *"by using a relative weighting process we can have as many factors as we need."*<sup>cxc</sup> Others pointed out that some indicators were supportive measures for wellbeing (such as work or food) and others were actual mental state such as self-worth & fulfilment.

Respondents put forward a number of ideas and justifications including:

- ∞ Aggregate illness, mental health and work and employment, then express the figure as a percentage of the population unable to work for health reasons.
- ∞ Start with an overall happiness/life satisfaction question and then drill down with questions on specific situations such as satisfaction with work, finances, community etc.
- ∞ A suite of indicators measuring social and aspirational activities that are undertaken by individuals when things are going well and people are happy.
- ∞ Choose indicators most appropriate for Government action such as housing and local environment, work, education etc.

The responses also contained the following reservations:

- ∞ Measures should acknowledge the global context of the measure and progress should not

<sup>11</sup> Collated to responses to question 4b If you were to choose a suite of indicators to measure wellbeing which would they be? (please limit to 5 or less if possible)



- be made at the expense of those elsewhere
- ∞ Developing indicators and measuring wellbeing should not detract from action on the ground to empower people to improve their own wellbeing
- ∞ One respondent urged a rethink of the work ethic and the ability of those to achieve fulfilment in other ways.

## 5.4 Indicator format <sup>12</sup>

Respondents were asked to nominate what a compelling and robust indicator should look like. They were given three options of a single trend measure, an aggregate or composite measure and a set of measures:

### Trend Measure

A small minority of respondents (8%) chose a trend measure or a single proxy measure for wellbeing. Those that did, felt it was simpler, easier to understand and media friendly. This result was consistent with the findings earlier in the panel debate that members were unhappy with having to choose just one indicator.

### Combined/Aggregate Measure

A significant minority (32%) favoured a combined or aggregated measure assembled together from constituent parts to get a single 'figure' such as Gross Domestic Product. Many justified it as the need to make a 'snappy pitch' and communicate with the media and public. *"Option (a) is too crude and option (c) is too woolly to have impact comparable to GDP."*<sup>cxci</sup> Another respondent pointed out that complexity and lack of full understanding has not been a barrier to the widespread use of GDP.

<sup>12</sup> Collated from responses to question five of second panel session. Looking at the three options above, what measure do you think would deliver the most compelling and robust wellbeing indicator?

*"You are trying to influence people that are probably short of time and overworked, with lots of other stuff on their minds too, and who are brought up in the reductionist worldview. A snappy 'pitch' would have more effect than a long winded, well reasoned and accurate debate."*<sup>cxcii</sup>

One concluded that a combined measure would be *"robust enough to catch the public attention, but with enough meat in the details underlying that figure to generate real debate among the political classes and the commentariat."*<sup>cxiii</sup>

In terms of weighting of the components, it was felt that this needed to be carefully explained and justified with the components publicly available. Ideas included weighting to reflect each measure's potential for life enhancement. Although one respondent felt that weighting issues added complexity where it was not necessary. *"No need to get hung up on issues like weighting: everyone will know that it's rough and ready."*<sup>cxciiv</sup>

### Set of Measures

Nearly two thirds of respondents (58%) preferred the option of a set of measures. A set or suite of measures was felt to be more accurate and meaningful than the other options although many acknowledged it was also less compelling than an aggregate figure. *"Measuring progress is complex and we shouldn't misguide an intelligent public by suggesting it isn't."*<sup>cxcv</sup>

*"We've got to get away from the idea that complex concepts can be boiled down into a single number. GDP has only been widely used since the 1950s, yet we've got into the habit of expecting to see one big number that tells us everything - even if it doesn't really tell us much at all."*<sup>cx cvi</sup>

A set of measures was felt to provide an accurate and realistic assessment of progress. A set of measures would also ensure that all the indicators were heading in the correct direction rather than hide disparities in an overall figure. The analysis and understanding of the complex relationships and interdependencies between various measures and indicators is also a key part of good policy design.

### A Combined Approach

A good number of respondents made the point that in fact an aggregate measure and set of measures were not mutually exclusive. A set of measures necessarily forms the basis of any aggregate. The issue was simply a presentational one. Combining the approaches would mean that policy makers would be able to conduct detailed analysis, whilst a single figure provided the compelling headline figure.

Finally, it was also noted that all methods of analysis should be open to critical interpretation and that there was too much absolute belief in 'objectivity' and neutral measurement of things. A number of responses noted that in fact as society changes the figures needed to change over time and there should be trial and error period. *"We should avoid the temptation of trying to find some kind of "Holy Grail" measurement which is totally acceptable and agreed by all interested parties. This is likely to be a fruitless task. It would be much better to settle for something that has a high degree of initial support, introduce it, monitor its value and refine it accordingly."*<sup>cxcvii</sup>

## 6. Governments role in shaping progress<sup>13</sup>

Government has an enormous number of different roles through which it directly and indirectly influences the population and businesses. Government shapes progress by what it does, and crucially also by what it doesn't do. This was eloquently summarised by one panel respondent.

*"Government as the executive can set the policy, legislative and economic frameworks upon which we measure progress. Government as a purchaser can define the way we buy and consume products. Government as a provider of services can influence the way we interact and consume those service. Government as a national leader can encourage and incentivise (e.g. through the tax system) our behaviour. And Government as an employer can influence the way it develops and measures the productivity and success of its own staff and how it rewards those staff; which in turn will filter out to the way other employers operate in the UK."*<sup>cxcviii</sup>

### 6.1 Role of Government in Shaping Progress

#### What Role for Government

Our democratic system was felt by some members to bestow on UK Governments a legitimate mandate to intervene in lives and to change behaviour. In particular it was felt that this mandate extended to upholding the 'interests of the majority' and acting for the 'common good'.

*"Government is by definition bringing society together to allow it to act together for the common good. Whilst local and national Government can often*

<sup>13</sup> Collated responses from panel responses to session 1, Qu. 5 What role – if any – should UK Governments have in shaping progress?

*forget this core role as they drown under their own bureaucracies, they need to be reminded.”<sup>ccix</sup>*

The direction of progress needed to change in order to support sustainability and increase wellbeing. Currently most of the panel respondents felt that action to change the direction of travel was not forthcoming as *“the status quo has large vested interests and inertia on its side.”<sup>cc</sup>* Respondents felt that that Governments key role was to work to address the tension between individual self-serving, money focused aspirations and aspirations of social justice and environmental sustainability. This could either be through actively attempting to change values away from ‘profit and be damned’ mindset, or more passively acting as referees and mediators to allow people to pursue their own wellbeing whilst protecting individuals from the ravages of others’ callous self-interest. *“Governments should allow legitimate activities without restriction and red tape, at the same time as providing a safety net for the poor and vulnerable.”<sup>cci</sup>*

*“Governments also have an important regulatory role: in a nutshell, to limit the unacceptable without unduly restricting the possible. And, crucially, they have a duty to listen.”<sup>ccii</sup>*

Most respondents did stress the need for Government to take more indirect action rather than attempt anything overbearing that might impinge on individual freedoms.

*“This does not necessarily mean that the government should act as a central dictatorial body to forcibly effect change, but should be a co-ordinating and agenda setting organisation influencing the core elements of change.”<sup>cciii</sup>*

One of the least controversial functions of Government put forward by many panel respondents was the role to protect and promote public goods, and to redress market failures. It was

suggested that Government should act as the champion of social and environmental objectives (nominally public goods) whilst the market and businesses champion the economic. The rules of business and the market should only be overseen by Government and with action taken only in cases of market failure or lack of self-regulation.

### **Defining a vision of progress**

To steer a country in a direction more conducive to wellbeing and sustainability, it was felt that a key role for Governments should be form a long-term perspective about the future. Government needed to tread a fine line between representing an ideology which the populace can vote for and on which its actions measured whilst also promote a vision that reflects society, not imposes on it.

*“Through legislation Government has a central role to play in shaping progress but at the same time government is only a reflection of society as a whole. There is constant feedback between the two and it is often hard to know whether government is shaping ‘progress’ or ‘progress’ is shaping government.”<sup>cciv</sup>*

Any Government perspective should not however be defined in isolation. *“Good government is emergent. It is part of the system rather than external to it. We can only ‘shape’ from within. Building this systemic awareness and reflexive wisdom into our processes of governance is critical to progress within sustainability.”<sup>ccv</sup>* One respondent suggested that government should collate evidence about possible future directions, fully inform the public and use their information to stimulate national debate about progress.

### **Leadership and Long-term targets**

It was felt that currently governments overarching vision was geared towards the imperative of profit and wealth. To achieve this primary targets were made on inflation and GDP, with the

economy is geared towards stabilising the former and growing the latter. A different long-term vision requires changing long-term targets and long-term policy planning. More holistic targets, such as wellbeing and sustainability, would require steering the economy in a different direction. One respondent likened Governments to parents, *“If the government/parent is only interested in measuring the economic performance of the nation/child, then that is all that the nation/child will think is important.”*<sup>ccvi</sup>

Leadership towards a shared vision of progress was felt to be a moral responsibility of Government as a whole, as well as individual politicians and all public figures. It was imperative that messages about sustainability and promoting a fair and just society were consistent across time, and across Government. Using the parent analogy, ‘do as I say, not as I do’ is not a message that will cut any ice with the electorate.

*“For the vast majority of the UK population progress currently appears to mean being able to buy a larger 4 x 4, a bigger flat screen TV, and to clock up more air miles every year. The current UK government does very little to challenge this.”*<sup>ccvii</sup>

Leadership is simple when the road is an easy one, leadership is clearly far more demanding, but also more imperative, when the road is narrow and rocky. The type of progress conducive to sustainability was felt to require bold and brave decisions by Government to confront the conflicts between the way we live now and a way of life that is sustainable, a decidedly uphill and rocky road.

Some respondents felt however that instead the primary responsibility of individuals and communities was to drive towards a new vision of progress and sustainability. Governments’

responsibility was limited to setting the rules and providing the funds.

*“UK governments should work to shape progress, but in a way which is far more participative and democratic than is currently the case. There should be a real shift towards decisions being made locally, with people actually being able to influence the direction of change.”*<sup>ccviii</sup>

Although others were sceptical about the capacity of individuals to effect any change at all. *“It is impossible to “legislate for goodness” in the population - no external pressure is going to change the fundamental human condition.”*<sup>ccix</sup>

## 6.2 Barriers and other issues

Many of the respondents were optimistic and positive about what Government could achieve in steering towards a better future, others were less so...

*“We need a government which is motivated to do what is good for the people and not what it is in its own short-term interests. That requires old-fashioned vision, courage, leadership and a large dose of selflessness. I guess that rules out the whole modern national political system!”*<sup>ccx</sup>

### Electoral System

The short-termism of the UK electoral system was the key to much of the scepticism about what Governments could achieve. Electorates may support sustainable development but few would actively vote for a party promising lower economic growth. A bitter pill could only be swallowed by the electorate if there was cross-party consensus, or essentially, no choice. Devolution and proportion representation in Scotland was felt to have gone some way towards achieving this requirement. Another disagreed, believing that the recent political rivalry over environmental issues between the Conservative and Labour parties had brought the sustainability and wellbeing

issues further to the attention of the public.

A number of respondents also brought up the issue that Governments are facing a large and growing areas beyond their control such as multinational corporations and media, supra-national organisations and the dominant interests of super economies. *UK government persistently gives us the message of impotence in the face of global forces.*<sup>ccxi</sup>

However, despite the growing limitations of UK national governments, the two party competitive political system encourages Governments to over-promise about what they can influence and how quickly things can change on the ground. Politicians are setting themselves up for a fall and at the same time breeding disillusionment with the political system.

### **Silo-thinking and contradiction**

The departmental structure of Government was also to blame for the inconsistency that was felt to dog the sustainability agenda in the UK. Silo-thinking and contradicting policies between different departments had done little to persuade the public of commitment to sustainability. Key policies such as the expansion of the air transport infrastructure and Thames Gateway developments had made the rhetoric on climate change ring hollow.

Some respondents also went further to challenge the assumption of democratic mandate and legitimacy of Government in shaping progress. Politicians can attempt to educate the public and engage in a debate about our future were suggested but, with the growing distrust and disengagement of politicians and politics respectively, could anything constructive ever be achieved?

### **Reinforcing elites**

Many respondents believed the Government was too permeable to elites and special interest groups to be seriously concerned about changing the direction of progress for sustainability and the greater good. Rather they felt that Government was subject to the *"vagaries of self-serving lobby groups"*<sup>ccxii</sup> and the self-reinforcing elites of business, politics and media. The result, it was felt, had been that, *"The past 5 years have been about death and destruction - central government have waged wars, promoted nuclear and GM, all without a popular mandate."*<sup>ccxiii</sup>

Given the willingness of Government to undertake numerous unpopular policies, respondents felt the lack of conviction to promote sustainability was all the more puzzling. Governments have in the past set the pace for progress through championing universal education, the National Health Service, nationalisation and privatisation; for many members a radical rethink for sustainability seemed a distant hope

### **Bull in a China Shop?**

Other respondents were more pragmatic and felt simply that, when it comes to individual behaviour, values and aspirations for the future, Government instruments and exhortation, no matter how well-meaning, are simply too blunt an instrument to be effective. Good intentions regularly have perverse impacts. One respondent felt central governments would be most effective simply sticking to what they can control, namely law and order through regulation, legislation and 'policies with teeth.'

For wellbeing there are clearly issues with a 'big government' approach. The most wellbeing enhancing and effective behaviour change comes about when values and change are internalised. Government coercion to encourage pro-sustainability behaviours



is the least likely to effect this internalisation of values. Another respondent felt that it was over-control, made necessary by the electoral system, which stifled true progress towards sustainability. *“The problem is that politicians at all levels, in order to get re-elected, need to demonstrate how they have added to progress / change. Consequently we get micro management, target setting, fear culture, risk aversion, fear of failure, loss of innovation and creativity, loss of autonomy.”*<sup>CCXIV</sup> In contrast the respondent felt that initially in LA21 *“There were no inspections, targets, naming and shaming. Instead many people saw an opportunity to be innovative and creative, and to develop something locally distinctive.”*

### 6.3 Shaping progress: Actions for Government

Whilst some respondents kept responses theoretical, others recommended more specific ideas about what Government could do in its various roles.

#### 1. Education for Sustainable Development

Respondents often cited the potential of the curriculum to *“Shapes peoples values and aspirations”*<sup>CCXV</sup> in a way that reinforces rather than undermines sustainability. Education should not be training to become effective economic agents but instead have a more holistic objective such as wellbeing.

#### 2. Information Gatherers & Providers

It was felt that Government should use its privileged position to call upon a wide range of resources and expertise to gather information about the future, progress and sustainability. The information should then be used both to actively educate and inform the public about the issues as well as to inform policy makers.

#### 3. Fiscal Incentives and Disincentives

A number of respondents called on Government to put in place fiscal measures to facilitate positive behaviour change. This would require a shift in the tax system towards taxing environmental ‘bads’ and changes stimulating greater altruism through policies such as capital allowances for charity donations.

#### 4. Legislation and Regulation

Government needs to use legislation and regulation to remove barriers and disincentives to sustainability. One commonly cited example being higher standards in building regulations. Others suggested focusing on what was the default option; people should choose to opt-out of sustainability rather than opt-in.

#### 5. Public Goods and Infrastructure

Government is a major provider and procurer of goods and services. Respondents felt that a key role was the protection and promotion of essential services, infrastructure and non-costed public goods. The most important public good being law and order, to uphold individual freedom and empowerment to pursue their own wellbeing.

#### 6. Social Justice and Equity

Government should aim to reduce inequality (including international and intergenerational). Champion the needs of the marginalised and ensure equal opportunities for all.

#### 7. International Relations

Engage internationally to achieve sustainability and uphold the current international agreements on sustainable development. Gain international recognition and agreement on a new definition of progress. Promote sustainable development within all international activities, benchmarking and trade relationships.

## 8. Devolution & Empowerment

Devolve responsibility and empower individuals and communities to deliver wellbeing and sustainability “by providing the social and financial environment in which the ‘third sector’ - community and voluntary organisations – can operate.”<sup>ccxvi</sup>

## 9. Relationship with Private Sector

Encourage innovation and R&D for sustainability through targets, incentives and investments. Provide a challenge to the market to provide the least cost products and services to achieve objectives. One suggestion was to amend accounting rules to modify what companies do and don’t value.

One more radical view was to rationalise sectors such as energy and transport where long term objectives for sustainability are contrary to the profit motivation. For example, if there is profit in higher energy consumption, then there is no incentive to reduce it.

## 10. Employment and Work

Use the Government’s role as an employer and promoter of best practice to encourage more life-long learning and skills development for sustainability across the economy.

## 11. Radical Re-structure of Economy around ‘polluter pays’

A few respondents suggested the radical restructuring of the market economy around limited carbon allowances for businesses and individuals. People and the private sector would then decide the most effective way of complying with those limits.

# 7. Wellbeing use and implications in policy making

## Introduction<sup>14</sup>

When asked about the usefulness of the wellbeing concept, one member felt that “We need to use the idea of wellbeing not as political cotton wool but as a scalpel with which we can dissect and analyse what’s going on in our economy and society.”<sup>ccxviii</sup>

Although not all were in agreement as to whether wellbeing should be the aim, or the by product of policy. Whereas one respondent asked “Wasn’t increasing wellbeing always the goal of a government or am I naive in believing this?”<sup>ccxix</sup> Another stated “The caveat is the principle of ‘obliquity’; that some very important things are achieved not by aiming at them but by aiming at other things for which the by-product is, in this case, wellbeing.”<sup>ccxx</sup>

“Some influences on wellbeing are not directly attributable to government, e.g. people’s ability to create happy relationships. Well being is a good measure of progress but how would it result in changes in policy/activity towards increased wellbeing? Who should take note of the findings from wellbeing measures? These are interesting questions...”<sup>ccxxi</sup>

A wellbeing focus was felt to imply a shift in policy making away from reactive ‘fire fighting’ towards preventative policies; a perspective more conducive to sustainable development. Another felt that wellbeing was most useful as a communications device with the general public although under the condition that it is impossible to politically manipulate. “The danger of adopting a concept of

<sup>14</sup> Introduction collated from responses to question 4a&b of first panel debate



*this kind is that its incoherence and 'fuzziness' can be exploited by powerful actors."*<sup>ccxxii</sup>

Another felt that focusing on wellbeing offered many possibilities for Government action and accountability and that *"it signifies a wider range of possibilities and opportunities for governments to influence the way that society operates and also makes government more accountable for the results of its policies, rather than just being able to hide behind one measure of progress such as economic development."*<sup>ccxxiii</sup>

A further respondent felt it was useful to equate wellbeing with security, Government *"does have a central responsibility for national security which, in itself, depends on the long-term establishment of a broad sense of wellbeing amongst the people."*<sup>ccxxiv</sup>

The perhaps most contentious suggestions were that government should encourage, or even engineer, a huge cultural shift through communication and re-education. An enormous effort was required by government to embed 'wellbeing' as a valid concept within the public and the private sector as well as within markets and businesses. Another quoted Robert Axelrod's theories on cooperation looking at ways *"society can be persuaded to give up the self-interested pursuit of consumption in order to deliver intergenerational equity."*<sup>ccxxv</sup>

Others felt that a wellbeing focus implied a passive role for government in creating opportunities and structures for wellbeing. There was concern that governments are unable to make judgements about individual and necessarily subjective wellbeing. *"The danger is, who is the state to tell someone that they are happier because society is healthier, more financially secure, better educated and cleaner."*

## 7.1 Role of Government in fostering wellbeing<sup>15</sup>

*"We can no longer allow economic growth and market forces to shape our development as nations and societies without any kind of check or restraint. Given this, governments have to show leadership in re-calibrating the arguments - and popular opinion - around what constitutes prosperity, progress and wellbeing."*<sup>ccxxvi</sup>

### Central Role

Many felt that wellbeing should in fact be Government's main purpose and active responsibility. *"If this is a democratic state it is hard to see what purpose a government has other than creating the greatest happiness for the population."*<sup>ccxxvii</sup>

*"Government therefore has the legitimacy (e.g. via election), the resources (e.g. via public spending) and the capacity (e.g. via regulation) to deliver a well-being society."*<sup>ccxxviii</sup>

*"Government should occupy a central role in fostering the wellbeing of the nation. The alternative is to let loose the powerful and the privileged to determine what constitutes their own wellbeing, which will inevitably be at the expense of others."*<sup>ccxxix</sup> Although this assumes that government itself does not embody power and privilege.

Most of the respondents felt that the word 'fostering' accurately represented the capacity of Governments role in the wellbeing of the nation. *"Whilst governments can't legislate and regulate for 'happiness' per se, they can prioritise policies, strategies and systems that move towards a more holistic goal and thereby facilitate well-being and happiness."*<sup>ccxxx</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Collated responses from panel responses to session 1, Qu. 6 What role – if any – should UK Governments have in fostering wellbeing?

A number also felt Government should be setting wellbeing as an objective for policy and *"securing a definition of wellbeing & measuring it, in assessing policies for impact on wellbeing and ensuring cross departmental policy integration to maximise benefits."*<sup>ccxxxix</sup>

Given the topic and the expertise of the panel it was unsurprising that most saw an intimate link between sustainable development and wellbeing, predominately with greater wellbeing achieved through a process of sustainable development. A number of respondents used the two terms interchangeably.

### **Indirect Responsibility**

Most of the respondents did however see only an indirect role for Government in individual wellbeing. *"A government's job is to create the regulatory framework in which its citizens are free to thrive and cushioned when they fail."*

The predominate reason for respondents not seeing a direct role for Government in wellbeing was due to the scepticism that politicians or civil servants are competent to decide for individuals what would most improve their wellbeing.

*"Take a look at the average government minister. They work long and unsocial hours. Their family lives are characterised by snatched moments of companionship amid schedules dictated by the demands of the job. They jockey for position, they backstab, they spin and they feud. Of all occupations, that of a government minister must be one of the most miserable. Do we really want to entrust our wellbeing to these people?"*<sup>ccxxxii</sup>

Instead respondents saw the wellbeing agenda as individuals and communities being given control over the important decisions of their lives and in determining the best way to improve their own wellbeing. This implies the end of centrally controlled decision-

making and a role for Government in fostering the climate and resources for wellbeing to flourish.

As one respondent summarised *"If wellbeing is a useful concept in moving away from economic indicators of progress, then fine. But there is a danger in government pursuing wellbeing/happiness as a primary objective. I'm not sure that politicians/the infrastructure of government is particularly good at making people happy by design."*<sup>ccxxxiii</sup>

### **Uncontroversial actions**

In terms of active policies to promote wellbeing many respondents felt that Government should only attempt uncontroversial policies on wellbeing. Government should be *"implementing (via legislation and regulation) those rules for social interaction which have wide social consent."*<sup>ccxxxiv</sup>

*"As discussed in the wellbeing sections, the term wellbeing is complex and includes many aspects of life. Some of these aspects are measurable and quite stable and objective (e.g. health, discrimination) while the other are completely dynamic and subjective (e.g. self fulfilment, happiness). Governments can and should help promote the objective elements, but it cannot – and maybe even, should not – intervene in regards to the subjective ones."*<sup>ccxxxv</sup>

A number also were clear about penalties and coercion being the last resort rather than the default option. Government should achieve change through *"positive reinforcement rather than negative law enforcement (where possible). By developing policies such as increased access to cheaper public transport - the carrot has to come with or before the stick."*<sup>ccxxxvi</sup>

One respondent equated wellbeing with security, as a public good with wide consensus about a significant role of the state. Part of that role certainly entails

protecting individuals from negative actions of others, namely internalising negative externalities or making the polluter pay. Issues such as pollution, waste and smoking are relatively straight forward. Controversies arise when the impacts are more indirect. Obesity is one example with huge, but indirect, impacts on the health service and public spending.

Although one member was prompted to ask *“Why is it that when govt fosters economic growth, it is seen as not only legitimate but indeed its first duty, and that if it did not so promote economic growth it would be deemed illegitimate and/or ineffective, and when it might foster well-being, it’s accused of being authoritarian?”*<sup>ccxxxvii</sup>

## 7.2 Barriers and issues

### A Nanny State?

There is clearly a fine line between interference and security that politicians have to judge on a daily basis. *“Interference at a micro level frequently fosters resentment.”*<sup>ccxxxviii</sup> This issue is magnified in the case of wellbeing.

Controversially, other respondents disagreed *“Fixing things that are obviously nasty is mostly uncontentious. However, some of the nastiest things are badly brought up children deprived of good guidance and affection. I favour the Swedish model of heavy intervention to ensure that we do not produce unpleasant people; and a significant reduction in parents’ rights to produce more thugs.”*<sup>ccxxxix</sup>

A number of respondents questioned the legitimacy of Government’s role in wellbeing. This was not simply because they felt there was not a role for Government to some extent as a ‘nanny state’, but more often because there was little trust that that politicians would act on anything other than its own interests. *“The idea of government’s trying to make people happier directly*

*strikes me as ominous and susceptible to political manipulation.”*<sup>ccxl</sup> Voters were portrayed as cynical and disenfranchised. The conclusion being that much higher levels of trust need to be in place before policies on wellbeing would be taken seriously.

Another respondent raised a point about the desirability of measurement, given its implications for control. The *“danger with measuring things is the desire to start to manipulate them and control them, i.e. can we measure the sum of human creativity, culture, joy, knowledge, connections etc without spoiling them?”*<sup>ccxli</sup>

Another respondent raised the issue of how much it would cost to foster wellbeing as opposed to a more indirect role. *“Government cannot foster well-being, it can only educate, inform and facilitate others to make their own wellbeing. This is inevitably more expensive than propping people and the economy up which means that either taxes will have to rise to fund proactive activity or people will be penalised for the bad choices they make.”*<sup>ccxlii</sup>

### Local and community

Central Government was generally not seen as a suitable delivery body for wellbeing. Other levels of government, from UK nations down to parish councils were cited more appropriate levels for action. However, government policy at any level was felt in some cases to be too blunt an instrument to deal with individual happiness and wellbeing directly without imposing on individual liberty. Many thought that individuals themselves or organisations working directly with people, such as teachers, doctors and employers were far better placed to make a genuine and positive difference.

*“This all sounds like ‘bread and circuses’ to me. Do public displays, parades, etc, make people happy? Probably. So why not have a minister for wellbeing?”*

*[someone] Who would organise picnics and parades. Nice!*<sup>ccxliii</sup>

The UK political system itself was also seen as an issue. It was felt that the UK style of oppositional politics was more conducive to highlighting problems rather than developing good solutions. *"Democracy itself should contribute to wellbeing, so a political system that is more honest and focussed on sustainable solutions and less about party political one-upmanship and tokenism would engender much greater social wellbeing."*<sup>ccxliiv</sup>

### Subjectivity of Wellbeing

The issue of subjectivity of wellbeing was raised a large number of times throughout the responses, as was the differences and conflicts between short-term transitory happiness and the longer-term satisfaction through rewarding work and strong relationships. The further question is whether there would ever be a suitable policy response. *"The problem often is that ill-being is apparent but the cause of ill-being is not. For instance mental ill-health is known to be less in times of full scale war. What is the policy implication?"*<sup>ccxlv</sup>

*"I would reserve judgement until it becomes clearer that 'wellbeing' can be formulated as a coherent and well-grounded concept that can be: (a) operationalised in policy terms; and (b) gain widespread acceptance within society."*<sup>ccxlvi</sup>

Subjectivity was the key issue in the much cited conflicting agendas of different government departments. Many things, including GDP, can be said to contribute to wellbeing. As a result, respondents felt that wellbeing policy will always be piecemeal with departments picking and choosing those aspects most convenient to their existing agendas. The more positive interpretation is that wellbeing policy needs to be better coordinated and

concentrated in areas where cross-departmental objectives can be made mutually supportive.

### Diversion from More Important Issues

Although some felt that sustainable development and wellbeing were linked, others felt that the wellbeing agenda was a diversion away from the key issues facing sustainable development, namely climate change and population crisis. Many were keen to stress that wellbeing needs to be "meaningful and connected" to wider environmental and economic objectives.

One member pointed out the wellbeing link with individual productivity implying that the agenda is of relevance to the pursuit of economic growth. The opposite position, that economic growth aids the achievement of wellbeing, is also true.

## 7.3 Specific actions for Government

A lot of the responses mirrored the point of view that in order to improve wellbeing, society should move away from seeing people as consumers and economic agents towards producing people as citizens with a more holistic perspective of life and worth. Government can either, actively or passively, work to promote this change:

### 1. Indicator and measurement

There were a number of respondents that mentioned the development of a wellbeing indicator that better reflects people's aspirations. Valuing and measuring what matters should start of shift perspectives in a more sustainable direction.

### 2. Law and order

*"Preventing individuals and organisations from undertaking activities which reduce or damage the wellbeing of others"*<sup>ccxlvii</sup>. Providing guidelines for citizenship, encouraging mutual support

and social cohesion on the one hand and actively preventing anti-social behaviour and regulating damaging private interests on the other.

### 3. Social justice and equality

With the declining marginal returns from income and negative externalities from wealth, Government should orientate the welfare, investment and tax system towards a more effective redistribution of wealth. Greater equality should reduce modern society's consumption imperative. The objective being to remove poverty, and to ensure equal access to basic needs and opportunities.

Some suggestions included; improve public transport and mobility for excluded groups; improving the experience of the elderly (with mobility, stronger community involvement and access to basic needs); provide a properly funded and responsive health service with more focus on preventative healthcare such as regulation of illegal drugs & junk food advertising; better communities and access to green space to promote healthy living. Encourage, through fiscal incentives and other means, greater volunteering and participation in wider civil society; provide safer, warmer and more affordable housing.

### 4. Communication and information

Provision of information on wellbeing and sustainable development in order to empower people to make informed decisions about lifestyles and consumption. This should include labelling on products and free access to independent comparison of goods and various strategies for dissemination of relevant information.

From a more extreme viewpoint, one respondent suggested that Governments role required them to *"Accept that progress will meet with economic decline and prepare the nation for this and inevitable consequences."*<sup>ccxlviii</sup>

### 5. Devolved, local and community decision making

Devolve relevant decision-making, funding and implementation of wellbeing and sustainability policy to local and community level. To promote and foster stronger communities and civil society. *"It is the job of politicians to be visionary on behalf of the electorate. To a certain extent, devolution has created opportunities for leaders to interpret and realise the visions of their communities. It could be argued that this has enhanced wellbeing through a positive sense of collective identity and self-realisation."*<sup>ccxlix</sup>

### 6. Family/relationship friendly

Most respondents felt that strong relationships universally improved wellbeing and that sustainable lifestyles requires people to have time to reorder priorities. Government therefore needed to *"provide social support, regulate labour laws so as to reduce working hours and promote more family friendly policies."*<sup>cd</sup> Policies included the ease of divorce and Sunday trading as well as the working culture of parliament itself.

### 7. Educating the next generation

The values and experiences of the next generation will determine how society develops. Education and the curriculum is a key facet of this. Government should *"begin setting the scene for a society that more explicitly values ideas such as well-being. Educational policies have a major part to play in this process."*<sup>ccli</sup> The emphasis should be on intra and inter-personal skills *"promoting mental health, self care and self esteem from an early age."*<sup>cclii</sup>

### 8. Advertising and expectations

To curb unsustainable levels of consumption the Government should look to check the culture of unfettered materialism in the same way as anti-social behaviour or inciting religious hatred. One method could be restricting the advertising of consumer products to children. Other ideas included



diversification of media funding sources away from advertising, such as the licence fee for the BBC. Government should also aim to reduce level of personal debt. This would involve controlling the actions of lenders and potentially using interest rates to discourage spending and encourage saving.

One respondent suggested policies to restrict the development of new unsustainable products.

## **9. Freedom of choice/ Restriction of choice**

The issue of choice was also controversial. Many respondents differed on the question of whether or not sustainability and wellbeing were necessarily mutually reinforcing. In order to fully internalise behaviour changes and maximise the positive impacts for sustainability and wellbeing, it was understood that behaviours should be conscious and contemplative. One member said *"I want the right choices to be easy and the bad choices to be hard."*<sup>ccliii</sup> However, others stressed individual responsibility and self reliance, to *"contribute to people's feelings of control in decisions affecting their lives."*<sup>ccliv</sup>

## **10. Work & Skills**

There were a number of mentions of the public sector's huge role as an employer, with responsibility to actively foster the wellbeing of their employees and encourage best practice in other businesses. *"UK governments have the potential to act as exemplars through their own institutions and mode of governance."*<sup>cclv</sup> Life-long learning and skills development was also a key facet of this.

## **11. Direction of Businesses**

Government have many direct and indirect influences on business strategy in the UK. For example through health and safety regulation and the minimum wage. Rather than to go down the road of further outsourcing and labour-saving mechanization, one respondent suggested a full tax shift and by removing all tax on employment and labour to end unemployment.



## Appendices

### Appendix i - Questions for SD Panel - Session 1

#### Exploring your views

#### Debate stage 1: September - October 2006: Redefining progress

The SDC's work is addressing the thorny issue of UK's ability to reconcile economic growth with sustainable development – a strong, healthy and just society living within environmental limits. The following six questions ask you to explore some key questions that will help us formulate recommendations to UK governments on redefining and measuring progress.

#### **QUESTION 1 - *What should progress mean?***

##### **Preamble**

Before we can consider how to measure progress, we first need to define what it means to us. What would demonstrate to you that the nation is getting better or progressing? And to what extent would this differ if you consider it from a global perspective?

##### **Background**

Mainstream political thinking still understands Government progress and achievement in more or less conventional terms of ever-increasing economic output. The SDC has adopted a forward thinking position in these debates about what progress is and how it can be delivered, but there is still a long way to go before a meaningful vision of progress, past economic growth, can inform politicians and steer us towards sustainable development. The challenge of an economy based on continued consumption growth remains a big quandary for sustainable development and will be the subject of a publication from the SDC in summer 2007.

#### **QUESTION 2 - *What do you think about the use of economic growth as a measure of national progress?***

##### **Preamble**

GDP is the sum of all final goods and services produced over a year.<sup>16</sup> As a result the measure does not include non-paid work or free 'public goods' like environmental goods (for example clean air or soil). Despite limitations in its measurement, national governments often emphasise economic growth when demonstrating their success to the general public. Economic growth features strongly in the first few lines in seven out the nine of the UK budget announcements since 1997.

##### **Background**

In starting to question the dominant status of economic growth, there is also a need to acknowledge and explore the inevitable tensions that arise from the fact that the modern global economy is essentially built around the continuous growth of consumption. Economic growth generates economic stability, and economic stability appears to be a pre-requisite for the pursuit of wellbeing and environmental and social goals. If we

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<sup>16</sup> GDP measures the size of the UK economy. The figure is calculated using monetary transactions only and is the sum of all final goods and services produced over a year. Economic growth or more specifically GDP growth is the rate at which that figure is expanding annually.

instead choose to abandon the 'GDP growth at all costs' approach, for an economic system more supportive of sustainable development, the result might be a contraction of the economy or recession.

### QUESTION 3 - What other measure(s) of progress would you like to see emphasised within UK governments?

#### Preamble

There is general recognition of the limitations of GDP as a measure of everything that happens in the nation and the world. Governments already measure a large number of other variables and trends as a complement to economic growth data, including ill health, education, crime etc.

#### Background

The UK Sustainable Development Framework identified 20 indicators that reflect the UK wide priorities. These are listed below. The last three indicators, including the wellbeing indicator are in development.

Indicator		Change since		Direction in
		1990	1999	latest year
1. Greenhouse gas emissions:		✓	≈	✗
13. Resource use:		✓	≈	≈
18. Waste:		***	≈	≈
	Farmland	✗	≈	≈
20. Bird populations:	Woodland	≈	≈	≈
	Coastal	✓	✓	≈
27. Fish stocks:		***	✓	✓
28. Ecological impacts of air pollution:	Acidity	***	✓	✓
	Nitrogen	***	✗	✗
30. River quality:	Biological	✓	≈	✓
	Chemical	✓	≈	✗
32. Economic output:		✓	✓	✓
37. Active community participation:		***	✓ <sub>2001</sub>	✓
38. Crime:	Vehicles & burglary	✓	✓	✓
	Robbery	✗	✗	✓
40. Employment:		≈	✓	≈
41. Workless households:		✓ <sub>1992</sub>	✓	≈
43. Childhood poverty:		✓	✓	≈
45. Pensioner poverty:		✓	✓	✓
47. Education:		✓	✓	✗
49. Health inequality:	Infant mortality	✗ <sub>1994</sub>	✗	✗
	Life expectancy	✗ <sub>1991</sub>	≈	✗
55. Mobility:	Walking/cycling	✗	✗	✗
	Public transport	✗	≈	≈
59. Social justice:		***	***	***
60. Environmental equality:		***	***	***
68. Wellbeing:		***	***	***

#### QUESTION 4a

*To what extent is the concept of 'wellbeing' a useful way of thinking about progress?*

#### QUESTION 4b

*Do you think 'wellbeing' is a useful measure of progress?*

##### Preamble

Research has shown that after a certain level of income, more money does not tend to make people happier or more satisfied with life. Wellbeing is a concept that tries to explain this paradox by looking at the welfare of the nation beyond purely economic or monetary terms. Contributors to wellbeing include relationships, work, health, community, equality, freedom and values.

##### Background

The SDC has argued that GDP growth is an unsatisfactory measure of progress but it has also been suggested that an economy based on relentless consumption growth actually undermines wellbeing. There are several arguments that try to explain this:

- ∞ **Environmental degradation** - A continually expanding economy implies further exploitation of an already degraded natural environment. Even with 4/5ths of the world living in relative poverty, worsening environmental conditions (for example climate change) are already threatening the wellbeing of future generations
- ∞ **Human nature** - The pursuit of materialism beyond our basic needs for survival and security damages us psychologically and socially. The 'more and better, year after year' attitude that underlies consumption growth, entrenches people in an unsatisfying treadmill of competition, disrupts our work-life balance and distracts us from all those things that offer meaning to our lives. Human nature itself therefore offsets the positive outcomes of income growth
- ∞ **The structure of modern society** - The type of modern society that results from economic growth unavoidably damages some of the key conditions on which research tells us wellbeing depends (family, friendship, community, trust etc.).

#### QUESTION 5 - *What role, if any, should UK governments have in shaping progress?*

##### Preamble

Governments are not directly responsible for economic growth or the health of the nation. However UK governments are responsible for the setting the 'playing field' in which we live, consume, and work.

##### Background

The sustainable development principle in One Future Different Paths defines sustainable development as a strong, healthy and just society living within environmental limits. This vision is underpinned by a sustainable economy, good governance and sound science.

#### QUESTION 6 - *What role, if any, should UK governments have in fostering wellbeing?*

##### Preamble

Press and public reaction to and Government exploration of the concepts of wellbeing, happiness and life satisfaction invariably feature concerns about the role of the state and what is a legitimate aim for policy makers. UK governments are however already measuring many 'wellbeing' issues and have policies in place to tackle those that are most damaging including physical and mental ill-health, inequality and social exclusion.



## Background

As part of their Happiness Formula programmes the BBC conducted an online poll to assess the nation's happiness. Key findings of the poll included that 'Britain is less happy than in the 1950s - despite the fact that we are three times richer. The proportion of people saying they are "very happy" has fallen from 52% in 1957 to just 36% today.' Furthermore the poll asked "whether the government's prime objective should be the "greatest happiness" or the "greatest wealth". A remarkable 81% wanted happiness as the goal. Only 13% wanted greatest wealth.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> BBC website: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/happiness\\_formula/4771908.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/happiness_formula/4771908.stm). Accessed 27th July 2006

## Appendix ii - Questions for the SD Panel – session 2

### **QUESTION 1 - *What would you like to challenge or add to the broad conclusions we have drawn from session 1 below?***

The SDC have drawn the following broad conclusions from the panel responses to the first round of questions.

- ∞ Economic growth has significant shortcomings as a measure of progress, predominantly as it does not differentiate between good and bad growth. It does however have some useful, primarily pragmatic, characteristics
- ∞ Progress should be measured with a suite of indicators that reflects all three pillars of sustainability
- ∞ Wellbeing is a potentially useful measure of progress that refocuses perspectives away from growth towards more meaningful aspirations and sustainability
- ∞ Wellbeing is culturally determined and subjective. If it is to be a useful indicator of progress, there first needs to be agreement on the definition and measurement
- ∞ Central governments have a fundamental role in fostering wellbeing and shaping progress through leadership and setting supportive regulatory and legislative frameworks
- ∞ Policies to foster wellbeing should be managed at the level closest to those affected. This implies that the primary delivery bodies should be devolved governments, regional bodies, local authorities and sub-local or community institutions
- ∞ A number of disagreements between respondents also emerged from our analysis. For example:
  - pragmatic respondents generally advised incremental changes, whereas idealists looked for a fundamental reassessment of progress and politics
  - the role of governments and the level of ‘nanny statism’ and the implications for wellbeing
  - the hierarchy of needs. Is wellbeing a debate with any relevance to the majority of the world that still lack basic needs of clean water, shelter and food?

### **QUESTION 2 - *Which is more appropriate for governments to try to measure; ill-being or wellbeing?***

#### **Preamble:**

The Government is developing a wellbeing indicator as part of the SD framework indicator set.<sup>18</sup> We would like to build on the first round of the panel debate to refine the panel’s guidance on measuring wellbeing and practicalities of developing a wellbeing indicator.

From the first round of the panel debate, it was clear that different respondents approached wellbeing issues from different perspectives. Some respondents suggested the focus should be on measuring positive aspects of wellbeing such as life satisfaction, psychological health or strength of relationships. Others suggested the focus should be on measuring ill-being such as incidents of mental illness, obesity and divorce rates.

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<sup>18</sup> As committed in the 2005 UK Sustainable Development Strategy, *Securing the Future*

**QUESTION 3. *How supportive would you be of governments using subjective (self-reported) measure(s) of wellbeing?***

*Please answer by indicating one of the below giving your reasons*

1. *Very supportive*
2. *quite supportive*
3. *don't know*
4. *not that supportive*
5. *not at all supportive*

***What advice would you give to make this measure as useful as possible?***

**Preamble:**

Many respondents mentioned wellbeing indicators based on 'subjective evaluations'. These could be evaluations of people's mental state (e.g. happiness, life satisfaction, self worth and fulfilment) or people's lives more generally (e.g. fulfilling work, cultural activities, freedom and work-life balance.)

If a wellbeing indicator was to be, or to include, subjective measures such as these, then it raises a number of issues around comparability (is one person's understanding of their own wellbeing directly comparable to that of others?) and tradeoffs between individuals and tradeoffs over-time (e.g. my wellbeing now versus the wellbeing of future generations)

**QUESTION 4a - *If you were to choose one measure for wellbeing below which one would it be?***

**QUESTION 4b - *If you were to choose a suite of indicators to measure wellbeing which would they be? (please limit to 5 or less if possible)***

**Preamble:**

As outlined in the broad conclusions from the first panel debate, most respondents felt that wellbeing could be a useful measure of progress. They also felt that wellbeing was culturally determined and raised concerns about definition and measurement. Below is a list of indicator areas for wellbeing taken from the first round of debate.

Please note that the list of measures below have been chosen to reinforce rather than replicate existing Government indicators such as the SD indicators. As a result, we have not included any purely 'environmental' indicators such as biodiversity or greenhouses gases.

**Twenty possible wellbeing indicator areas**

**Health & wellbeing**

1. **Physical health (illness)** - levels of disease and illness, including obesity & self reported illness
2. **Health inequalities** - measures of health inequalities between social groups or geographical areas
3. **Physical health (wellness)** - healthy life expectancy, fitness and physical activity
4. **Mental health** - incidents of mental health problems, levels of stress and depression
5. **Food and Diet** - access to healthy food and diet

## Social wellbeing

6. **Housing and local environment** – quality of local environment, green space and affordable housing
7. **Local services** – access to good local services and basic needs, including public transport & mobility
8. **Inequity, poverty & social exclusion** – income disparities and levels of homelessness
9. **Social capital & community** – trust and indicators of the strength and attitudes of community
10. **Voluntary, cultural & spiritual activity** – volunteering and participation in cultural and spiritual activities

## Individual wellbeing

11. **Worklessness** – rates of under-employment or unemployment including incapacity benefits
12. **Family and work/life balance** – time spend on leisure activities and with family and friends
13. **Divorce rates and domestic violence** – measures of family breakdown
14. **Self worth & fulfilment** – self-reported measures of self-worth and fulfilment
15. **Ethical behaviour** – levels of ethical consumption and behaviour
16. **Happiness/Life Satisfaction** – subjective measure of happiness and how satisfied we feel about our lives
17. **Work and employment** – levels of employment and fulfilling work

## Governance

18. **Political freedom** – democracy, freedom, voter turnout and participation
19. **Insecurity, crime & discrimination** – levels of crime and fear of crime, antisocial behaviour, discrimination and intolerance
20. **Education & skills** – adult and children learning and skills, including literacy

### **QUESTION 5 - Looking at the three options below, what measure do you think would deliver the most compelling and robust wellbeing indicator?**

We want to make our recommendation to governments as compelling as possible. There are a number ways that the wellbeing indicator could potentially be calculated; It could be presented as a:

- a) **Trend measure** - a single proxy measure for wellbeing. This could be either subjective or objective (e.g. life satisfaction or life expectancy)
- b) **Combined measure** - a combined indicator assembled together from its constituent parts to get a single 'figure' (like Gross Domestic Product)
- c) **Set of measures** - a set of separate measures (which can be trend or total measures) such as the twenty Sustainable Development framework indicators

There was a tendency in the first round of debate for respondents to suggest that an indicator for wellbeing should be composed out of more than one measure (for example a combination of equality, happiness and fulfilling work). However any of the above options raise further questions. How do you weight the relative importance of each indicator (e.g. is life expectancy more important than equality)? How do you account for

trade-offs between the indicators (e.g. does longer healthy life expectancy increase carbon emissions)?

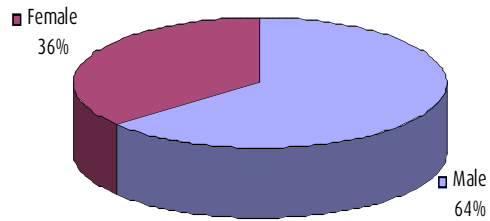


## Appendix iii - Panel Participants - Redefining Progress

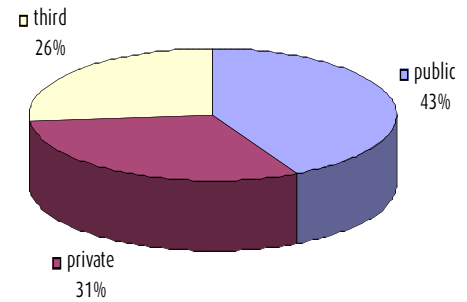
### Session 1

Number of participants: 317

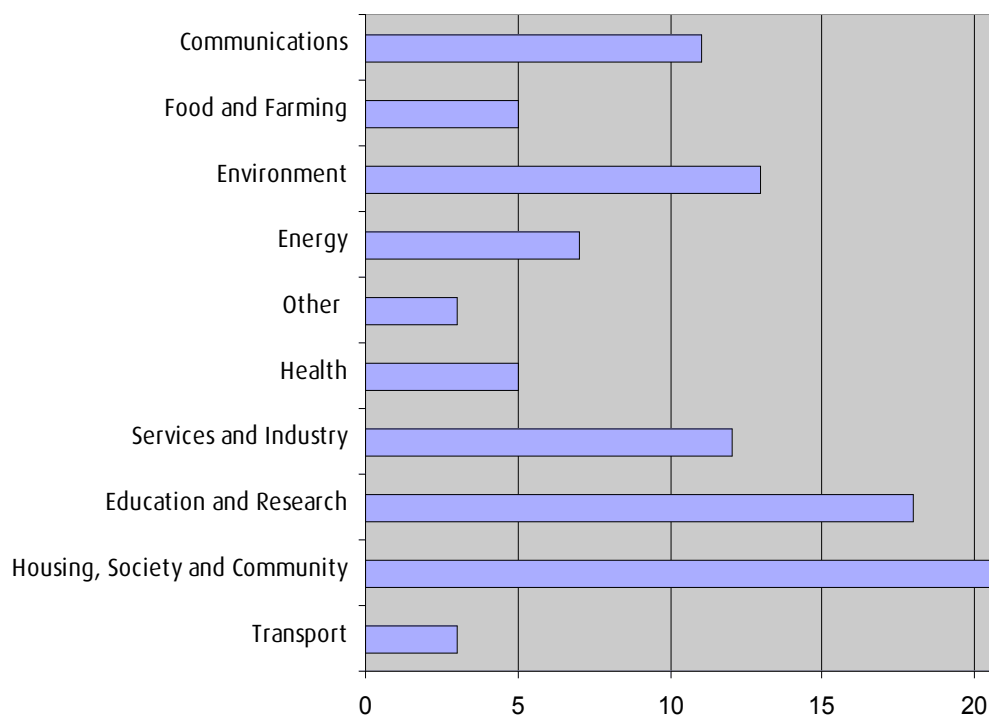
#### Gender %



#### Main Sector %



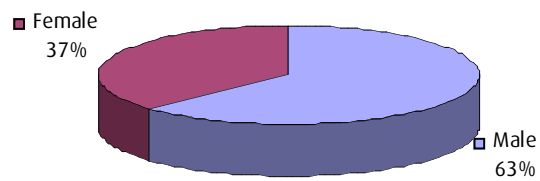
#### Main Interest %



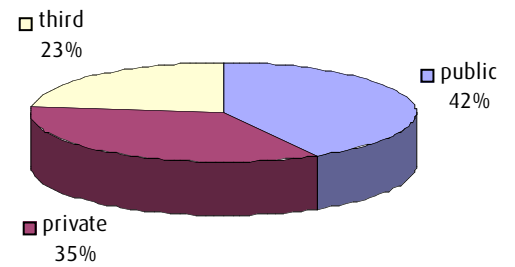
## Session 2

Number of participants: 130

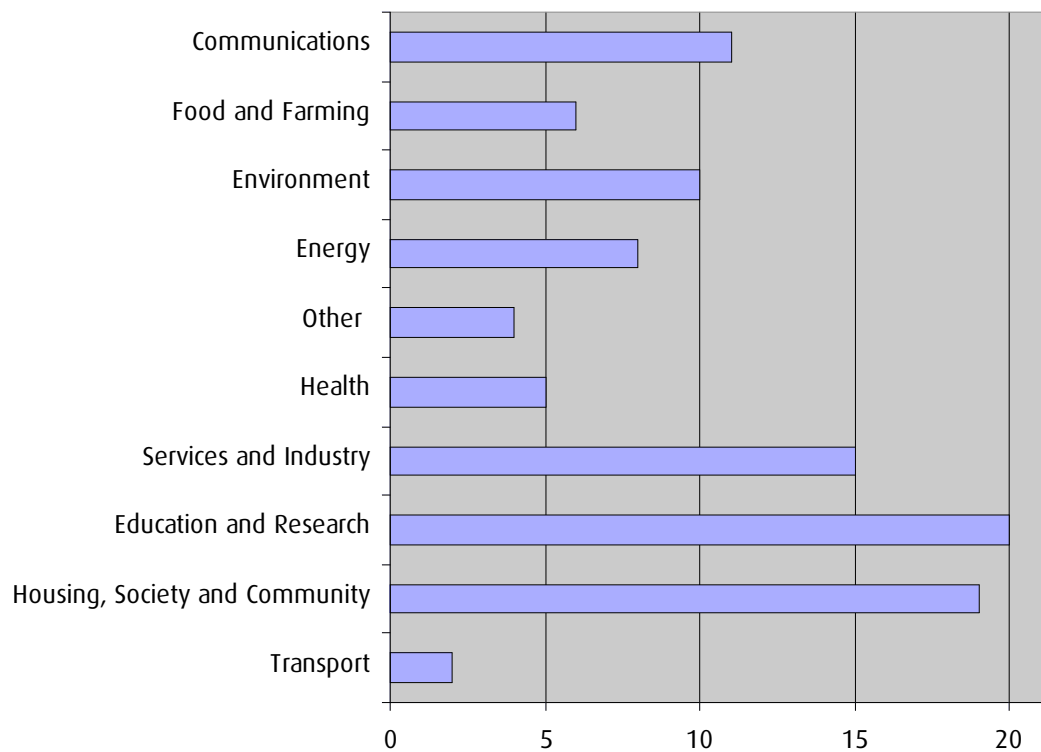
### Gender %



### Main Sector %



### Main Interest %



List of participants from all sessions: (alphabetical order)

<u>Title</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Surname</u>
Mrs	Kate	Abendstern	Mr	Philip	Igoe
Mrs	Claire	Adam	Mr	Jeremy	Iles
Ms	Helen	Adams	Dr	Jane	Ince
Mr	John	Adams		Antonia	Ineson
Mr	Ben	Agbasi	Mr	Philip	Insall
Ms	Anita	Aggarwal	Miss	Meabh	Ivers
Dr	Kemal	Ahson	Mr	Elwyn	James
Mr	Mik	Alban	Mr	Andrew	Jeffrey
Ms	Diane	Alderdice	Mr	Adrian	Jevans
Dr	Gary	Alexander	Dr	Edward	Jones
Mr	Peter	Allen	Mr	Peter	Jones
Mr	David	Allwood	Dr	Kathryn	Jones
Mr	David	Amos	Ms	Sarah	Joyce
Mrs	Deborah	Andrew	Mr	Joe	Kelly
Mr	Doug	Anthoney	Mrs	Irene	Kempton
Ms	Philippa	Ardlie	Mr	Dom	Kihara-Hunt
Mr	Mark	Armitage	Ms	Nancy	Kirkland
Mr	Richard	Askew	Mrs	Louise	Kiteley
Professor	Sue	Atkinson	Mr	Gunther	Kostyra
Mr	Andrew	Attfield	Ms	Rutuja	Kulkarni
Mr	Alex	Badley	Mrs	Debbie	Laubach
Dr	Richard	Baines	Miss	Joanne	Lavender
Mr	Chas	Ball	Mr	Gordon	Leathers
Mrs	Michelle	Barkley	Mr	Barry	Leathwood
Mr	Stuart	Barlow	Dr	Simon	Lenton
Prof	Peter	Barrett	Mr	Roger	Levett
Dr	John	Barry	Mr	Rodger	Lightbody
Mr	Malcolm	Barton	Dr	Hermione	Lovel
Mr	Paul	Baruya	Revd	Donald	Macdonald
Ms	Jade	Bashford	Ms	Alex	Machin
Ms	Kate	Beckmann	Mr	Duncan	Mackenzie
Mr	Matthew	Bell	Mr	David	Maddox
Ms	Sarah	Benjamins	Mr	Paul	Malpass
Mr	Rory	Bergin	Dr	Greg	Masden
Mr	Erik	Bichard	Mr	Pierre	Masson
Mr	Angus	Biggerstaff	Mr	Gordon	Masterton
Ms	Dee	Bingham	Mr	Martin	Mathers
Ms	Lucy-Anne	Bishop	Ms	Esther	Maughan McLachlan
Mr	Stewart	Blain	Ms	Catherine	Max
Dr	John	Blewitt	Dr	Larch	Maxey
Dr	Richard	Blundel	Mr	Jude	Maxwell
Mr	David	Boardman	Mr	Brendan	May
Mr	Derek	Boden	Mr	Robin	Maynard
Ms	Liz	Bogie	Ms	Kathrine	Mcaleenan
Mr	Paul	Bollum	Ms	Frances	McCandless
Revd	Andii	Bowsher	Mr	Peter	McDonald
Prof	David	Bradley	Mr	Archie	McIntosh
Ms	Manda	Brookman	Dr	Malcolm	Mcintosh
Mrs	Pat	Broster	Mr	Michael	McKinley
Mr	Alan	Brown	Mr	Alastair	Mcmahon
Mr	Nick	Brown	Dr	Fiona	Mcphie
Mr	Philip	Brown	Mr	Simon	Michaels
Mr	Russell	Buckley	Mr	David	Middleton

Mr	Alexander	Buehl	Dr	Ian	Moffat
Mr	Toby	Burnham	Ms	Alice	Moncaster
Mr	Jonathan	Burns	Mrs	Gayle	Monk
Mr	Richard	Burrett	Ms	Julie	Moore
Mr	Christopher	Burton	Mr	Peter	Morgan
Mr	Keith	Calder	Ms	Jane	Morris
Mr	Jon	Cape	Mr	Wolfgang	Muller
Dr	Philip	Catney	Mr	Ben	Murray
Ms	Lynne	Ceeney	Dr	Nick	Murry
Mr	Mansel	Chamberlain	Dr	Peter	Musgrove
Cllr	Maureen	Child	Mr	David	Muspratt
Mr	Danny	Chivers	Mr	Ross	Mypal
Prof	Sue	Christie	Mr	Richard	Nash
Dr	Rebecca	Clark	Ms	Jill	Nelson
Mr	Sam	Clarke	Mr	Maurice	Neville
Mr	Hugh	Clear Hill	Mr	Nick	Nielsen
Mr	Alasdair	Colquhoun	Dr	Jutta	Nikel
Dr	Keith	Colquhoun	Mr	Robert	Noble
Mr	Steve	Connor	Mr	Paul	Nolan
Mr	Mark	Cook	Mr	Alan	Norchi
Mr	Carey	Coombs	Mr	Clive	Notley
Miss	Ellie	Cooper	Mr	Dennis	O'Leary
Mrs	Jayne	Cornelius	Mr	Hugh	Oliver-Bellasis ESQ FRAGS
Mr	Ward	Crawford	Mr	Giuseppe	Ottavianelli
Dr	Vic	Crisp	Ms	Ece	Ozdemiroglu
Mr	Thurstan	Crockett	Mr	John	Palmer
Ms	Liz	Crosbie	Mr	Michael	Palmer
Mrs	Claire	Crothers	Dr	Yael	Parag
Professor	James	Curran	Miss	Sally	Pattison
Dr	Donald	Curtis	Mr	Philip	Pearson
Mr	Ronald	Dane	Mr	Frank	Pearson
Mr	Geoff	Davis	Mr	Matt	Phillips
Mrs	Geraldine	Delaney	Mr	Greg	Pilley
Mr	John	Dembovskis	Mrs	Helen	Pitel
Mr	William	Denton	Miss	Kate	Povey
Dr	Martin	Desvaux	Dr	Julieanna	Powell-Turner
Mr	Paul	Di Mambro	Mr	Archie	Prentice
Ms	Naomi	Diamond	Mr	Matt	Prescott
Mr	Fred	Dinning	Mr	Robert	Pringle
Mr	Andrew	Dixey	Miss	Jolanda	Putri
Mrs	Kim	Dixon	Mr	Simon	Radclyffe
Mr	Dominic	Doble	Mr	Graham	Randles
Mr	Julian	Dobson	Dr	John	Rawles
Mr	John	Doggart	Mr	Bruno	Reddy
Mr	Martin	Dolan	Mr	Brian	Redman
Mr	Arik	Dondi	Ms	Donna	Rispoli
Mr	Michael	Donnelly	Prof	Philip	Roberts
Mr	Thomas	Donnelly	Mr	Nick	Robins
Mr	Mark	Dooris	Dr	Brooke	Rogers
Mr	Malcolm	Dowden	Ms	Amanda	Roll Pickering
Prof	Chris	Drinkwater	Mr	Will	Rolls
Mr	Simon	Drury	Mr	Gareth	Rondel
Mr	Mike	Duckett	Ms	Mary	Roslin
Mr	Chris	Dunabin	Mrs	Anne	Rushton
Mr	Nick	Dusic	Mr	Graeme	Russell
Ms	Joyce	Edmond-Smith	Mr	David	Rutherford
Dr	Geraint	Ellis	Ms	Clare	Sain-ley-Berry
Dr	Val	Ellis	Dr	Philip	Sargent

Miss	Vicky	Etheridge	Mr	Jamie	Saunders
Miss	Beth	Evans	Dr	Linda	Saunderson
Mr	Simon	Fairlie	Ms	Alison	Seabrooke
Mr	Stephen	Farrant	Ms	Jenny	Searle
Prof	John	Farrar	Cllr	Matthew	Sellwood
Dr	Michael	Farrell	Dr	Gill	Seyfang
Dr	Andrew	Favell	Mr	Tony	Shallcross
Dr	Ioan	Fazey	Dr	Andy	Shea
Mr	Mark	Felton	Ms	Penny	Shepherd
Mr	Bob	Fiddik	Mr	Ben	Shimshon
Mrs	Anna	Fielder	Cllr	Allan	Siao Ming Witherick
Mr	John	Forster	Mr	Stuart	Singleton-White
Ms	Claire	Foster	Dr	Adrian	Smith
Mrs	Lesley	Franklin	Mr	Peter	Smith
Mr	John	Freeman	Mr	Chris	Smith
Miss	Amy	Fuller	Mr	Michael	Smith
Ms	Dominique	Gabry	Mr	Paul	Sousek
Dr	Caroline	Gallagher	Mr	Alan	Speedie
Dr	Ian	Garner	Mr	Glyn	Stacey
Ms	Tara	Garnett	Mr	Dave	Stanley
Mr	Steve	Garrett	Dr	Andrew	Stirling
Dr	Julia	Garritt	Mr	Ed	Straw
Dr	Campbell	Gemmell	Ms	Kim	Swan
Mr	Simon	Gershon	Ms	Nicky	Swetnam
Mr	Gordon	Gibson	Ms	Jessica	Symons
Mr	Michael	Gilbert	Mrs	Claire	Tancell
Mr	Ian	Gilmartin	Mr	Irfan	Tariq Chaudry
Mr	Bill	Gilmour	Mr	Vince	Taylor
Mrs	Marianne	Glen	Ms	Lesley	Telfer
Ms	Kirsten	Gogan	Mr	Alex	Templeton
Mr	Robin	Goodhand	Mr	Stan	Terry
Dr	Dominic	Gooding	Prof	Phil	Thomas
Ms	Elanor	Gordon	Mr	Eric	Thomas
Mr	David	Govan	Mr	Dafydd	Thomas
Mr	Bill	Graham	Mr	John	Thomson
Dr	Penny	Gray	Dr	Simon	Thorntonwood
Mr	Jon	Green	Miss	Liz	Tinlin
Mr	David	Green	Mr	Mike	Tooke
Ms	Briony	Greenhill	Mr	Jon	Townley
Mr	James	Greyson	Miss	Solitaire	Townsend
Dr	Rod	Gritten	Dr	Paul	Toyne
Dr	Philippa	Guest	Mr	Simon	Tribe
Mr	David	Gunn	Mr	John	Turner
Mr	Martin	Hall	Mrs	Jan	Uden
Prof	Sandy	Halliday	Dr	Fiona	Underwood
Ms	Susanna	Handslip	Ms	Julie	van Kemenade
Prof	Phil	Hanlon	Mrs	Alison	Walker
Mr	Brian	Hanna	Dr	Louisa	Watts
Miss	Josephine	Hansom	Mrs	Ruth	Webster
Dr	Richard	Harding	Mr	Ken	Webster
Mr	Tom	Hargreaves	Ms	Jean	Welstead
Mr	Andrew	Harmsworth	Ms	Lynn	Wetenhall
Mr	Michael	Harper	Mr	Will	White
Ms	Fiona	Harvey	Ms	Caroline	Wickham-Jones
Mrs	Linda	Harwood	Dr	Diana	Wilkins
Dr	Lucy	Heady	Mr	Malcolm	Wilkinson
Miss	Abigail	Herron	Ms	Lee-Ann	Williams
Ms	Alice	Hindle	Mr	Steve	Williams



Mr	Chris	Hines
Ms	Kate	Hinks
Ms	Vicki	Hird
Mr	Jonathan	Hodrien
Mr	Nigel	Hollett
Mr	Peter	Homer
Ms	Fiona	Hoppe
Mr	Richard	Howell
Mrs	Bernadette	Howitt
Mr	Nigel	Howlett
Mr	Jason	Hubbard
Mr	Phil	Hughes
Mr	Chris	Hunt

Miss	Emma	Williams
Miss	Helen	Wilson
Ms	Chris	Wilson
Mrs	Katharine	Winnard
Ms	Ruth	Wolstenholme
Mr	Anthony	Woolhouse
Mrs	Jane	Woolmer
Dr	Aled	Wynne
Mr	Andy	Wynne

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