

LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY SCOTLAND REPORT January 2019 - December 2019



Steering Group members Kirsten Leask and Laura Curtis Moss at the Global RCE Award Presentation, Cebu, December 2018



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LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY SCOTLAND REPORT JANUARY -DECEMBER 2019

1. BACKGROUND

Scotland has a long-standing commitment to Learning for Sustainability (Lfs) involving all aspects of learning: formal (e.g. schools, colleges, universities), non-formal (e.g. youth, adult, community, business) and informal (e.g. home, leisure). The UN's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-14) catalysed activity in all sectors through two Action Plans¹ co-ordinated by the Scottish Government. As the Decade came to its end, the Lfs community in Scotland considered that the establishment of a Scotland-wide United Nations recognised Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) was the most appropriate way to continue the work of promoting and supporting the concept and practice of Lfs in Scotland. The proposal to create Scotland's RCE was accepted unconditionally by the United Nations University in December 2012 and the first AGM of Scotland's UN recognised RCE, Learning for Sustainability Scotland, was held on October 22nd 2013.

2. GOVERNANCE

The Lfs Scotland Steering Group represents members: providing strategic advice and direction to support Learning for Sustainability Scotland's Vision, Mission and Objectives. Their roles and responsibilities are set out in the Lfs Scotland Strategic Plan 2015-20.

Our eight elected Steering Group members in 2019 were:

- Andrew Samuel (Abertay University)
- Kate Campbell (Consultant)
- Kirsten Leask (Lfs Scotland from February 2019)
- Laura Curtis-Moss (Edinburgh International Science Festival)
- Rebecca Petford (EAUC Scotland)
- Ron MacKay (Edinburgh College)
- Rehema White (University of St Andrews)
- Ullrich Kockel (Heriot Watt University)

Rehema White was re-elected Steering Group Chair in 2018. During 2019 she continued to be supported by Vice Chairs Kate Campbell and Kirsten Leask.

Task Group representation on the Steering Group during this period was: Further and Higher Education: Rebecca Petford (EAUC Scotland); Communications: Sarah Ford-Hutchinson (University of Edinburgh); Connection with Nature: Lesley Totten (Harmeny School); Community and Sustainable Development Goals: Rehema White (University of St Andrews); Heritage: Ullrich Kockel (Heriot Watt University).

Laura Curtis-Moss and Rebecca Petford continued to work as Scotland's RCE Youth Coordinators (from September 2017).

The Secretariat was managed by Professor Pete Higgins, University of Edinburgh and Director of Lfs Scotland. An Executive Group comprising the Director, Chair, Vice Chairs and the Secretariat met on a number of occasions to facilitate planning and action. Over this period, the Steering Group and Secretariat confirmed the Strategic Plan for Lfs Scotland 2015-2020 and a work plan 2019. The Steering Group also reviewed fundraising

¹ Scottish Government (2006) *Learning for Our Future: Scotland's First Action Plan for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* and (2010), *Learning for Change: Scotland's Second Action Plan for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*.

activities, supported Task Group activities, led on and contributed to various policy consultations, engaged formally and informally with Scottish Government and contributed to national and global fora.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Learning for Sustainability Scotland has 740 members (December 2019), comprising both individuals and groups or organisations from across Scotland.

4. EMPLOYEES

During this period, Betsy King was employed as Development Manager (0.6 FTE). Abi Cornwall resigned as Development Officer (0.6FTE) on January 31st 2019. In January 2019, Jenny Haggarty was appointed as Administration and Finance Officer (Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning CCGL 0.6FTE). Kirsten Leask was appointed as Project Manager (CCGL 0.8FTE) in February 2019, and Project Manager (Lfs Scotland 0.2 FTE) from August 2019. Project consultants engaged by Lfs Scotland were Mary Collacott, Sophie Coats, Norah Barnes and Anna Dodge.

5. RESOURCES

The University of Edinburgh has generously hosted Lfs Scotland and has provided administrative support as an in-kind contribution since its inception. This has included the provision of office accommodation for the Lfs Scotland staff within the Moray House School of Education Campus, Edinburgh and full servicing for the Centre including payroll, HR, telephone and internet, IT support and the use of University meeting spaces. Lfs Scotland operates under the University of Edinburgh's charitable status.

Other than this University of Edinburgh support, Lfs Scotland is entirely self-funding. It has no recurrent direct grant from the Scottish Government or any other source, and continues to be free for members to join and receive benefits. Every year the organisation must secure funding to keep operating, and we have again been fortunate this year that several such opportunities arose. These all require services to be delivered, there continues to be no revenue to support staffing. We 'square the circle' through the unpaid work on these projects by University of Edinburgh staff, and more general support from Steering Group members.

During 2019, Lfs Scotland activities were supported through fee earning from projects (British Council, University of Edinburgh, Scottish Government, and TEESNet) and events. The Lfs Scotland team and members of the Steering Group continue to develop additional proposals for longer-term funding. During the year, two major (and unfortunately unsuccessful) bids were submitted to the Global Challenges Research Fund (ESRC) and a submission to the UNESCO-Japan Education for Sustainable Development prize.

6. ACTIVITIES

6.1 MAILING LIST AND BULLETIN

A monthly e-bulletin containing information on events, courses, resources, policy and funding news, the latest job vacancies and the work of different organisations in the field of Learning for Sustainability was compiled by Editor Norah Barnes and distributed to members.

6.2 WEBSITE

In 2019, [the website](#) was re-designed by consultant Anna Dodge in line with previous comments and suggestions from members. This is a dynamic process, with the website constantly updated to reflect shifts in

activity or emphasis. Our active Communications Task Group provides focus and support to the secretariat to enhance communication.

6.3 PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

Presentations and workshops were given on behalf of LfS Scotland at the following conferences and seminars during 2019:

Date	Event	Presentation(s) by LfS Scotland	Event organized by LfS Scotland (many in partnership)	Place
January 2019	Values and LfS in ITE (With GTC Scotland at ICSEI conference)	X		Stavanger
January 2019	Taking forward Sustainability and Social Responsibility (UoE Be Sustainable Advanced course)	X	X	Edinburgh
January 2019	Interdisciplinary Learning: Creative Thinking for a Complex World (Royal Society of Edinburgh Conference)	X		Edinburgh
March 2019	Introduction to LfS (College LfS Champions, with EAUC Scotland)	X	X	Dundee and Angus College
March 2019	Engaging with the SDGs (LfSS Task group workshop)	X	X	Edinburgh
March 2019	Effective Learning and Teaching: LfS (Workshop for Clackmannanshire probationers)	X		Alloa
April 2019	Learning for Sustainability in Scotland (Bridge 47 workshop)	X		Belgrade
April 2019	Learning for Sustainability and Connecting Classrooms			Edinburgh
May 2019	Developing an LfS advocacy strategy (presentation to Heads of Education, NGOs in England)	X		London
May 2019	Innovative teaching and learning approaches (With EAUC Scotland Topic Support Network)	X	X	Edinburgh
May 2019	Taking forward LfS at Dundee and Angus College (College LfS Champions, with EAUC Scotland)	X	X	Dundee
June 2019	Developing College Learning for Sustainability Champions (at College Expo 2019 with EAUC Scotland)	X		Perth
June 2019	LfS and Storytelling (LfSS workshop)	X	X	Edinburgh
June 2019	Local and Global context for LfS (UoE Be Sustainable Advanced course introduction)	X	X	Edinburgh
July 2019	Learning for Sustainability in Scotland (presentation at UK RCEs conference)	X		Swansea
July 2019	Permaculture Scotland gathering	X		Isle of Skye
August 2019	LfS from abstraction to application (for Jiangsu International Exchange teachers)	X		Edinburgh

August 2019	Hippy Nonsense – the Global Climate Strike (Contribution to WoSDEC podcast recording)			Podcast
August 2019	Making Connections through LFS introduction Dornoch Firth Cluster staff	X	X	Dornoch
September 2019	Making Connections through LFS introduction Harmeny School staff	X	X	Edinburgh
September 2019	Connecting Classrooms through Global learning (at National Network for Outdoor Learning event)	X		Edinburgh
September 2019	Scotland’s College Lfs Champions approach (for European RCEs conference)	X		Crete
September 2019	Food and Lfs in Scotland (for European RCE conference)	X		Crete
September 2019	Learning for Sustainability theory and practice (for Zhejiang Department of Education)	X		Edinburgh
September 2019	Learning for Sustainability (Walk the Global Walk teacher induction seminar)	X		Glasgow University
September 2019	Can’t see the fish for the trees? Of raindrops, rivers and rewilding The Big Picture Conference - Rewilding	X		
October 2019	Lfs and Connecting Classrooms (for National Professional Learning Network)	X		Edinburgh
October 2019	SDGs and Interdisciplinary Learning (Workshop for Napier University ITE students))	X		Edinburgh
October 2019	Sustainability in action (UoE Be Sustainable Advanced course)	X	X	Edinburgh
October 2019	Learning for Sustainability in action in Scotland (for British Council UK Subject Associations conference)	X		London
October 2019	Lfs in initial teacher education in UK (workshop with TEESNet)	X	X	Edinburgh
October 2019	Outdoor Learning theory and practice (for Beijing Institute of Education teachers)	X	X	Edinburgh
October 2019	Biodiversity and Nature Education in Scotland (keynote & workshops at First World Forum on Nature Conservation)	X		China
October 2019	Outdoor, Environmental & Sustainability Education in the UK. Nature Education in K12 Schools (keynotes & workshops at China National Nature Education Forum)	X		China
November 2019	Lfs in the GTCS Professional Standards (consultation workshop)	X	X	Edinburgh
November 2019	Curriculum in Further and Higher Education in times of climate and ecological emergency EAUC Conference	X		Glasgow
November 2019	Evaluating ESD in the curriculum – looking at why & how (With EAUC Scotland Topic Support Network)	X	X	Edinburgh

November 2019	Learning for Sustainability (workshop for Scottish Council of Independent Schools)	x		Edinburgh
November 2019	Outdoor Learning theory and practice (for Zhejiang Headteachers)	x		Edinburgh
November 2019	Learning for Sustainability is... (round table at Scottish Education Research Association conference)	X	X	Edinburgh
November 2019	Learning for Sustainability (Keynote, Science and the Parliament conference)	X		
December 2019	Introduction to Learning for Sustainability (at Early Learning and Childcare seminar)	X	X	Edinburgh

6.4 WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS and EVENTS

The following offers more detail on some of the workshops, seminars and events organized during the year to give a flavour of the range of activities undertaken.

6.4.1 AGM 2019

As we celebrated the fifth birthday of LfS Scotland, more than sixty members attended our Annual General Meeting in January 2019. This event was one where our members could learn what LfS Scotland had been doing, feed into future activities, be inspired by speakers, contribute to policy and connect with each other.

The theme was **‘The Power of Storytelling: Learning from the Past to Inform the Present and Inspire the Future’**, and storyteller and researcher Alette Willis spoke powerfully about Restor(y)ing our relationship to the Earth; providing insights into why a story is essential in bringing about individual and collective change.

At round table discussions members heard about the Scottish Government’s important consultation on Good Food Nation Proposals for Legislation and were asked for views on a response to the UK International Development Committee inquiry on UK progress on the SDGs

Member Duncan Zuill of Levenmouth Academy and some of his Outdoor Learning group (learners from S1 – S6) spoke about their inspiring work planting trees and creating wildlife areas in their local Bat’s Wood.

Participants chose from a wide range of skills-based mini-workshops delivered by: **Rebecca Petford (EAUC)** Telling your stories on social media; **Abi Cornwall (LfSS)** Using simple graphics to illustrate your stories; **Laura Curtis-Moss (Edinburgh Science Festival)** Visual Art as a vehicle for storytelling; **Rehema White (University of St Andrews)** Telling stories using blog posts, and **Sarah Ford-Hutchinson (University of Edinburgh)** Communicating with your audience through video.

For 2019, members were keen to see more opportunities to see learning for sustainability in practice with continued regular networking and information sharing and a focus on the SDGs.

6.4.2 Alternative and innovative teaching methods and assessments

In collaboration with EAUC Scotland, we jointly organized an event **Alternative and innovative teaching methods and assessments**. The seminar attracted 11 attendees with the aim to review a range of different pedagogical techniques, hear about interesting case studies where innovative LfS teaching methods and assessments were already being employed, and review and discuss the potential for using and embedding alternative methods into curriculum or institutions.

Presentations and discussion included linking learning for sustainability and innovative teaching at the University of St Andrews, the case study of the Vertically-Integrated Projects for Sustainable Development (VIP4SD) Programme at the University of Strathclyde and an interactive workshop demonstrating Education for Sustainable Development through role-play.

The seminar concluded that applying case studies, using role-play, participatory workshops, interdisciplinary modules, action research, outdoor learning, field visits and using real world learning were key. It was felt that it was key for students to build on knowledge by learning to know themselves better and finding ways to enhance inter/intrapersonal competencies and make learning enjoyable.. Resources were needed to support use of vertically- integrated programmes, demonstrate scenarios for SDGs in teaching across all subjects and provide guidance on running interdisciplinary modules.

6.4.3 Engaging with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Thirty participants from diverse backgrounds including schools, colleges, universities, local authorities, NGOs and other contexts participated in an insightful workshop in June 2019. The aim was to examine how the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can support us in our work and how we can contribute to the delivery of the SDGs, in Scotland and beyond.

In the context of the UN National Review of progress on the SDGs in July 2019, the workshop offered a critical introduction to the emergence of the SDGs. Case studies of relevant work underway at Scotdec (Charlotte Dwyer), the University of Strathclyde (Scott Strachan) and Heriot-Watt University (Cait McCullagh) were shared. Participants explored how Learning for Sustainability can help us appreciate the interconnectedness of the SDGs more widely and discussed in small groups what they wanted to action following the workshop on personal, institutional and sectoral levels. In plenary, they asked for more general and specific workshops to enhance engagement with the SDGs and for suggestions and support of partnerships to address the SDGs, especially across sectors.

6.4.4 Storytelling about Sustainability

Changing the stories that we live by is key to bringing about the changes needed to shift us all towards greater sustainability. Following input at our 2018 AGM, renowned storyteller, author and University lecturer, Alette Willis, led a popular participative workshop introducing the use and practice of storytelling in a range of learning for sustainability contexts and exploring the arts of story- crafting and of performance storytelling. The twenty participants learned techniques and participated in activities that could be applied to both creating their own stories and learning and telling a range of stories too.

6.4.5 LfS in the GTCS Professional Standards

In November 2019, LfS Scotland organised a members' workshop to consider a Learning for Sustainability focused response to the General Teaching Council for Scotland's (GTCS) consultation on a refreshed set of Professional Standards for teachers and new Professional Code for teachers. In line with the Scottish Government's Learning for Sustainability Action Plan launched in June 2019, members advised that 'strengthened references to Learning for Sustainability should be included in the Professional Standards for: registration; career-long professional learning; and leadership and management'. We submitted a [detailed response](#) based on the outcomes of the workshop and look forward to continued working with GTCS in 2020.

6.4.5 Taking forward Learning for Sustainability in Early Learning and Childcare

In Scotland, all learners in Scotland's schools and early learning and childcare (ELC) settings have an entitlement to Learning for Sustainability; supported by practitioners through a whole-setting approach, as set out in the [Vision 2030+ Report](#) (2016). The purpose of this seminar, jointly organised with inspiring Scotland's 'Thrive Outdoors' and funded by Scottish Government, was for strategic stakeholders to explore the nature of Learning for Sustainability (LfS) as a core strand of Curriculum for Excellence and showcase existing Learning for Sustainability practice in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). The event offered an opportunity to design strategic interventions that would mobilise and support ELC practitioners. Kate O'Neill, Stirling Council, and Robert Kennedy, Baltic Street Adventure Playground shared inspiring examples. The seminar highlighted actions required from participants, ELC settings, government and agencies; including the need for leadership, resources, professional development, sharing of inspiring stories and joined-up thinking.

6.4.6 Heritage

Seven free heritage and communities events, including a ceilidh, were organised as part of the UK-wide 'Being Human Festival' to celebrate and highlight public engagement with humanities research. – November 2019. These events demonstrated community engagement and Scotland's wide understanding of learning for sustainability as being embedded in heritage and a dynamic aspect of our culture.

6.5 YOUTH CO-ORDINATORS

6.5.1 In 2017, the Global RCE Network asked all RCEs to nominate a Youth Co-ordinator to help engage "youth" with the networks (by which they mean anyone under the ages of 35 or working with those under 35!), and Laura Curtis-Moss (RSPB) and Rebecca Petford (EAUC-Scotland) stepped forward to be Co-Co-ordinators for Scotland's RCE. The aim is to increase Learning for Sustainability Scotland's engagement with students and young professionals with an interest in teaching and learning about sustainability, through development of a Youth Network.

6.5.2 In 2019, these Co-ordinators developed links with others in Europe to be able to deliver co-ordinated and networked responses to inspire youth to engage with learning for sustainability. They also supported youth action; offering learning opportunities to help young activists gain deeper understanding of issues and strengthen the evidence base for their protests.

6.6 COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

6.6.1 GTCS Initial Teacher Education project

This partnership project 2015-2018 with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and funded by the Gordon Cook Foundation LfS Scotland involved all eight of Scotland's Initial Teacher Education Universities in working towards the incorporation of the Learning for Sustainability dimension of the GTCS Standards, in existing and developing courses and programmes. During 2018, this involved engagement with 22 newly qualified teachers drawn from all the ITE institutions in developing a practitioner enquiry focused on values and learning for sustainability with support through webinars and discussion forums.

In January 2019, the project was showcased at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) in Stavanger, Norway. In November 2019 a special Issue of the Scottish Educational Review was published, 'Education re-viewed: putting sustainability at the heart of living'. Scottish Educational

Review 51(1), Laura Colucci-Gray, Claire Cassidy, Robbie Nicol, and Betsy King. This was the focus of a roundtable discussion at the Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) conference in November 2019.

6.6.2 British Council Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning 2018-2021

In 2019 LfS Scotland continued to work as part of a consortium with University of Edinburgh/LfS Scotland, International Development Education Association of Scotland (IDEAS) and the Scotland Malawi Partnership as the Scotland lead organisations delivering the UK wide [Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme in Scotland](#). The programme is managed by Kirsten Leask, and supported by Administration and Finance Officer Jenny Haggarty, working with Local Advisers based in the five Development Education Centres across Scotland.

During 2019, University of Edinburgh/Learning for Sustainability Scotland delivered a professional learning programme for teachers, 'Making Connections through Learning for Sustainability'. The professional learning is available at three levels over 6 weeks, 10 weeks and 18 weeks. In 2019, the programme was accredited by GTCS for professional recognition in Learning for Sustainability. For individual teachers, the course is offered fully online, and face-to-face sessions are provided for groups of teachers in schools, clusters of schools and groups of student teachers.

6.6.3 British Council Supporting teacher educators to embed Development Education and Global Learning in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) 2019-21

LfS Scotland contributed, as Scotland's representative on the Teacher Education for Equity and Sustainability Network (TEESNet) Steering Group, to the submission of a successful tender to the British Council in October 2019. The project will develop a new 'professional practice' framework for teacher educators working in ITE settings, and will develop and run professional learning for educators in ITE. LfS Scotland has been subcontracted to develop two courses to be available in early 2020.

6.6.4 College Learning for Sustainability Champions

In spring 2019, working in Partnership with EAUC Scotland, Learning for Sustainability Scotland developed and piloted a face-to-face and online course to support Dundee and Angus College to become the first College in Scotland recognised as having a whole-institution approach to sustainability in the curriculum. This successful pilot involved at least one participant from each academic department in the College in attending an introductory session, collaborating online over an eight-week period, working with learners and sharing outcomes in a final session. Participants have continued to embed sustainability ideas and teaching approaches into their own courses and committed to work with colleagues in their Department to encourage them to do the same. A continuing partnership, with EAUC Scotland and College Development Network, to work with further Colleges in Scotland is planned for 2020.

6.7 POLICY ENGAGEMENT

LfS Scotland's Secretariat maintained formal and informal dialogue with a wide range of individuals from Government and its agencies during the year.

During 2019, LfS Scotland responded to consultations through its Task Groups and Steering Group members. Responses were submitted on behalf of members to:

- Scottish Government's Good Food Nation consultation (April 2019)
- GTCS Professional Standards and Professional Code consultation (November 2019, see 6.4.5)

In June 2019, LfS Scotland attended the launch of the Scottish Government's [Learning for Sustainability Action Plan](#) for the Government's Implementation Group Vision 2030+ Report as a member of the newly formed Learning for Sustainability network.

LfS Scotland has participated in Scotland's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Network during the year; a coalition on sustainable development that is open to all and supported by SCVO. In 2019, LfS Scotland contributed to network development and Scotland's contribution to the UK Voluntary National Review on the SDGs.

LfS Scotland continues to collaborate with the UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development network to add a learning and education dimension to their work and contribute to their presence in Scotland.

6.8 INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

LfS Scotland is Scotland's UN recognized Regional Centre of Expertise in ESD and one of the global network of 168 RCEs (December 2019). During 2019, there was regular contact with the Global Network and UK RCEs and we were invited to peer review an application from a prospective European RCE. We carried out the following international knowledge exchange and research activities.

6.8.1 UK RCEs During 2019, regular contact with progress of RCEs in England, Wales and Ireland was maintained by email and skype. In July, we attended a UK and Ireland conference hosted by RCE Cymru to get to know each other better, share our RCE experiences and ongoing work, co-develop new ideas (and find funding for those ideas) and to discuss potential publications. We have agreed to collaborate on a joint publication based on each of the themes of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2020.

6.8.2 European RCEs. Twelve Regional Centres of Expertise from ten countries gathered in Heraklion, Crete, in September 2019 for the annual European Regional RCE Meeting. Steering Group members Rebecca Petford and Kirsten Leask attended on behalf of RCE Scotland. With a particular focus on learning and teaching about sustainable food production and food security – and the inevitable links that this most inclusive and global of topics has with our world-wide climate emergency and its impact on planet and people – this two-day meeting provided ample opportunities for discussion and sharing. Systems-thinking approaches to understanding and tackling the issues we face as educators and facilitators of Education for Sustainable Development were explored, and there were case studies from across Europe. Insights from Scotland's work towards becoming a 'Good Food Nation' and the 'College Learning for Sustainability Champions Programme' were presented.

Communication was also a key theme; with a consideration of how to ensure on-going and effective collaboration not just between ourselves as RCEs, but with those we seek to engage and influence. As part of this, Scotland has volunteered to be part of a new working group on climate change education and engagement.

6.8.3 In early 2019, LfS Scotland and University of Edinburgh hosted University of the Basque Country PhD student Leire Agirreazkuenaga, who undertook research into Scotland's approach to Education for Sustainable Development in primary schools.

6.9 PARTNERSHIPS

In line with the partnership focus of the SDGs and our status as a network organization with many active members, we sought to strengthen our partnership working in 2019. We organised and ran many events in partnership and have developed stronger links with other organisations.

Examples include working with:

- Tertiary education sector leading organisations such as EAUC Scotland and the College Development Network;
- NGOs supporting education or other aspects of sustainability, such as Inspiring Scotland, Leith Crops in Pots and the Permaculture Association;
- Schools and teacher education organisations;
- UK level groups such as the UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development and TEESNet;
- International partners such as UNESCO;
- University of Edinburgh's international teacher exchange programmes.

6.10 TASK GROUPS

The purpose of LfS Scotland's Task Groups is to enable members to work individually or together to carry out specific pieces of work or projects that relate to the Vision, Mission and Objectives of LfS Scotland. The following Task Groups were active during this period.

6.10.1 Further and Higher Education (Convenors: Rebecca Petford, Scott Strachan, Rehema White, Christine Calder)

This is an ongoing networking group that meets twice yearly. It is co-badged as one of EAUC's Topic Support Networks to explore and share best practice in learning for sustainability within further and higher education settings, curricula and research practices and develop resources to support teaching and research staff to embed sustainability in their practice. Further and Higher Education groups plan both separate and joint meetings; attended by representatives from universities and colleges around Scotland, depending on the focus of the meeting. The group experienced a change in leadership this year.

Two popular meetings were held jointly between Higher Education and Further Education groups. The May event focused on **Exploring alternative and innovative teaching methods and assessments** and showcased interesting examples from around Scotland, inspiring participants to trial new pedagogical approaches and tools. In November, an event titled **Evaluating ESD in the curriculum – looking at why and how** included a discussion of competency frameworks from University of St Andrews plus examples from Grass Roots and Shining Stars RS Components, College Development Network, West Lothian College and University of Edinburgh Veterinary College. The group is now planning to assess how to support newcomers to ESD whilst deepening ESD capacities in those already on the journey.

6.10.2 Communications (Convenor, Sarah Ford- Hutchinson)

The Communications Task Group existed to improve awareness of LfS Scotland, and to share communications best practice among its members. In March 2019, this Task Group was paused to enable several members to devote their time to assisting LfS Scotland staff with core communications duties throughout 2019 - such as newsletters and website updates. LfS Scotland continues to have two main communication challenges: not all LfS Scotland members understand what the network is, how it can support them and how they can get involved and not everyone in Scotland who the network would be useful for knows of its existence. LfS

Scotland also has two main communications opportunities: a number of network members have ESD and sustainability communications expertise and are willing to share these with other members, and there is an appetite among members to gain communications skills in ESD / sustainability.

In January 2020, the Communications Task Group will be re-formed and will agree its function (i.e. to address the above challenges or deliver on the above opportunities) and then spend 2019 fulfilling this function.

6.10.3 Communities (Convenor, Rehema White)

This task group was dormant in 2019, having completed the previous specific task. Possibilities for the year ahead include scaling-up and sharing of sustainability learning across communities and with local authorities, in line with an ERASMUS+ project.

6.10.4 Curating Heritage for Sustainable Communities (Convenor Ullrich Kockel)

The primary objective of the group is to develop a framework for sustainable heritage tourism especially in vulnerable ecological settings. It takes as its starting point an appraisal of the maritime heritage of the Northern Isles as a cultural resource for sustainable community development and care for that resource (see below). The group is exploring the potential for community engagement with heritage, through creative responses to selected items. Members include Shetland Museums & Archives, Orkney Museum, Heriot-Watt University and various community groups.

The project has been very successful to date and has opened up new perspectives on sustainable development of community co-curated heritage. In 2019, this has involved a “New Connections” exhibition in Orkney and Shetland in May 2019; a Virtual Museum launched in May 2019; selected creative responses shown at Heriot-Watt Museum as part of Being Human Festival, November 2019 and a workshop at this exhibition. Preparation of CPD/adult education templates is underway for 2020.

6.10.5 Connection to Nature (Convenor Lesley Totten)

This task group reconvened due to interest from members, with a new enthusiastic convenor. A lively group met in February and discussed the scope and potential aims. It was clear that there are a number of existing networks and resources with an increase in relevant initiatives in recent times. It was suggested that the task group collaborate with other networks and coordinate resources when this would add benefit to existing schemes. A plan was made to map existing initiatives and activities in Scotland (and beyond) using a typology of focus and format. The creation of a toolbox of resources for LfS Scotland members was planned, signposting to other resource sites as appropriate and in particular, highlighting tools for the measurement of nature connection and its benefits. A further meeting explored this latter aspect in more detail. Work is underway.

6.11 CONSULTANCY ACTIVITIES

Members of the LfS Scotland Secretariat and associates carried out the following consultancy activities, in order to support the wider core work of LfS Scotland.

6.11.1 LfS Scotland (Betsy King) was engaged by University of Edinburgh to deliver an eight-week long (April/June 2019) Sustainability and Social Responsibility International Foundation programme for 36 students from China, Taiwan, UAE, Nigeria, Lesotho, Malaysia, Pakistan, Zambia, Iran, Kuwait, Philippines, Ukraine and Russia. This programme will be delivered again in 2020.

6.11.2 LfS Scotland (Mary Collacott, Betsy King, Pete Higgins) was engaged by University of Edinburgh Sustainability and Social Responsibility Department to deliver a 12 week online sustainability and social responsibility course for staff June – October 2019. A further course will be delivered in 2020.

6.11.3 LfS Scotland (Mary Collacott, Betsy King) was engaged by University of Edinburgh Sustainability and Social Responsibility Department to undertake a small scale scoping study to review and further develop professional learning opportunities to address social responsibility and sustainability in learning and teaching for academic staff at the University of Edinburgh.

6.12 REPRESENTATION ON NATIONAL and INTERNATIONAL GROUPS

Secretariat or Steering Group members represented LfS Scotland on the following national groups:

- a. **National Union of Students Education for Sustainable Development Advisory Group** member
- b. **Teacher Education for Equity and Environmental Sustainability Network (TEESNet)** Steering Group member and Scotland representative
- c. **Big Ideas Competition** – Solutions for the Planet- Scotland Regional Final Judge (May 2019)
- d. **Scottish Education Awards** – Learning for Sustainability Award judge (June 2019)
- e. **GTCS Professional Standards Review – LfS Steering Group** member (from March 2018 – ongoing)
- f. **RSPB Nature of Scotland Award** judge (Autumn 2019)
- g. **UK Our Shared World Coalition** Steering Group member (from Autumn 2019, ongoing)
- h. **College Development Network Awards** Judge (September 2019)
- i. **Scottish Qualifications Authority Learning for Sustainability External Steering** Group member (from September 2019 ongoing).
- j. **National Network of Outdoor Learning** (November 2019 and ongoing)
- k. **Blue-Action Societal engagement group** (member 2019 and ongoing)
- l. **College Development Network Climate Emergency** Expert Group (October 2019)
- m. **International Review Panel** member for MSc & PhD programmes in Learning in Natural Sciences - University of Cyprus (2019)

- n. **China Nature Education Network** expert adviser (2019- ongoing)
- o. **Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Advisory Group** reviewing the Education for Sustainable Development Guidance (2020-ongoing)

6.13 PUBLICATIONS

We have produced various resources to support our activities and facilitate our members over the year. These include:

- Research papers submitted and in progress, e.g. LfS chapter in ‘Social Justice re-examined’
- Research into Action briefings for members and for the Scottish Government
- A #ThisisLfS series of Learning for Sustainability case studies showcasing a range of educational settings

6.14 AWARDS

6.14.1 In October 2019, LfS Scotland received a GTCS Professional Learning Award. Ken Muir, GTCS, said *‘this award identifies organisations which aim through their work ‘to develop and enhance teachers’ knowledge, expertise and skill; develop their professionalism, and to impact positively on learning experiences and outcomes of children and young people’*.

6.14.2 In December 2019 we received an ‘Acknowledged Flagship Project’ award for the College Learning for Sustainability Champions programme and its role in contributing to SDG 4: Quality Education. This award is presented annually to RCEs that have made outstanding contributions to address local sustainable development challenges in their regions.

6.14.3 LfS Scotland was nominated by the UK UN Commission for the UNESCO-Japan prize in Education for Sustainable Development. Whilst we were not one of the three final global award winners, <https://en.unesco.org/prize-esd> , we were proud to be the peer-reviewed UK nominee.

7. NEXT STEPS

We have modified our Strategy and Action Plan for LfS Scotland in 2019. In 2020, a new Steering Group is to be elected and a new UNESCO Plan for ESD to 2030 will be launched. During the year, we expect to consider our strategic direction and develop a Strategic Plan for the next five years...

Priority steps for the year ahead continue to be:

- Maintain and strengthen our ‘community of practice’ for learning for sustainability; supporting existing members and widening our membership base
- Continued engagement with the underpinning role of learning in the conceptualisation and pursuit of sustainable development, as manifesting internationally and nationally through the UN SDGs, UNESCO GAP and the international UN RCE Network and in COP26, nationally in our roles with the SDG Network and directly with other partners such as UKSSD, in relation to particular goals, especially SDG 4.

- Continued leadership and engagement with Scottish Government, policy makers and other relevant bodies regarding LfS implementation in different sectors
- Projects funded externally that enable us to deliver professional learning through partnership, such as Connecting Classrooms
- Initiatives that tackle specific aspects of our objectives; including community engagement, culture and heritage
- Enhanced communication and sharing of resources, events, activities and opportunities through a refreshed bulletin and revamped website
- Provision of knowledge exchange and training events and activities; such as workshops, seminars and webinars, with more completed in partnership. We plan to hold more activities out of the Central Belt, through both virtual meeting spaces and face-to-face opportunities.
- Synthesis of new knowledge and presentation of a critical voice on relevant aspects of learning for sustainability and sustainable development; including research briefings, papers and reports
- Address the ongoing challenges of lack of funding for core activities and the uncertainty of current context.

8. MEMBERS' VOICES

We seek to inspire and inform members, to connect members and to work in partnership with members. We are driven by external policy and highlighted imperatives for LfS but we wish to respond to members' needs. We are always willing to hear new ideas or requests for Task Groups, communication or events. Please get in touch if you have any suggestions.

Learning for Sustainability Scotland, December 2019