



LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY SCOTLAND REPORT January 2020 - December 2020



Pre-Covid 19 at LfS Scotland members' annual gathering January 2020



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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 University 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 United Nations University unconditionally accepted the proposal to create Scotland's RCE in December 2012 and the first AGM of Scotland's UNU 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, elected in January 2020, were:

- Andrew Samuel (Abertay University)
- Dee Bird (Napier University)
- Duncan Zuill (Levenmouth Academy)
- Fritha Gilbert (Fife Pupil Support Services)
- Laura Curtis-Moss (The Edinburgh Remakery)
- Rehema White (University of St Andrews)
- Sara Smith (Royal Highland Education Trust)
- Ullrich Kockel (Heriot Watt University)

Rehema White was re-elected Steering Group Chair in March 2020. During 2020 the Chair was supported by Vice-Chairs Dee Bird and Laura Curtis-Moss.

Task Group representation on the Steering Group during this period was: Further and Higher Education: Rehema White; 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 continued to work as Scotland's RCE Youth Coordinator (from September 2017).

Professor Pete Higgins, University of Edinburgh and Director of LfS Scotland managed the Secretariat. 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 developed a Strategic Plan for LfS Scotland 2020-2025 and a work plan for 2020. 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 873 members (December 2020), 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), Jenny Haggarty as Administration and Finance Officer (Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning CCGL 0.75 FTE) and Kirsten Leask as Project Manager (CCGL 0.8FTE) and Project Manager LfS Scotland (0.2 FTE). Project consultants engaged by LfS Scotland were Mary Collacott, Sophie Coats, Norah Barnes (to March 2020) and Katie Grant (Bulletin) and Anna Dodge (website).

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 and Sport campus 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 resource and support from grant for specific projects, LfS Scotland is entirely self-funding. It has no recurrent direct grant for core activities from the Scottish Government or any other source, but continues to be free for members to join and receive benefits. Every year the organisation secures funding to keep operating, and we were again fortunate this year to be successful in funding bids. Such grants, however, all require services to be delivered; there continued to be no core funding to support staffing. We continued to offer the core provisions of LfS Scotland through University of Edinburgh resources, permitted overhead return and more general support from the Steering Group and other members.

During 2020, LfS Scotland's activities were supported through grant and fee earning from projects (British Council (August 2018- December 2021), University of Edinburgh, GTCS, Erasmus+ (2020-2023) and TEESNet (to August 2021)). The LfS Scotland team and members of the Steering Group continue to develop additional proposals for longer-term funding.

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 Editors Norah Barnes (to April 2020) and Katie Grant (April 2020 onwards) and distributed to members. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Norah for her dedication and expertise in editing LfS Scotland Bulletins since the RCE began in 2013.

6.2 WEBSITE

The [website](#) continued to be updated by consultant Anna Dodge in line with comments and suggestions from members. Our active Communications Task Group convenor, Sarah Ford-Hutchison, provided valued focus and support to the secretariat in 2020 to enhance communication.

6.3 PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

The Covid19 pandemic had severe impact on our ability to host face-to-face gatherings in 2020, and most events and workshops organised by ourselves and others took place online. During 2020 presentations and workshops were given on behalf of LfS Scotland at the following conferences, webinars and seminars:

2020	Event	Presentation(s) by LfS Scotland	Event organized by LfS Scotland (many in partnership)	Place
January	Feeling the Pressure: planetary health, participatory democracy and you – annual gathering	X	X	Edinburgh
January	Local and Global context for LfS (UoE Be Sustainable Advanced course introduction)	X	X	Edinburgh
January	‘From abstraction to application: sustainability in the everyday’ (Zhejiang University Winter School)	X		Edinburgh
January	Building partnerships; spotlight on Rwanda and Zambia (part of the CCGL programme)	X	X	Online
February	Making Connections through LfS- Taking Action Dornoch Firth Cluster staff	X	X	Dornoch
February	Ecovillage Tempelhof ETiA workshop	X		Germany
March	Making Connections through LfS- Introduction (New Monkland Primary School staff)	X	X	Airdrie
March	Introduction to LfS (College LfS Champions, with EAUC Scotland)	X	X	West Lothian College
March	A whole school approach to LfS (for Agents for Change SU11 project))	X		Online
March	Introduction to Learning for Sustainability (Forth Valley College LfS Champions, with EAUC Scotland)	X	X	Online
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining the dots across the Scottish policy landscape • Pupil & staff engagement session #1 (for ‘Food Activism in the Schoolyard’ SU11 project) 	X	X	Glasgow Aberdeen
April	Next steps: Sustainability and Social Responsibility (UoE Be Sustainable Advanced)	X	X	Online
May	Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning (Scotland-wide webinars x 2)	X	X	Online

June	Exploring relevance and approaches in LfS in times of crisis and calm	X	X	Online
June	Whose Voice is it Anyway? Active participation for a better world (with Edinburgh City Council and Bridge 47)	X	X	Online
June	Learning for Sustainability (at CDN College Expo20 with EAUC Scotland)	X		Online
June	UK and Ireland RCEs in ESD Forum: LfS in Scotland	X	X	Online
August	Making Connections through LfS – taking action (Harmeny School staff)	X	X	Online
August	Local and Global context for LfS (UoE Be Sustainable Advanced course introduction)	X	X	Online
August	The Future of Tertiary education – Curricula that benefit society	X		Online
September	" Learning from Covid-19 for ESD: causes, consequences and curriculum" (With EAUC Scotland Topic support network)	X	X	Online
September	UN 75 – the role of RCEs (for RCE Cymru, Bangor University)	X		Online
September	Discover the power of Learning for Sustainability (for Creative Bravery Festival)	X		Online
September	Chinese Academy of Sciences and Union of Botanic Gardens - Advanced Training Course on Environmental Education Research and Practice	X		Online
September	Enhancing local authorities' community engagement: co-designing and prototyping strategies for carbon emission reduction (for Communities for Future (CfF) and the European Day for Sustainable Communities (EDSC) 2020 online workshop)	X		Online
October	Youth Work and Learning for Sustainability (with YouthLink Scotland)	X	X	Online
October	University of Teacher Education, State of Vaud (HEP Vaud), Lausanne, Switzerland. Keynote lecture.	X		Online
October	German Federal Ministry of Education and Research - European Forum on Science & Education for Sustainability Workshop "Moving Education towards Sustainability". (Invited workshop member)	X		Online
October	Learning for Sustainability in Scotland (for Lithuanian Sustainable Schools network))	X		Online
November	Creating productive teacher communities online (UK CCGL trainers network consultation workshop)	X		Online

November	Cluster Co-ordinators' Get-Together #1: Setting the scene (Peer networking opportunity as part of the CCGL programme)	X	X	Online
November	ESD and Health and Wellbeing (With EAUC Scotland Topic Support Network)	X	X	Online
November	Next steps: Sustainability and Social Responsibility (UoE Be Sustainable Advanced course)	X	X	Online
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art and Climate - Using Creativity to Understand the Crisis. • Climate Justice Education: Between Social Movement Learning and Schooling • Enabling joined up action for a better world • Erasmus+ ESD Supervision Project((for European RCEs Conference) 	X		Online
November	Scaling Community Sustainability (for GEN Europe Ecovillage solutions for extraordinary times workshop)	X		Online
December	Collaborative learning through the SDGs (presentation to the Scotland Malawi Partnership's Education Forum and the new Minister for Education in Malawi)	X	X	Online
December	Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning (Scotland-wide webinar)	X	X	Online
December	Cluster Co-ordinators' Get-Together #2: Building your cluster (Peer networking opportunity as part of the CCGL programme)	X	X	Online
December	Collaborative learning through the SDGs (presentation to the Scotland Malawi Partnership's Education Forum and the new Minister for Education in Malawi)	X	X	Online
December 2020	Learning for Sustainability (at LfS Local Authority Officers Network)	X		Online

6.4 WORKSHOPS, WEBINARS and EVENTS

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

6.4.1 AGM January 2020

Our Annual General Meeting, held in **January 2020**, had the theme - **Feeling the Pressure: planetary health, participatory democracy and you**. With awareness of the climate and nature crisis rising in Scotland, and the expected upcoming arrival of the critical COP26 climate conference in Glasgow, more than 70 members came together to explore these issues, elect the Steering Group 2020-22, discuss the future work of Learning for Sustainability Scotland network and learn new skills. A fascinating session with RSE Young Academy of Scotland members Alice Konig and Peter McColl proved an excellent way to get us all thinking about Responsible Debate for a Sustainable Future and feeding into an active ongoing process. 'Shaping the next generation of global citizens' showcased member Keri Reid and pupils Martha and Jessica from Muthill Primary, Perth and Kinross, who shared their inspiring [Connecting Classrooms](#) journey and sung their wonderful collaborative '[Global Goals Song](#)'. A tasty vegan networking lunch was combined with the

opportunity to meet students from Levenmouth Academy and hear about their plans for rewilding unused playing field land. Members selected from three Skills for Engagement workshops: Preparing for COP26 with Caroline Rance, Friends of the Earth Scotland, Engaging communities in environmental and social justice with Eurig Scandrett, Queen Margaret University and Dealing with Eco-Anxiety with Rehema White, University of St Andrews

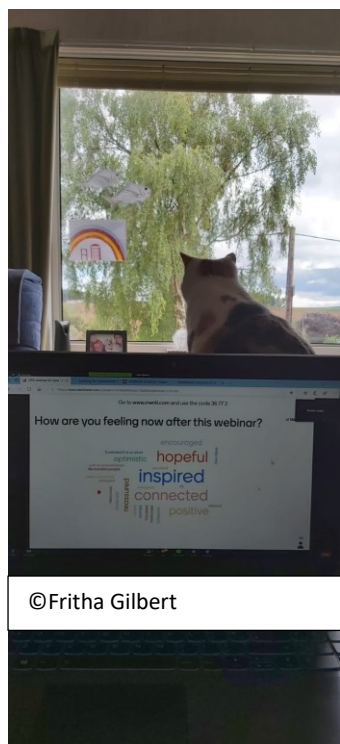
For 2020, priorities for members were: achieving connection locally and globally; sustainability in the context of colonialism and privilege; Involvement of young people; embedding a whole setting approach to LfS; Initial Teacher Education and probationary teachers; COP26 and developing resources including case studies for schools.

6.4.2 Seizing the moment: Youth Work and Learning for Sustainability

YouthLink Scotland and LfS Scotland jointly hosted a webinar joined by 54 youth work practitioners from across Scotland, exploring the role of Learning for Sustainability in enhancing youth work practice to support recovery and beyond Covid19.

The event provided an opportunity to: answer the question 'what is Learning for Sustainability in youth work; explore the benefits and opportunities of getting young people involved in Learning for Sustainability; share and celebrate examples of youth work from around Scotland; inspire new thinking and approaches for engaging young people and help find the support needed to take action. Inspiring insights and approaches were shared by Catriona Willis, Highland One World; Lucy Sparks, John Muir Award; and #IWill Ambassador Katrina Lambert.

6.4.3 Exploring relevance and approaches in LfS in times of crisis and calm



In June 2020, more than 70 LfS Scotland members from across the country – and several international guests – gathered online to explore the relevance of Learning for Sustainability in creating a flourishing, equitable and sustainable world during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

This was a chance to reflect on the current and future need for Learning for Sustainability approaches. The webinar shared and celebrated practitioners from around Scotland who had found new ways of working to engage their learners and the communities around them.

We considered, within the context of Covid19 presenting its immense challenges including loss of life, increased inequity and damaged livelihoods, whether there could be positive possibilities for change. Participants highlighted the importance of solidarity, compassion, connection to people and nature and opportunities to discover new ways of thinking and being.

Inspiring approaches were shared by: Rehema White, University of St Andrews; Toby Clark, the John Muir Award; Roxana Romero, Croft Carbon College Development Officer, Leith Community Crops in Pots; Anya Hart Dyke, author of e-book 'Our throwaway society - raising children to consume wisely' and Karen Carter, Head teacher and international education lead at Lockerbie Primary School.

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 and Rebecca Petford (EAUC-Scotland, on maternity leave in 2020) 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 2020, further links were made with RCEs in Europe to plan co-ordinated and networked responses to inspire youth to engage with learning for sustainability. Partnership working with YouthLink Scotland was initiated, and an ongoing programme of webinars exploring how members can support youth action developed. Links were made to support the 'Teach the Future' youth initiative.

6.6 COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

6.6.1 British Council Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning August 2018-December 2021

In 2020 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](#). Kirsten Leask, LfS Scotland manages this programme, supported by Administration and Finance Officer Jenny Haggarty and working with Local Advisers based in Scotland's five Development Education Centres. By December 2020 90 schools in Scotland were funded and engaged in the school partnerships aspect of the programme. During 2020, LfS implemented several new interventions to support schools in Scotland with their Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning partnerships work. These include:

- 'Critical Friends' advisory group for CCGL: comprising educators from early years to college level
- Scotland-specific microsite: a 'one-stop-shop' for educators to access the latest news, resources and advice for their CCGL work
- A series of 'how-to' animations detailing specific aspects of the programme
- A series of inspirational 'talking heads' from teachers already taking part in the programme
- Monthly 'Get-Togethers' for existing and prospective cluster co-ordinators: providing a peer support network for teachers across Scotland

During 2020, University of Edinburgh/Learning for Sustainability Scotland continued to deliver its successful GTCS accredited professional learning programme for educators in early learning, schools and colleges, 'Making Connections through Learning for Sustainability'. The professional learning was available fully online at three levels over 6 weeks, 10 weeks and 18 weeks in 2020. In April 2020 the programme was further developed and offered to educators from across UK. In addition to individual teachers, tailored programmes were provided for groups of teachers in schools, clusters of schools and groups of student teachers.

In 2020 the Dornoch Firth Cluster (Dornoch Academy, Dornoch Primary and Bonar Bridge Primary) obtained British Council research funding to work with University of Edinburgh/LfS Scotland investigating their development of a whole cluster approach to Learning for Sustainability. A report will be available in 2021.

6.6.2 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. In spring and summer 2020 LfS Scotland developed and successfully piloted two professional learning programmes for UK educators in Initial Teacher Education (ITE): Introducing learning for Equity and

Sustainability in ITE and Leading Change in Equity and Sustainability in ITE. These programmes were rolled out in Autumn 2020, facilitated by LfS Scotland, and at least three further courses will be offered in 2021.

6.6.3 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. A continuing partnership, with EAUC Scotland and College Development Network, worked with two further Colleges in Scotland in 2020, West Lothian College and Forth Valley College.

6.6.4 Erasmus+ KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices

ESD SuperVision 4.0 (September 2020-2023)

In 2020 LfS Scotland/University of Edinburgh was part of a successful Erasmus+ partnership proposal, led by the University of Vechta and working with RCE Oldenburger Munsterland (Germany); three secondary schools (Germany, Romania, Latvia); Casa Carpului Didactic Dambovitza (ITE institution Romania); Daugavpils University (Latvia); Italian Association of Sustainability Science (Italy); Vytauto Didziojo University (Lithuania); and Karlova University (Czech Republic). The project's focus is implementation of Education for Sustainable Development into school curricula through: 1) Capacity building for teachers and educators; 2) School development as a whole institution approach and; 3) Policy making in relation to ESD in secondary schools.

6.6.5 Erasmus + KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices

Sustainability Framework for School Self-Assessment "Jump into Sustainable Lifestyle" (September 2020-2022)

In 2020 LfS Scotland/University of Edinburgh was part of a successful Erasmus+ partnership proposal, led by the Lithuanian Children and Youth Centre and working with the University of Vechta; EESTI People to People (Estonia) and Vytauto Didziojo University (Lithuania). The project aims to develop a holistic sustainability framework for school self-evaluation "Jump into Sustainable Lifestyle" and to empower teachers and pupils to be change agents in today's complex world.

6.6.6 Scottish Universities Insight Institute (SUII) -funded projects August 2020-21

In 2020 LfS Scotland supported two Scottish Universities Insight Institute (SUII) funded projects with a focus on responding to the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

1. [Agents of Change Toolkit \(ACT\)](#) for teachers and schools, led by University of Edinburgh and Glasgow School of Art. The ACT toolkit, a 'serious game', will facilitate teachers and schools acting as agents of change for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, helping educators build the national SDG indicators into their local targets, identifying relevant knowledge and networking with stakeholders within and beyond schools to consider solutions and evaluate their impact.

2. [Food activism in the schoolyard](#) building capacity for sustainable food systems in Scotland, led by University of Strathclyde and University of Edinburgh

Addressing key global challenges such as poverty, inequality and climate action, this programme is centred on growing food in school gardens to support the wellbeing, informed activism and democratic participation of young people across educational sectors. The goal of the programme is to co-produce an action plan for

developing food education in school gardens as a core element of young people's participation and activism in schools.

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 2020 LfS Scotland responded to consultations through its Task Groups and Steering Group members. Responses were submitted on behalf of members to:

- Scottish Government re. Publication of [Scotland's Supplementary Review - Scotland and the SDGs: A national review to drive action](#) (June 2020 with SDG Network)
- Right to Food consultation (September 2020)
- [Response to the final draft of the GTCS Professional Standards 2021](#) (November 2020)

During 2020 LfS Scotland continued to participate in the implementation of the Scottish Government's [Learning for Sustainability Action Plan](#) for the Government's Implementation Group Vision 2030+ Report as a member of the Learning for Sustainability network.

Throughout 2020 a selected group of academics across the UK, including LfS Scotland's Chair Rehema White and Director Pete Higgins, worked with the QAA and Advance HE to produce revised Education for Sustainable Development Guidance for UK HE institutions: [The draft is out for consultation](#) until 22 January 2021.

LfS Scotland continued to participate in [Scotland's Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) Network](#) development during the year and in November 2020 LfS Scotland's Chair Rehema White was elected as a Steering Group member. This coalition on sustainable development is open to all. In July 2020 the Scottish Government published its [landmark review](#) of the progress Scotland has made in delivering the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. The review was developed in partnership with SDG Network Scotland.

6.8 INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

LfS Scotland is Scotland's UNU recognized Regional Centre of Expertise in ESD and one of the global network of 175 RCEs (December 2020). In January 2020 Betsy King accepted an invitation from the Global Service Centre to become the RCE Regional Advisor for Europe for a two year period, to advise RCEs in the region and to review new RCE applications.

During 2020, there was regular contact with the Global RCE Network and UK and Ireland RCEs. We carried out the following international knowledge exchange and research activities.

6.8.1 UK and Ireland RCEs During 2020, regular contact with progress of RCEs in England, Wales and Ireland was maintained by online meetings. In June, we supported a [UK and Ireland online forum](#) hosted by RCE Dublin. 21 Steering Committee members from 6 RCEs (from the UK and Ireland) came together to consider the role of RCEs within and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of this forum was to provide solidarity and support, to share challenges and opportunities associated with the pandemic and to further consider the collaborations across UKI RCEs to be prioritised in the coming year in light of emerging or emergent opportunities and challenges. Dr Philip Vaughter, UNU-IAS in his keynote talk highlighted the

role of RCEs in creating an enabling environment to learn from the past, address the need for systems thinking and to support behaviour change through multidisciplinary 'joined-up' responses.

6.8.2 European RCEs. The two day Europe conference 2020, hosted by RCE East Midlands under the theme 'Climate Emergency: Joined-up Action', was held online because of Covid19. The event brought together more than 300 members of European RCEs, and those with an interest in collaborative local action and learning for sustainability. Participants appreciated the unexpected opportunity to attend online and many expressed a preference for future 'blended' conferences, particularly as a contribution to reducing carbon emissions. Short talks were pre-recorded which left space during the conference for discussion and sharing.

Insights from Scotland's work on Climate Justice Education (Beth Christie and Mary Collacott), Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning (Kirsten Leask) and Using Creativity to understand the Climate crisis (Laura Curtis-Moss) and the ESD Supervision Erasmus project (Betsy King) were shared as well as an update on LfS Scotland's activities (Rehema White).

Communication continues to be a key theme; with a consideration of how to ensure on-going and effective collaboration between ourselves as RCEs and with those we seek to engage and influence. This will be increasingly important with the transition from UNESCO's Global Action Programme to the ESD for 2030 programme.

6.8.3 Global RCE Conference 2020

LfS Scotland was successful in a bid to host the RCE Global conference in Edinburgh 21-23 November 2020, based on a draft programme and outline funding options. The conference had been timed to follow the Global Climate Conference COP26 in Glasgow. Along with COP26, Covid19 restrictions have resulted in this event being postponed to November 2021. LfS Scotland will be working with the Global RCE Service Centre to host two pre-conference webinars in February and June 2021 and is exploring the potential for a blended (online and face-to-face) conference in November 2021.

6.9 PARTNERSHIPS

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

Examples include working with:

- Tertiary education sector leading organisations such as the QAA, EAUC Scotland and the College Development Network;
- NGOs supporting education or other aspects of sustainability, such as the National Network of Outdoor Learning, International Development Education Association for Scotland, Scotland Malawi partnership, YouthLink Scotland;
- Schools and teacher education organisations such as Education Scotland, the Regional Improvement Collaboratives, GTCS, the SQA and several local authorities;
- UK level groups and organisations such as The British Council, TEESNet and the Our Shared World coalition;
- International partners such as UNESCO and our Erasmus+ partners (see 6.6.4 and 6.6.5)
- 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. Covid19 limited many Task Groups activities during this period.

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

This is an ongoing networking group 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.

From Autumn 2020 the Higher Education and Further Education groups aimed to hold short theme based online events together. The September event focused on **"Learning from Covid-19 for ESD: causes, consequences and curriculum"** and examined how to teach in a blended or virtual environment and the impact of Covid-19 on learning and teaching. The University of Highlands and Islands shared experiences of the challenges and benefits of remote learning. Participants considered how to integrate Covid-19 into teaching to enhance ESD, highlighting systems thinking and pedagogical aspects such as flipped classroom and permission to trial new approaches.

In November, an event titled **ESD and Health and Wellbeing** included Psychotherapist Vikki Simpson-Price - Psychotherapist speaking about the nature of staff and student burnout; Barry Carmichael sharing Dundee and Angus College's Wellness Recovery Action Plan and Nadine Andrews, Climate Psychology Alliance, speaking about the nature of Climate Anxiety. At the next meeting on 15th January 2021 the group will develop a joint response to QAA's consultation on its revised Guidance on Education for Sustainable Development.

6.10.2 Communications (Convenor, Sarah Ford- Hutchinson)

The Communications Task Group exists to improve awareness of LfS Scotland, and to share communications best practice among its members. 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 was re-formed with support offered by several key members. However, in March 2020 this Task Group was paused and the Convenor devoted time to advising LfS Scotland staff on communications issues and engagement with members. The 2020 Membership Survey was distributed in October 2020, with a focus on finding out more about members' needs.

6.10.3 Communities (Convenor, Rehema White)

This task group was dormant in 2020, 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 the SUII project *'The centrality of 'folk, place and work' in the UN SDGs: learning with Falkland Estate towards Scotland's Land Use Strategy* led by University of St Andrews and University of Dundee.

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. This has involved a “New Connections” exhibition in Orkney and Shetland and a Virtual Museum. A proposal for an international Summit to be held in Inverness as part of the Being Human Festival with a focus on intergenerational resilience has been delayed because of Covid19.

6.10.5 Connection to Nature (Convenor Lesley Totten)

This task group was dormant in 2020 whilst awaiting a clear task to pursue in the future.

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 2020) Sustainability and Social Responsibility International Foundation programme for 33 international students. This programme will be delivered again in 2021.

6.11.2 LfS Scotland (Mary Collacott, Betsy King, Pete Higgins) was engaged by University of Edinburgh Sustainability and Social Responsibility Department to deliver two 12 week online sustainability and social responsibility courses for staff January – March 2020 and August – October 2020. Further courses will be delivered in 2021.

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.

6.11.4 LfS Scotland (Mary Collacott, Betsy King) were engaged by University of St Andrews to undertake small-scale research as part of the ODA Supporting Skills, Competencies And Learning for Engagement in sustainable forest management project. Investigation is underway to determine how ESD professional learning activities for teachers can be adapted or developed to enhance capacity of educators in schools around the Selva Maya in Mexico and Guatemala. An example case study will be prepared for use in Scottish education.

6.12 REPRESENTATION ON NATIONAL and INTERNATIONAL GROUPS

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

- a. **Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs** as Regional Adviser to the RCE Community (Europe) (from January 2020)

- b. **Scottish Government Learning for Sustainability Network** (member from June 2019- ongoing)
- c. **Scotland SDG Network** (Steering Group member from December 2020)
- d. **Teacher Education for Equity and Environmental Sustainability Network (TEESNet)** Steering Group member and Scotland representative
- e. **Scottish Education Awards** –Learning for Sustainability Award judge (June 2020)
- f. **GTCS Professional Standards Review – LfS Steering Group** member (from March 2018 – ongoing)
- g. **RSPB Nature of Scotland Award** judge (Autumn 2020)
- h. **UK Our Shared World Coalition** Steering Group member (from Autumn 2019, ongoing)
- i. **College Development Network Awards** Judge (September 2020)
- j. **Scottish Qualifications Authority Learning for Sustainability External Steering** Group member (to June 2020).
- k. **National Network of Outdoor Learning** (November 2019 and ongoing)
- l. **Blue-Action Societal engagement group** (member 2019 and ongoing)
- m. **College Development Network Climate Emergency** Expert Group (October 2019 and ongoing)
- n. **China Nature Education Network** expert adviser (2019- ongoing)
- o. **Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Advisory Group** reviewing the Education for Sustainable Development Guidance (2020 and ongoing)
- p. **Scottish Government** - Scottish Biodiversity Programme Stakeholder Engagement Group (member September 2020)

6.13 PUBLICATIONS

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

- Research papers produced and in progress, e.g. [Educational Outcomes of Learning for Sustainability Literature Review](#) (Christie and Higgins 2020).
- Connecting Classrooms schools case studies and videos eg ‘[Discover the power of Learning for Sustainability](#)’; schools’ [Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning journeys](#) (Lockerbie Primary, Holyrood RC High School, Kilmaron School; [Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning ‘how-to’ animations](#)).
- Articles eg ‘[Learning our Way to a Sustainable Future](#)’ in Issue 84 GTCS Teaching Scotland; LfS Scotland project in ‘[RCE Contributions to a more Sustainable World](#) 2015 – 2019’
- Papers on learning for sustainability in universities including ‘Education for sustainable development in higher education’ in Environmental Scientist November 2020.

7. NEXT STEPS

We have developed a new Strategic Plan for LfS Scotland in 2020-2025 in the context of the new UNESCO Plan for ESD to 2030.

Priority activities are:

1. We weave connections across sectors within Scotland and with our international partners
1.1 Increase engagement in LfS in Scotland across all sectors
1.2 Share knowledge, achievements and opportunities for members
1.3 Organise and co-host events for members, within and across sectors
1.4 Coordinate task groups to address issues of concern and interest for our members

1.5 Share our learning with others across the UN RCE Network
2. We co-produce, pioneer and practise new knowledge and approaches and curate materials and resources with and for educators, organisations and communities
2.1 Play a leading role in debating, enabling and monitoring the UN SDGs in Scotland and beyond (especially but not exclusively SDG 4.7)
2.2 Contribute to the conceptualisation as well as the practice in this field
2.3 Develop and facilitate professional development for educators
3. We advocate and provide strategic advice for effective learning for sustainability policy
3.1 Lead on and contribute to policy debates In Scotland, UK and internationally
3.2 Provide advice to practitioners, policy and decision makers
3.3 Lead and contribute to expert groups to address LfS issues
3.4 Work with local authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives for progress across Scotland in sustainability capacities
4. We lead, monitor and evaluate projects and programmes locally and internationally, often in partnership
4.1 Pursue the implementation of LfS in the school sector, including teacher education at all stages
4.2 Support learning in communities and the Third Sector
4.3 Engage with the Further Education and Higher Education sectors to integrate and embed LfS
4.4 Undertake consultancy projects to progress LfS

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 2020