BLENHEIM PALACE
EDUCATION

This is an introduction to Blenheim's Sustainability Programme.

This module explores the present and the future of Blenheim, Blenheim Palace, and Blenheim Estates. Topics include Citizenship and Science.

"Buy less, choose well, make it last. Quality rather than quantity: That is true sustainability."

Vivienne Westwood

Society

You are a member of a **community** as a citizen or a resident.

Q: What is a community?

A: It's a place where a group of people live or learn or work together.

A: It's a place where a group of people share the available resources together e.g., air, water, food.

All members of a community have **rights** and **responsibilities**.
Human rights are based on **dignity, fairness, respect** and **equality**.

Q: What are our rights in the UK?

A: We have the right to **life**. We have the right to **privacy**. We have the right to have **personal beliefs**.

A: Children have the rights to **play, safety** and **protection**, to **healthcare** and **education**, to **voice their opinions** and to **be heard**.

Q: What are our responsibilities in the UK?

A: We must respect other people's rights, opinions, and beliefs. We must respect the laws.

A: We have the duty to understand the community we are in and to care and respect all its members.

Environment

All members of a community are responsible for maintaining a healthy **environment.**

Q: What is the **environment**?

A: It's the world around us. It's where community members live, learn and work.

A: It's the space where we live, learn and work. The environment is **everything on the planet**: people, animals, plants, forests, oceans and the sky. It's everything on land, on water and in the air.

Economy

The economy is a way of securing the **basic needs** of all members of the community.

Q: What are the basic needs?

A: All human beings have basic needs such as **breathing, eating, drinking** and **sleeping**. They have the right to keep safe and warm, to be healthy and to live a peaceful life.

Q: What does the environment provide to communities to meet their basic needs?

A: The environment provides **food, water, air** and **materials** to build homes.

Community members have the right to live by using the resources the environment provides.
To live a healthy life, people have the responsibility of maintaining a healthy environment.

Sustainability

The UK is considered a rich country where there are a lot of resources and there is enough for everyone, but people **waste** a lot of resources and there will not be enough for future generations.

Q: What do we waste?

A: We waste a lot of food. We waste a lot of clean water. We waste a lot of energy (electricity/heating).

A: We also **pollute** the air we breathe and the water that is available to us.

Q: What is **sustainability**?

A: It's the idea of caring about the world we live in and keeping it safe for future generations.

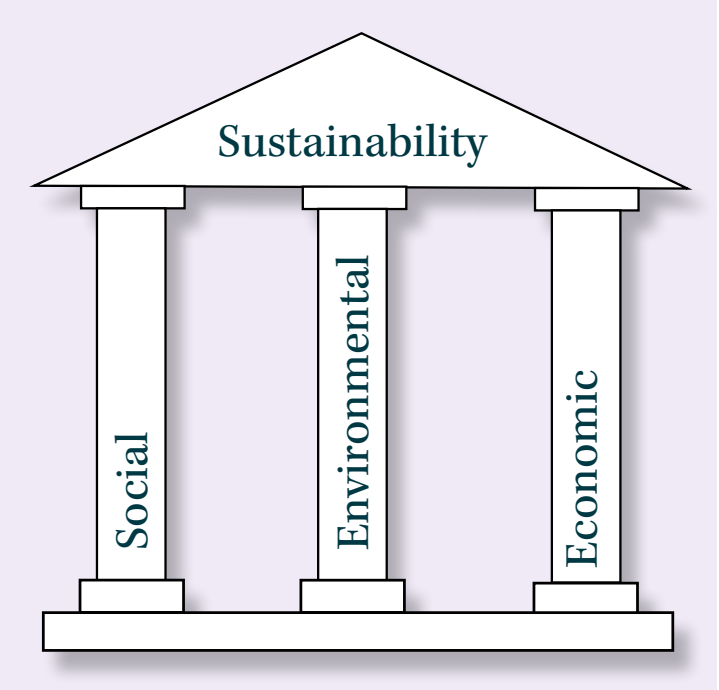
We are currently using more resources than we need, and there are communities where there are not enough resources for everyone. This is not a sustainable way to live.

Q: How can communities become sustainable?

A: By setting fair **goals** for everyone to aim and respect.

- People should put their rubbish in bins, not on the ground whether it's inside or outside.
- People should reduce the use of single-use plastic at home.
- People should reuse food containers.
- People should recycle all the paper, glass and plastic.
- People should compost the non-consumed food.
- People could save energy by turning off lights when they are not in a room.
- People could save water by using only what they need.

A sustainable community is a place where **Society** will live in harmony with the **Environment** and where the **Economy** supports a fair and equal life for everyone.



The United Nations has defined **17 Sustainable Development Goals** for the world. Here are some of the goals:

1. No poverty: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. Zero hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. Good health and well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. Quality education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5. Gender equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
6. Clean water and sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Affordable and clean energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
8. Decent work and economic growth: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
10. Reduced inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
11. Sustainable cities and communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
12. Responsible consumption and production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13. Climate action: take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
14. Life below water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
15. Life on land: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
17. Partnerships for the goals: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Climate change

Climate change is a natural phenomenon that occurs repeatedly through human history. It can be a period of cooling down or a period of warming up.

Q: Do you know a cooling down period?

A: The Ice Age about 20,000 years ago. Pre-historic animals like the woolly mammoths, the sabre-toothed tigers and the dire wolves became **extinct** during this period.

Q: Why did these animals become extinct?

A: Because they had **no food to eat**. Everything was cold and frozen.

Climate change affects **food production** and **food accessibility** around the world. The current climate change is a warming up period.

Q: How is climate change affecting food production and accessibility?

A: The warmer temperatures cause an imbalance in the environment and the consequences are **floods, mudslides, wildfires, droughts,** etc.

Climate change causes more rainfall in some places and less rainfall in other places. Drought is when there is not enough water, and flood is when there is too much water. Too much water will kill plants and not enough water will kill animals.

Q: Have you noticed the effects of climate change in the UK?

A: There are heatwaves in the summer and there are periods of snow in the winter.

Q: How is climate change affecting the people in the UK?

A: Some farmers have lost their crops due to the heatwaves and floods. This means there is less food.

Save the Children

UNICEF

Global warming

Global warming is also a natural phenomenon. The combination of climate change, global warming, and people's choices of polluting environment has worsened the situation.

Q: How is global warming a natural phenomenon?

A: There are natural gases in the air that we breathe. One of them is **carbon dioxide**. Human life could not exist without carbon dioxide, but the problem is that there is too much of it in the air.

Q: How is there too much carbon dioxide in the air?

A: Most vehicles we use emit a lot of carbon dioxide by burning fuel (petrol and diesel).

Blenheim's Sustainability Programme

To address the waste problem, we **Reduce – Reuse – Recycle**

We have reduced our electricity consumption.

We have installed light sensors in the toilet areas. This means that the light will come on only when there is movement in the area.

We have reduced our water consumption.

We have installed touch sensors on our sinks. This means that the water will run when there is movement under the tap. We have also installed a dual-flush system on our toilets. This means that we can flush less water than with traditional flush systems.

We have reduced the amount of waste sent to landfill.

We have installed different bins around the Palace and the Park. We encourage staff and visitors to dispose of their rubbish in the appropriate bin: General Waste, Recyclable Waste and Organic Waste.

We no longer use plastic cutlery or paper cups in the cafés.

We use re-usable cups and recycled wooden cutlery.

To address the pollution problem, we **Replace – Regenerate**

We use less petrol and diesel vehicles.

We have replaced many of our vehicles with electric cars and electric buggies.

We are on a mission to plant a thousand trees.

We are planting oak trees, cherry trees, walnut trees and beech trees. Oak trees are very good at absorbing carbon dioxide and keeping it away from us for a very long time.

We are rewilding parts of the estate.

We hope to encourage bees and butterflies to come and pollinate our flowers.

We let the grass grow on some parts of the Estate.

We leave a dripline zone (Root Zone) under trees where we don't cut the grass. It is a zone where rainwater falls off the leaves and nourishes the soil. This becomes a good area for pollinators.

Read Blenheim's Sustainability report

Our rights and responsibilities

At Blenheim, we have made the choice to become green and sustainable because we feel responsible for the communities living around us.

We have the **right** to life. To stay alive, we need food. All living creatures (humans, animals, and plants) are part of the **food chain**.

Q: What rights do animals and plants have?

A: As much as we have Human rights, there are also Animal rights and Plant rights. Animals and plants have the right to **life** too. That's why there are people who speak on behalf of animals and plants to protect them from harm and extinction.

Q: How can we ensure that we respect animal and plant rights?

A: Like us, they have the right to **food** too. They have the right to **shelter**. They live in the environment.

Rights are needs.
All living creatures have the right and the need **to be safe** and **cared for.**

At Blenheim, we care for all animal and plant life on our land. We ensure that all living things have shelter and food. We look after the biodiversity of our land. We are the custodians of the natural environment around us.

A **responsibility** is an expected action.

- We are responsible for making the right choices for our community.
- We are responsible for finding the right information to make the right choices.
- We are responsible for our decisions, actions, and inaction.

Our behaviours affect others in the community, they affect people, animals, and plants.

At Blenheim, we encourage green tourism by offering discounts to visitors arriving by public transport. We are planning new cycle paths and footpaths for our guests and visitors to enjoy healthy walks, runs, and rides. We provide a green space for the enjoyment of our local community.

If you have any questions or comments about this self-led resource, please contact our Education Team at **education@blenheimpalace.com**

"We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."

Native American proverb

Things to observe:













Light sensors
Tap sensors
Food wrapping
Reusable cups
Wooden cutlery
Compost heap
Segregated bins
Estate electric cars, vans, buggies
Dripline zones under trees
Wildflowers
Young trees