

Sustainable Northern Ireland runs the Sustainability Audit Matrix & the NEW Integrated Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool, manages the Sustainability Exchange, provides one-to-one mentoring, delivers capacity building training packages and communicates information on sustainable development via research papers, guidance documents and briefing notes. Visit the website for more information on our services. www.sustainableni.org

Sustainable Northern Ireland receives funding from:



Sustainable Northern Ireland Annual Review 2012-13

The Implications of the 2006 Duty for Sustainable Development

2012-13 was heavily dominated with talk of the impending guidance document detailing how OFMDFM will determine Councils' compliance with the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development. A draft document was issued by OFMDFM outlining a series of questions to which Councils must respond to provide evidence of compliance with the Duty. In line with this, SNI's work activities throughout the year have focussed on developing materials and providing support that will help Councils through this process.

Last year's move to work in closer partnership with NILGA has provided SNI with an enhanced opportunity to support Councils as they prepare to report to OFMDFM. NILGA (supported by SNI) and OFMDFM jointly hosted an information event providing local government with an opportunity to respond to the guidance. Further, the Local Government Sustainable Development Forum, run jointly by SNI and NILGA was established with the inaugural meeting taking place in March 2013. This Forum will provide an excellent conduit for members to exchange ideas, share best practice, gain advice and support for demonstrating compliance with the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development.

Other work carried out by SNI during the year included:

- The production of a briefing paper to align the Sustainability Audit Matrix (SAM) to OFMDFM's Guidance. This will make responding to Statutory Duty compliance a much less laborious task for Councils which have already completed the SAM.
- SNI have continued to roll out the SAM and deliver training to meet increased demand from Councils.

This year, the Matrix was also adapted for use by other organisations in response to interest from other public authorities.

- Creation of an additional tool, the Integrated Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool to help with assessment of sustainability impacts.
- Finally, SNI have been actively engaged in a number of taskforce groups to influence and keep abreast of issues such as biodiversity and climate change adaptation which are relevant to the sustainable development agenda and impact upon Councils' activities, especially in respect of service delivery.

OFMDFM is required to report annually on the number of public authorities acting in compliance with the statutory duty to promote the achievement of sustainable development provided by s.25 of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 (c.33)

Extract from the draft guidance document

Our Plan for 2013/14

Our work plan for 2013/14 will continue to prioritise providing an unrivalled support service to Councils in integrating sustainable practice. Through the Forum, we will seek to raise the profile of sustainability and provide best practice examples of sustainable development within local government and beyond. SNI will communicate and work to influence the sustainability agenda during this period of reform for our local authorities, under the direction of Claire Cockerill, SNI's new Executive Director. Our very kind thanks are extended to Patricia Mackey who ably delivered SNI's work for over five years. We wish her every success in her new position with North Down Borough Council.

Any Council, or other organisation wishing to avail of SNI's help should e-mail info@sustainableni.org

SNI Achievements 2012-13



SNI has developed a new tool that organisations can use to help them make more sustainable decisions. The draft guidance issued on the 2006 Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development requires public authorities to demonstrate their approach to sustainable decision making. The purpose of the ISIA is to ensure that economic, social and environmental issues are taken into account during activity planning.

Integrated Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool

Preparing Councils for the Sustainable Development Guidance

With Public Authorities' reporting obligations on the Duty for Sustainable Development imminent, SNI has spent the final 6 months of 2012-13 actively assisting Councils to prepare. The draft guidance document consists of 15 questions which will be used by OFMDFM to assess whether they are satisfied that a Public Authority is complying with the Duty or if they think that a compliance plan is needed.

To prepare Councils for the reporting obligations SNI has:

- Given presentations;
- Undertaken awareness raising training programmes;
- Run SAM training combined with guidance training ; and
- Established the Local Government Sustainable Development Forum



During 2012-13, SNI undertook SAM training with Armagh City and District Council, Moyle District Council and Newry And Mourne District Council. A SAM re-assessment took place in Omagh District Council.

More Councils have asked to join the scheme in 2013-14. The SAM continues to be the main method of assessing sustainability.



Sustainability Audit Matrix

Partnership with NILGA



2012/13 saw big changes for SNI with a physical relocation to the NILGA offices. This, together with a formalised partnership agreement, has led to greater co-operation and co-ordination of work activities between the two organisations. The partnership has enabled SNI to communicate directly with NILGA's Waste and Environment Committee.

Much of the work that SNI does for sustainable development is unique, not just in Northern Ireland but also in the UK. SNI was delighted to be shortlisted for a prestigious Sustainable Ireland Award for the work we have done in developing and implementing the Sustainability Audit Matrix. While we did not win in our category we were honoured to be shortlisted.



Shortlisted for a Sustainable Ireland Award

Effective communication is a significant aspect of achieving sustainability. During the year SNI launched a new e-bulletin version of sustainable which will facilitate access by a wider audience. Sustainability stakeholders can add themselves to the mailing list via SNI's website.



Launch of our new E-Bulletin

Working with Local Government

At the beginning of 2012-13 SNI was informed that we had been successful in securing an additional three years funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This was a significant accomplishment and comes at a crucial time allowing SNI to get on with the job of supporting local government to understand their contribution to the sustainability agenda and prepare for responding on the Duty for Sustainable Development.

In June 2012, OFMDFM produced a draft Guidance Document on the Duty. This outlined how Councils will have to complete a detailed report, providing answers to 15 questions that will be used by OFMDFM to determine their compliance.

In assessing whether each Council is complying with the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development, OFMDFM will look for evidence of the following:

- That each Council has taken a strategic direction and shows leadership for Sustainable Development
- That each Council has taken a systematic approach to Sustainable Development
- That each Council can demonstrate a measurable improvement in Sustainable Development outcomes

In September 2012, SNI published a briefing paper on how to use the Sustainability Audit Matrix (SAM) results to demonstrate compliance with the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development. The briefing paper contains a series of tables that link the questions issued by OFMDFM to relevant SAM elements. This makes it very easy for Councils who have completed the SAM to 'cut and paste' the information gathered for the SAM, as well as any additional information, to provide complete and comprehensive answers when the final Guidance Document on the Duty is released.

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www.sustainableni.org

Sustainable Northern Ireland Briefing Paper | September 2012

Completing the Statutory Guidance Document to Demonstrate Compliance with the SD Duty

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) recently issued a guidance document detailing how they are going to determine Councils compliance with the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development by having individual Councils provide a report on what they are doing. The reporting mechanism takes the form of 15 questions that all Councils are required to provide detailed answers and evidence for.

Sustainable Northern Ireland's Sustainability Audit Matrix (SAM) can be used to help you complete your reporting requirements. This is a briefing paper on how to use your Sustainability Audit Matrix (SAM) results to demonstrate your compliance with the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development and how to use the information gathered to complete the 15 questions asked in OFMDFM's guidance document.

This briefing paper contains tables with the 15 questions being asked by OFMDFM and information on how each question links to at least one of the 25 elements of the SAM. You can cut and paste the information gathered via the SAM, as well as adding additional information, to provide OFMDFM with a complete and comprehensive answer to their questions.

In assessing whether your Council is complying with the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development OFMDFM will be using your answers to the 15 questions, asked in their Guidance Document, to look for evidence of the following:

1. That your Council has taken a strategic direction and shows leadership for Sustainable Development
2. That your Council has taken a systematic approach to Sustainable Development
3. That your Council can demonstrate a measurable improvement in Sustainable Development outcomes

This guidance document relates to the
Statutory Duty on the achievement of Sustainable Development
Section 25 of the (Northern Ireland) Miscellaneous Provisions Act

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www.sustainableni.org

Sustainable Northern Ireland
Unit 5B, Castlereagh Business Park
478 Castlereagh Road, BELFAST, BT5 6BG
info@sustainableni.org



The SD Duty, Measuring Performance, Mechanism for Reporting and Demonstrating Compliance

Until then, SNI has been helping to ensure that Councils are well prepared and know what is expected of them. SNI is assisting Councils in using the Sustainability Audit Matrix (SAM) to gather evidence of good practice and to ensure that all departments understand their obligations. These SAM results can then be used to demonstrate compliance with the Duty as outlined in SNI's briefing document. In other Councils, SNI is running capacity building initiatives to show each department how they contribute to the Council's compliance with the Duty. This will make it easier for Councils to gather the information needed from across the entire organisation.

For more information on our work with local government e-mail: info@sustainableni.org

The NEW Integrated Sustainability Impact Assessment tool

SNI's NEW Integrated Sustainability Impact Assessment (ISIA) is a decision making tool designed to help organisations assess the economic, environmental and social impacts of activities in order to make more sustainable decisions. Adopting a sustainable approach means considering the long term and short term effects of an action. This tool can be used to ensure that impacts on future generations are taken into consideration.

For public authorities, the ISIA tool will help them to demonstrate their 'regard' for the Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development providing evidence that sustainability has been integrated throughout decision making processes. For private companies, the ISIA can be used to demonstrate regard for sustainable development and a higher level of corporate responsibility to customers.

The tool has been designed to be easy to use. The step by step methodology can be applied to new or existing activities (policies, plans, projects, events) to check consistency with the principles of sustainable development.

A preliminary assessment stage will help to identify options for achieving the objectives of activities and screen out those for which a full assessment is not necessary. The full assessment will facilitate a comprehensive analysis of how activities may effect:

- **Legal acceptable standards**

⇒ does legislation exist that the organization has responsibility for?

- **Trends demonstrated by existing data sets**

⇒ is an existing data trend positive or negative, how will the proposed activity affect it?

- **Permanence of any impacts**

⇒ if the proposed activity has a negative impact on any of the 15 assessment elements will this be permanent or reversible?)

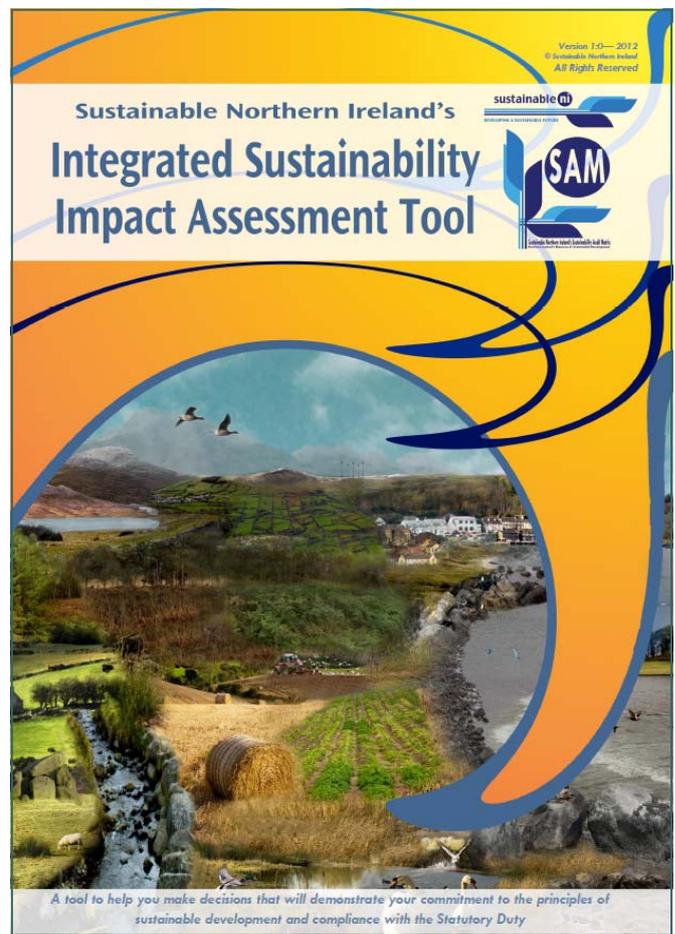
- **Impacts on future generations**

⇒ will the proposed activity have a positive or negative impact?

Activities are scored to calculate a sustainability rating, allowing comparison of options and ultimately identification of the most sustainable option.

It is important to have a consistent approach for assessing activities against a sustainability framework. The ISIA methodology is compatible with SNI's Sustainability Audit Matrix and criteria used for assessment are aligned with the criteria used in the SAM. This allows the ISIA to be used together with the SAM as one initiative or independently.

SNI will be rolling out the ISIA throughout 2013-14. For more information, contact info@sustainableni.org



Services Available to Local Government (and other sustainability Stakeholders)

SNI's primary stakeholders are local government. Information on the services that we provide can be found on the website (www.sustainableni.org):

SNI undertakes Activities to inform stakeholders of the services we offer as well as more specific examples of work e.g. the SAM, the Sustainability Exchange, and the NEW integrated Sustainability Impact Assessment tool;

SNI Publications for download of all past issues of our newsletter (sustainABLE), research papers, annual reports and guidance manuals, and links to our NEW e-bulletin of sustainABLE; and

SNI disseminates information on all the latest sustainable development activities including the published version of the SD Strategy, Implementation Plan and draft guidance on complying with the SD Duty.

Sustainable Northern Ireland is committed to the principles of sustainable development and designs work programmes that facilitate organisations to integrate these principles throughout their own operations and business planning functions.

Sustainable Northern Ireland's role is to increase an organisation's understanding of how sustainability is relevant throughout the whole of their business. This helps to increase the effectiveness of communication throughout the organisation as sustainable development links across all departments and all work streams due to its cross-cutting principles.

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DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP

SNI is able to offer Local Government* :

- **Tailor-made Training Packages** using an organisations existing documents (Corporate Plan or Service Level Plans) to explain sustainable development
- **One-on-one Support** to mentor officers to communicate sustainable development, write action plans and develop programmes to monitor progress.
- **Awareness Raising of Employees** to understand the statutory Duty for Sustainable Development.
- **Capacity Building for Elected Members** to increase understanding and application of sustainable development principles for better decision making
- **Sustainability Audit Matrix Training for Council Officers** to undertake a sustainability audit and apply the findings to improve integration of sustainable development through all local government services and functions.
- **Use of the Integrated Sustainability Impact Assessment tool** to help Council officers and elected members assess the impact of any proposed activities, policies or Council decisions on the achievement of sustainable development.



If you would like further information on the services that SNI can offer please contact:

info@sustainableni.org or visit www.sustainableni.org

* For a fee these services are also available to other stakeholders.

Working in Partnership and SD Communication

Sustainable Northern Ireland works in partnership with various organisations and groups to maximise impact and to help influence the integration of sustainability principles within other work programmes.

Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

SNI initiated a formal partnership with NILGA where, in addition to relocating to share office space, we have also worked together to establish the Local Government Sustainable Development Forum and liaise with OFMDFM regarding their new guidance on the SD Duty.

Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

While SNI no longer shares accommodation with NIEL, they continue to be an important partner within our annual work plan as well as maintaining our financial and administrative records. We continue to be grateful for this.

Working Groups

Other groups that SNI is involved in include:

● Stop Climate Chaos

The goals of this Coalition are to raise awareness of climate change and to change behaviour and public policies to deliver local and global benefits.

● NIEL's Transport Working Group

This group is working towards providing input to the Regional Transportation Strategy and other policy avenues to promote a more sustainable approach to transport.

● Sustainable Food Communities (NI)

Members of the Advisory Panel strive to promote sustainable food consumption and production by working towards the creation of sustainable food communities.

● Climate Change and Health Group.

Increasing awareness of the links between climate change and health is the primary purpose of this group.



During 2012-13, SNI issued three e-bulletin version of **sustainABLE**. This e-bulletin replaces the previous on-line version and will be used to help SNI disseminate up-to-date information relevant to the field of sustainability.

Features in this year's editions of **sustainABLE** included:

- A review of RIO+20, the UN Conference on SD
- What Nature Does for Us - SNI's poster visually portraying economic, social and environmental uses of ecosystems
- Achieving Sustainable Communities - a summary of SNI's report on manual for local government

To be placed on the electronic mailing list for **sustainABLE** or connect to SNI social network sites, register via the website



Directors' Statement on The Summary Financial Statement

The Directors present herewith the summary financial statement of Sustainable Northern Ireland Ltd for the year ended **31st March 2013** and confirm the following:

- The summary financial statement is not the statutory financial accounts but is a summary of information relating to both the Statement of Financial Activities and the balance sheet;
- The full financial statements from which the summary is derived have been externally examined by an independent auditor; and he has provided an unqualified report;
- The full annual accounts, the external examiners report and the trustees'/directors' report can be obtained on application to Sustainable Northern Ireland Ltd;
- The annual accounts were approved by the Board on **3rd October 2013**.

This directors' statement was approved by the board of Directors on **3rd October 2013** and signed on its behalf by:

Patricia Mackey
Secretary



Independent Auditors'
Statement to the Members
of Sustainable Northern
Ireland Ltd

I have examined the summary financial statement of Sustainable Northern Ireland Limited.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

The Directors are responsible for preparing the summary financial statement in accordance with applicable law. My responsibility is to report to you my opinion on the consistency of the summary financial statement with the full annual accounts and Directors' Report, and its compliance with the relevant requirements of Section 427 of the Companies Act 2006 and the regulations made thereunder. I also read the other information contained in the summary financial statement and consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summary financial statement.

Basis of opinion

I conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6 "The auditors' statement on the summary financial statement" issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom.

Opinion

In my opinion the summary financial statement is consistent with the full annual accounts and directors' report of Sustainable Northern Ireland Ltd for the year ended 31st March 2012 and complies with the applicable requirements of Section 427 of the Companies Act 2006, and the regulations made thereunder.

Nigel V Skillen FCA
Diamond & Skillen
Chartered Accountants and Registered auditor
Sinclair House,
89/101 Royal Avenue,
Belfast, BT1 1FE

3rd October 2013

SNI Ltd Extracted Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31st March 2013

	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Other Projects (restricted)	2013 Totals	2012 Totals
	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources				
Grants			51,611.15	58,136
Subscriptions				-
Other income				-
Project income				-
Investment income			108.65	39
Total incoming resources			51,719.80	58,175
Resources Expended				
Employee costs				43,537
Premises costs				3,126
Advertising costs			1,088.65	260
General administrative costs				1,020
Legal and professional fees			1,825	1,425
Programme costs				1,895
Other expenses				174
Total resources expended				51,437
Net incoming resources				6,738
Depreciation of fixed assets				-
Transfer between funds				-
Net movement in funds				6,738
Fund balances b/f at 1-April				40,170
Fund balances c/f at 31-March				46,908

	2012 £
Fixed Assets	
Tangible assets	-
	0
Current Assets	
Debtors	15,210
Cash at bank and in hand	48,123
	63,333
Creditors: Amount falling due within one year	(16,425)
Net current assets	46,908
Total assets less current liabilities	46,908
Accumulated funds	
<i>Unrestricted income funds:</i>	
General funds	46,908
<i>Restricted income funds:</i>	
No restricted funds	-
Total funds	46,908

«« Balance Sheet as at
31st March 2013



The summary financial statement was approved by the Board of Directors on **3rd October 2013** and signed on their behalf by:


Mr Sam Knox
Chairperson of Directors


Dr Sue Christie
Treasurer

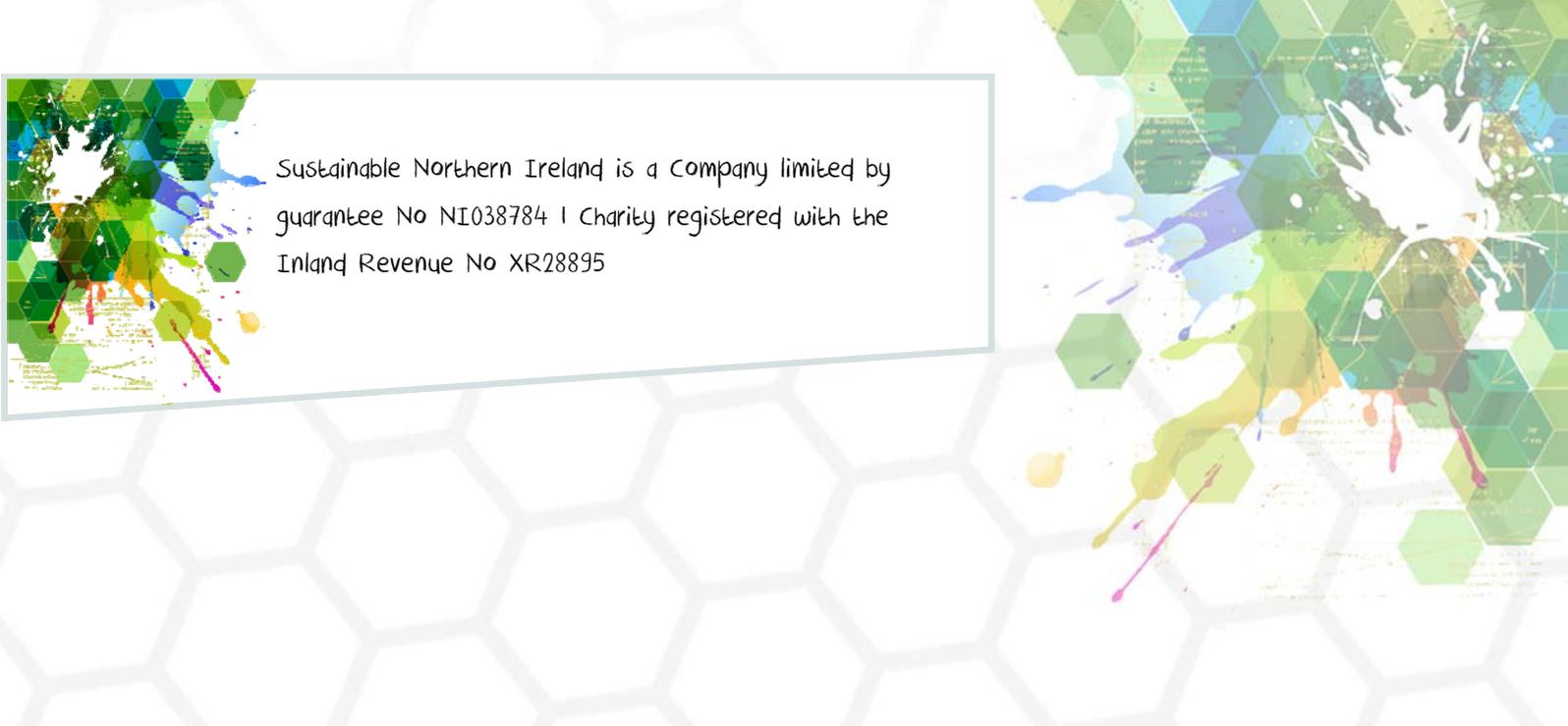
Sustainable Northern Ireland's Board of Directors meet four times per annum to agree the strategic direction of the organisation and to provide guidance and support to the Sustainable Development Officer.

The Board of Directors is drawn from experience across a wide ranging field including local government, environmental health, policy development, sustainable communities, community development, academia, business and the environment.

In addition to a five year business plan, SNI works towards the targets identified within our Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Work Plan and as of 2012-13 the commitments made within the Memorandum of Understanding we share with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association.

2012/13 Board of Directors

Chairperson	Samuel Knox
Vice Chairperson	Murray Watt
Treasurer	Sue Christie
Honorary Secretary	Gary McFarlane
Directors	John Barry Eileen Campbell Graeme Bannister Ian Leitch Thompson Keating (until November 2012) Anne Donaghy Karen Smyth Gary Ritchie (from November 2012)
Secretary	Patricia Mackey (Until March 2013)



Sustainable Northern Ireland is a Company limited by guarantee No NI038784 | Charity registered with the Inland Revenue No XR28895



2012/13 Staff Members

Patricia Mackey
Executive Director
(Until end March 2013)

Vanja Milicevic
Placement Student funded by the British Council
Through the IAESTE Programme
(May–August 2012)

Sustainable Northern Ireland
Unit 5B, Castlereagh Business Park
478 Castlereagh Road
BELFAST
BT5 6BQ

Tel: 028 9070 9227
E-Mail: info@sustainableni.org
Web: www.sustainableni.org
www.sustainabilityexchange.spruz.com