

# Sustainable Development Indicators: Making them work

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UNITED KINGDOM

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# UK Strategy

***“A better quality of life for everyone,  
now and for generations to come”***

# Why do we need indicators?

- **report on progress**
- **inform decision making**
- **get engagement**
- **be held to account**
- **summarise and simplify**
- **help focus on specific issues**
- **raise awareness**

# What do we expect of them?

- **meaningful and resonant**
- **robust and technically sound**
- **sensitive and reportable regularly**
- **based on available data**
- **have objectives or targets**

# Wide involvement

- **Consult within Government**
- **Consultation documents**
- **Stakeholder seminars / workshops**
- **Advisory groups of experts**
- **Public focus groups**
- **International experience**
  - **OECD, UN CSD, EU**

# UK approach

- **15 headline indicators**
  - ✓ focus attention on what sustainable development means
  - ✓ give a broad overview of progress

# UK approach

- **15 headline indicators**

Economic growth

Health

Road traffic

Investment

Housing

River water quality

Employment

Crime

Wildlife

Poverty & social exclusion

Climate change

Land use

Education

Air quality

Waste

# UK approach

- **15 headline indicators**
- **132 core indicators**
- **Government Commitments:**
  - ✓ **Headline indicators to move in the right direction**
  - ✓ **Policies will be changed if necessary**
  - ✓ **Others expected to take action too**
  - ✓ **Annual progress reports**
  - ✓ **Review after five years**





# The Barometer leaflet

## Quality of Life Barometer

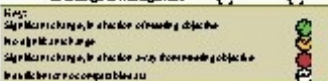
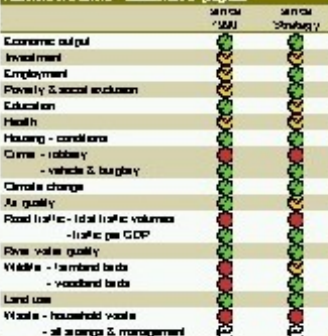
Annual Report 2002



Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone now and for generations to come.

The 15 Headline indicators of sustainable development – a quality of life barometer – provide an overview of progress in meeting the objectives of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy – A better quality of life (May 1999).

Headline indicators – assessment of progress



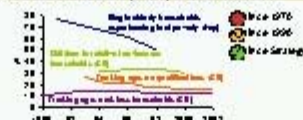
When a trend is unacceptable, the government will adjust its policies, and look to other partners in taking action. A full assessment of progress can be found in the third Government Annual Report on Sustainable Development, 'Achieving a better quality of life'. The indicators are updated at various times in the year, so not all figures are available.

[www.sustainable-development.gov.uk](http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk)

For more details please call 0161 275 6616

## H4 POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

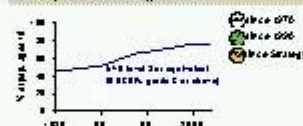
Selected indicators on poverty & social exclusion



- 11.2% of working age people were in workless households in 2000, reduced from 12.2% in 1996, 15.4% were without qualifications, reduced from 16.7% since 1996.
- 31% of children were in relative low-income households (after housing costs) in 2000, reduced from 34% in 1996.
- 50% of single elderly households experienced fuel poverty in 1999, reduced from 47% in 1991.

## H5 EDUCATION

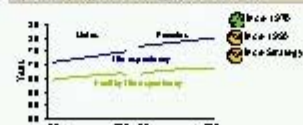
Level 2 qualifications as a % of UK



- In 2000, 14.8% of 16 year olds achieved NVQ level 2 or equivalent (5 GCSEs grade C) up from 52% in 1996 and down slightly from a peak of 15.2% in 2001.

## H8 HEALTH

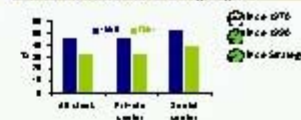
Expectancy of good or very good health (GB)



- Between 1996 and 1999 healthy life expectancy increased only slightly, from 69.1 to 69.2 years for men and from 68.9 to 69.2 years for women.
- Overall life expectancy (75.1 years for men, 74.1 years for women) has increased more than healthy life expectancy, as life expectancy whilst in poor health has increased.

## H7 HOUSING CONDITIONS

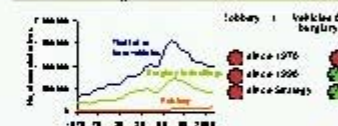
Households in non-decent housing (England)



- Between 1996 and 2000, non-decent housing fell from 4.7% to 4.0% and from 50% to 32% in the social and private sectors, respectively.
- Between 1991 and 1998 there was no significant change across a broad range of condition measures. As housing conditions have changed for the better since 1996, the overall assessment of what there has been an improvement since 1996.

## H3 CRIME

Recorded crime in England & Wales



- In 2001/2, recorded robbery had risen by 25% since 1990.
- Although increasing slightly in 2001/2, recorded theft of or from vehicles and domestic burglary have fallen by 22% and 15% since 1990.

## H9 CLIMATE CHANGE

Greenhouse gas emissions (UK)

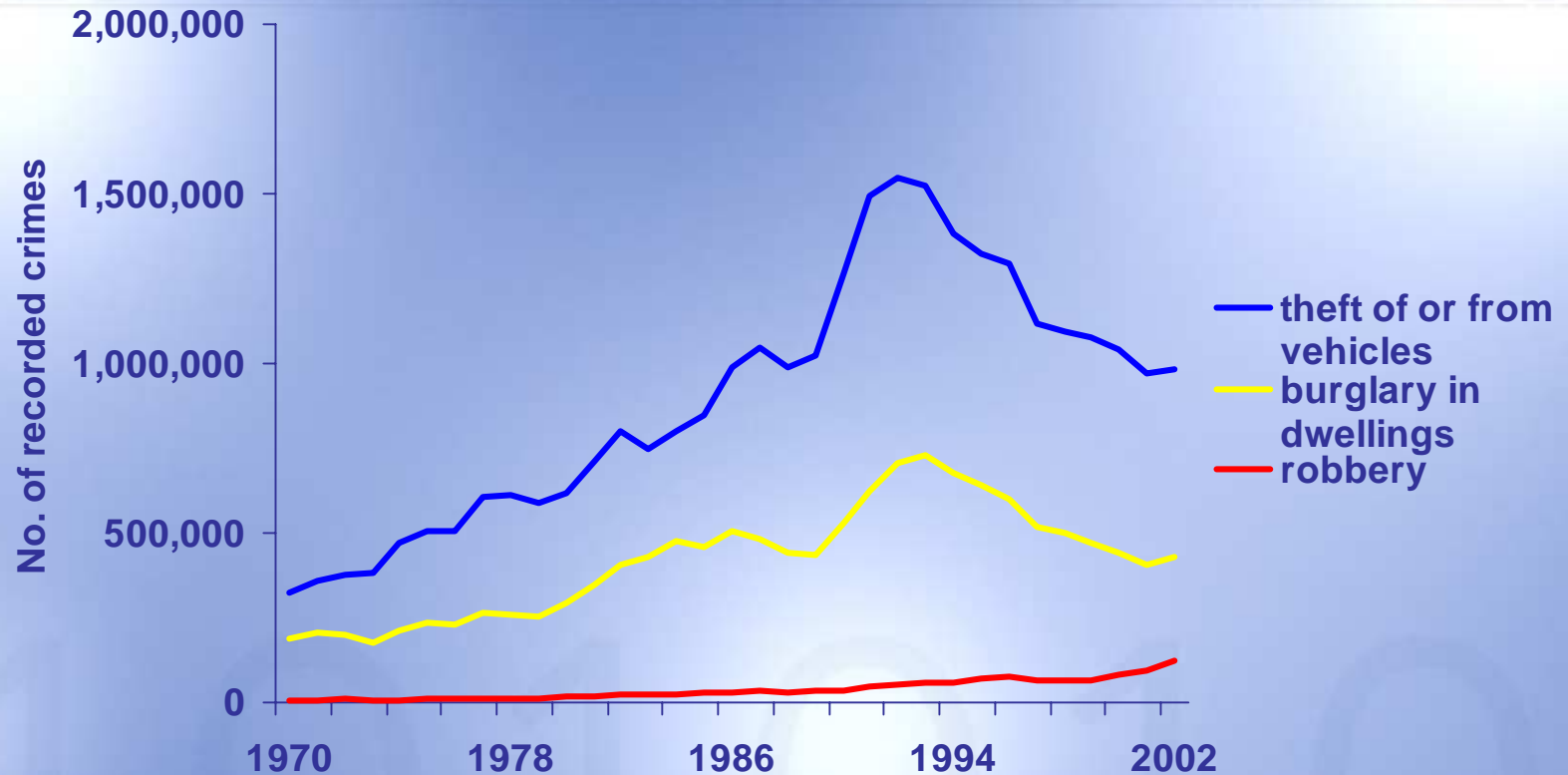


- Emissions of the 'total' of six greenhouse gases (on which progress is assessed) fell by 15% between 1990 & 2000, with no change between 1992 & 2000.
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for 2001 were 8% lower than in 1990, but 1.2% higher than in 2000 due to short term factors including a shift to coal in electricity generation due to lower coal and higher gas prices, and colder weather than in the preceding two years.

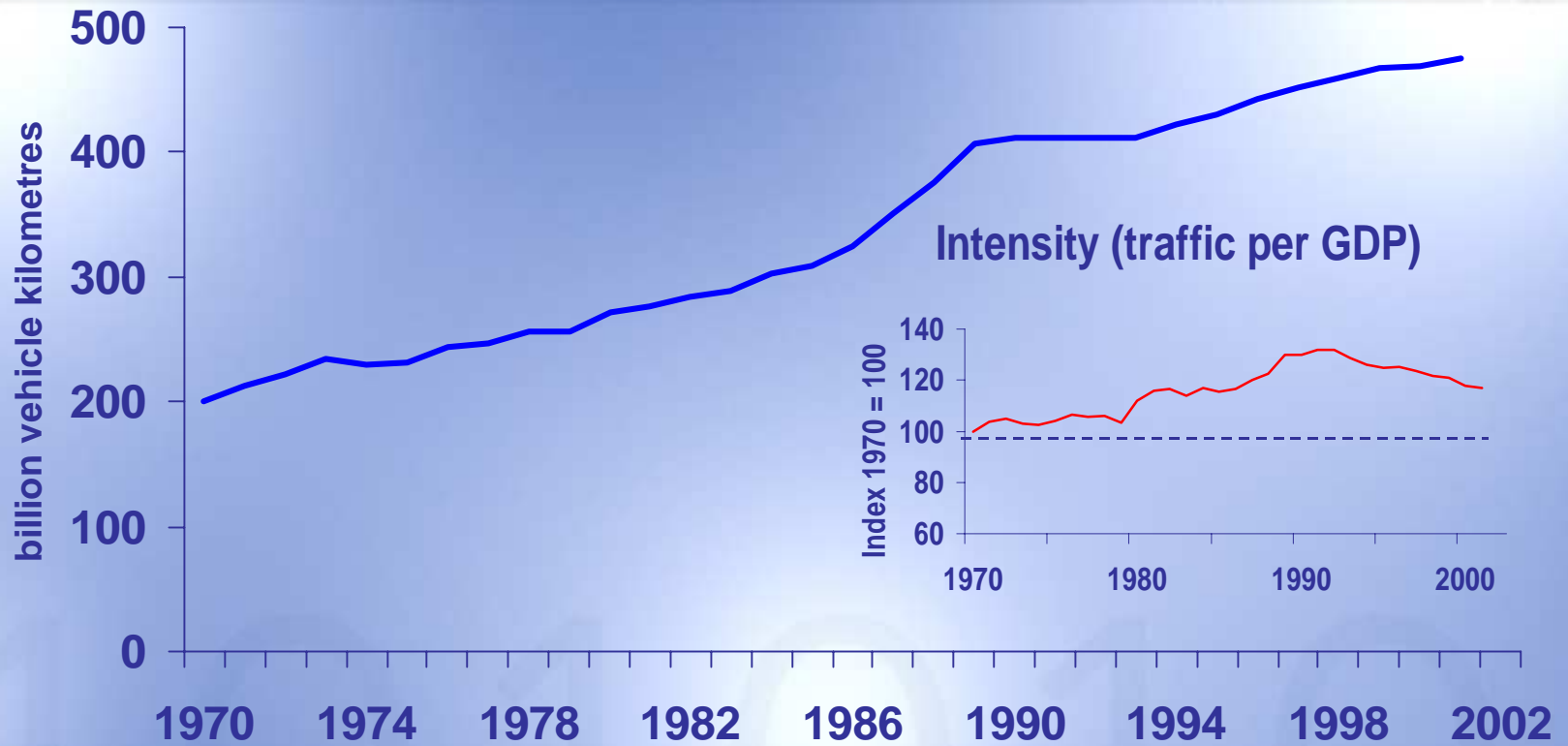
# Quality of life barometer

	since 1990	since Strategy
Economic output	✓	✓
Investment	⚡	⚡
Employment	⚡	✓
Poverty & social exclusion	⚡	✓
Education	✓	⚡
Health	⚡	⚡
Housing - conditions	✓	✓
Crime - robbery	✗	✗
- vehicle & burglary	✓	✓
Climate change	✓	✓
Air quality	✓	⚡
Road traffic - total traffic volumes	✗	✗
- traffic per GDP	✓	✓
River water quality	✓	✓
Wildlife - farmland birds	✗	⚡
- woodland birds	✗	✓
Land use	✓	✓
Waste - household waste	✗	✗
- all arisings & management	⦿	⦿

# Level of crime

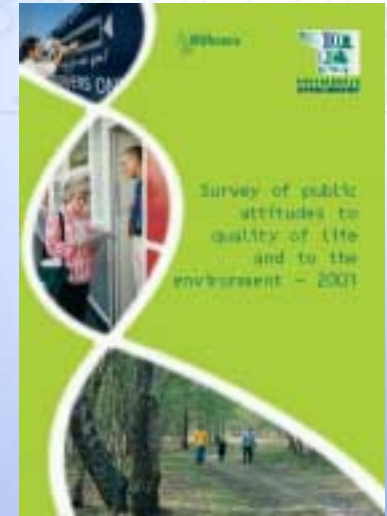


# Road traffic



# Public perceptions?

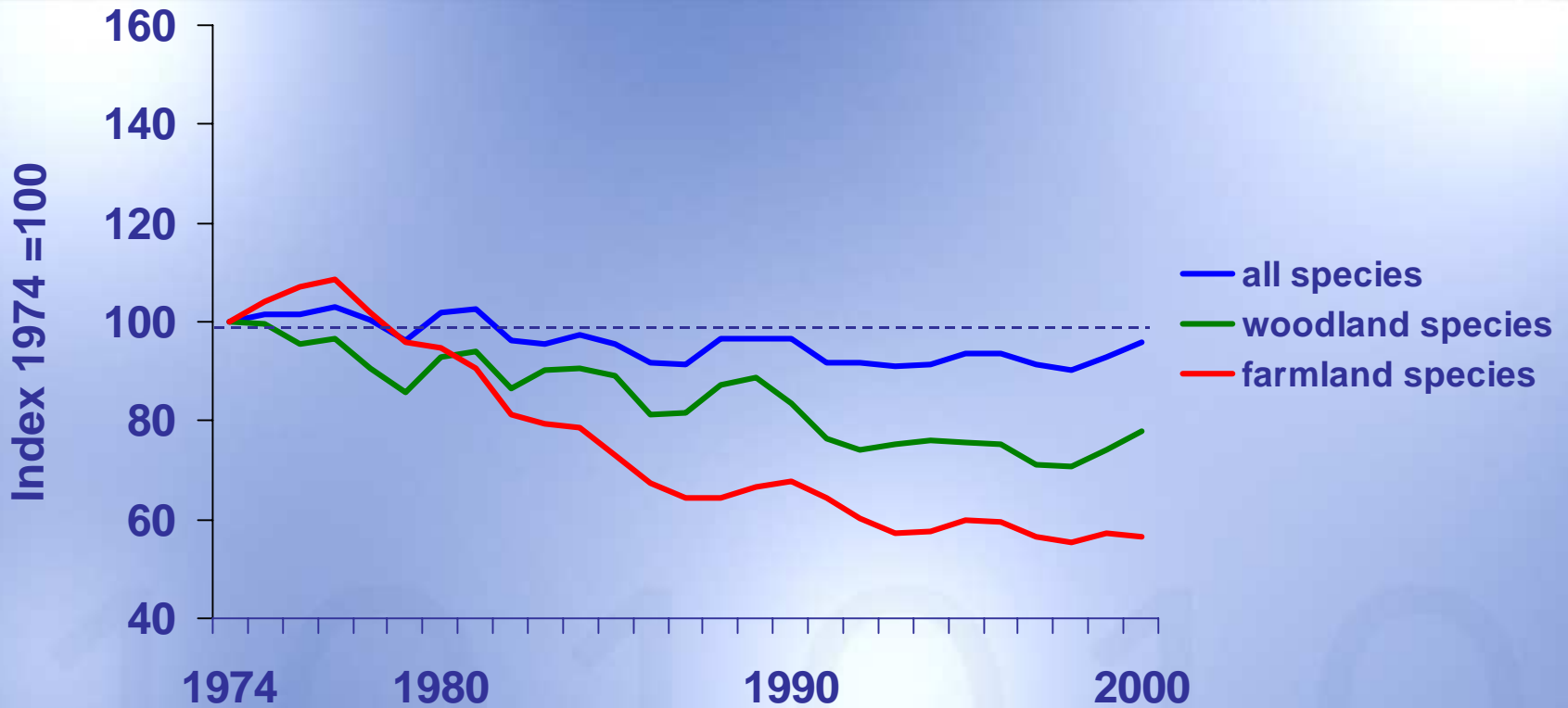
- **Factors affecting people's quality of life are reflected**
- **e.g. money, health and crime**
- **Only 2 in 5 people think quality of life is measured**
- **Headline issues regarded as important by the majority**



# How to integrate into policy?

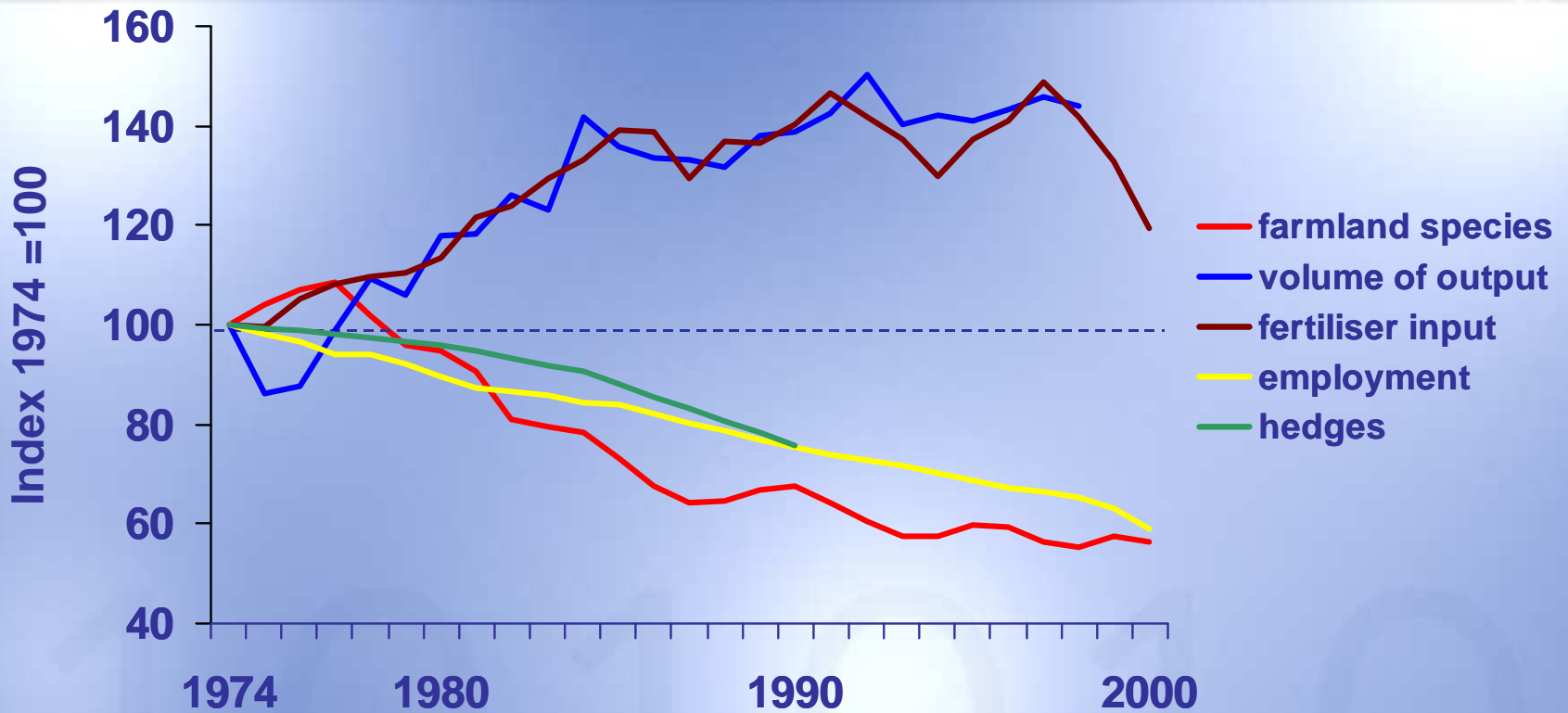
- **A big challenge but improving ...**
- **Departments have to demonstrate contributions to progress**
- **Public Service Agreements**
- **Departmental strategies**
- **Ministerial involvement**

# Wildlife





# Agricultural impacts



# Can we have indicators for all?

- headline indicators?
- comprehensive versus manageable?
- maintenance & longevity?
- ownership and profile?
- families of indicators?
- regional and local indicators?
- aggregated indices?
- reviews?

# More information

[www.sustainable-development.gov.uk](http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk)

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