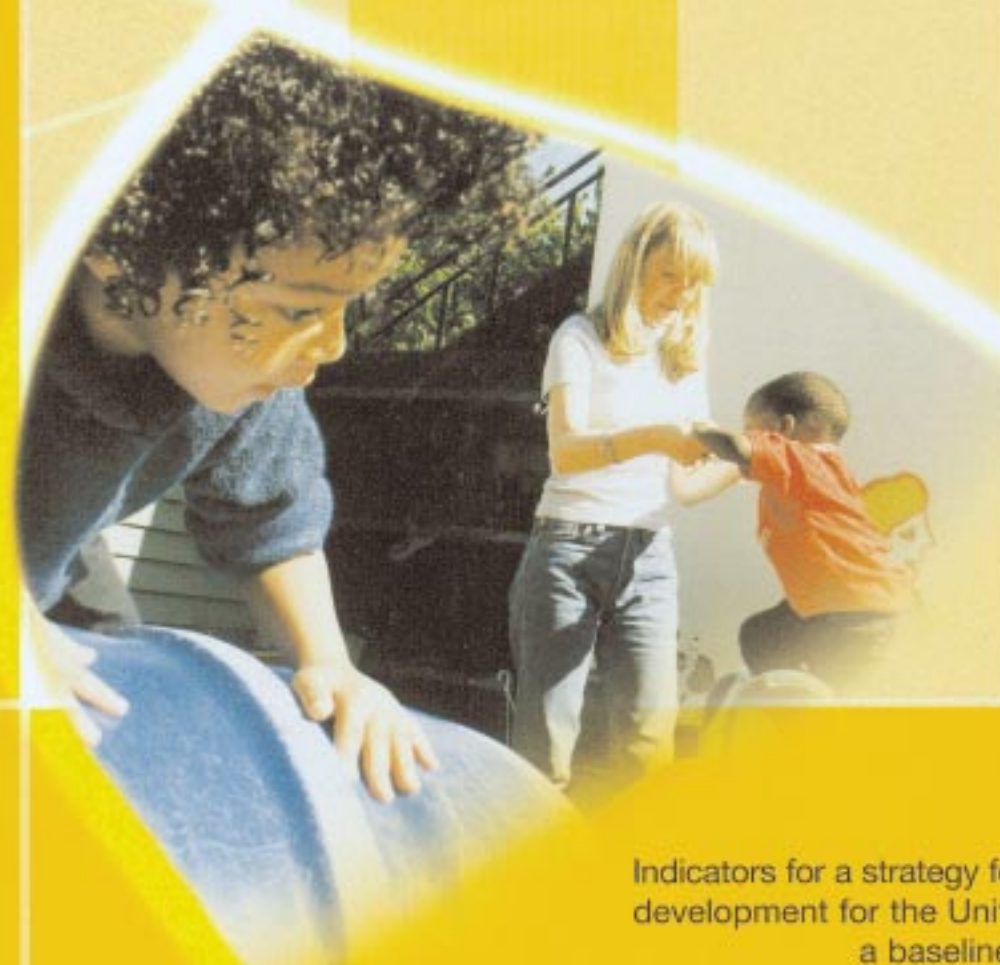




SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT



# Quality of Life counts



Indicators for a strategy for sustainable  
development for the United Kingdom:  
a baseline assessment

# Foreword



**By the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions – The Rt Hon John Prescott MP**

Improving the quality of life for the people of this country is perhaps the most important duty of Government. We have set measurable indicators across the whole range of issues that matter most to people, and are likely to matter to future generations too. That means measuring how we perform on the big, important things such as people's health, the state of the economy, employment, transport, crime and the environment. This report provides a baseline assessment of trends in the UK over the last 30 years and against which to judge future progress.

The indicators show how in some areas things are already improving. For example, the economy has grown and people's incomes have increased in real terms. Educational and housing standards have improved. Emissions of some of the gases that contribute to climate change have declined.

But we still need to make progress. Many people are worried about the levels of crime and pollution. On the brink of a new millennium, there are still people in this country living in poverty. In some places, whole communities are excluded from the social and economic benefits that most of us enjoy. We need to make further cuts in greenhouse gases in the longer term and to meet our climate change targets.

It will take time to turn around the problem areas. The Government cannot do the job alone. We need to work in partnership with others. But where Government can act, it should do so in an integrated way across the whole spectrum of its activity. These indicators are one way to help us measure our progress in future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Prescott." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JOHN PRESCOTT