

NATURE CONSERVATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004

BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT

FIFE COUNCIL 2012-2014

Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, all public bodies in Scotland are required to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their responsibilities. This biodiversity duty is about connecting people with the environment and managing biodiversity in the wider environment all around us, not just in specific protected sites. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011, further requires public bodies in Scotland to provide a publicly available report, every three years, on the actions which they have taken to meet this biodiversity duty.

This report helps to show:

- That Fife Council is delivering the duty
- Evidence of a socially responsible attitude to the way Fife Council is conducting its business
- The contribution Fife Council is making towards sustainable development and "quality of life" issues
- The contribution Fife Council is making towards Scottish government targets

1. Governance – providing clear leadership and management of biodiversity

This section outlines how Fife Council provides effective governance, leadership and management of biodiversity.

Governance

Outline Fife Council's decision-making structure and how the local authority provides political governance of biodiversity conservation. Include reference to any distinct biodiversity initiatives or groups in which elected members are particularly active.

Decision making and political governance within Fife Council

At its meeting on 17th May 2012 Fife Council agreed to replace its previous system of Strategic committees with an Executive/Scrutiny decision making model.

In the new governance model the Executive Committee is the key policy and decision making group relating to developing policy, setting strategic direction and allocating resources, replacing all previous strategic committees. Fife-wide policy recommendations and performance reports go to the Executive Committee for decisions or monitoring. It also ensures arrangements are made for:

- securing economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities and sustainability;
- achieving best value in the way functions remitted to them are exercised; and
- joint working with community planning partners and other statutory and voluntary or not for profit bodies to support the wellbeing of communities.

Decisions of the Executive Committee can be called-in and reviewed by the Council's two Scrutiny Committees, which also have powers to scrutinise Council performance in their respective areas.

The Council has set up six Policy Advisory Groups. These groups are working groups of the Executive Committee and meet in private. Their remit is to develop policy in detail and make recommendations to the Executive for implementation.

Six strategic committees are responsible for setting and reviewing Fife-wide policies and strategies and monitoring progress against the Council Plan.

Seven area committees involve all local ward councillors. They make decisions about local planning applications and community issues. Sometimes they make recommendations to strategic committees on Fife-wide policies and strategies based on the situation in their local communities.

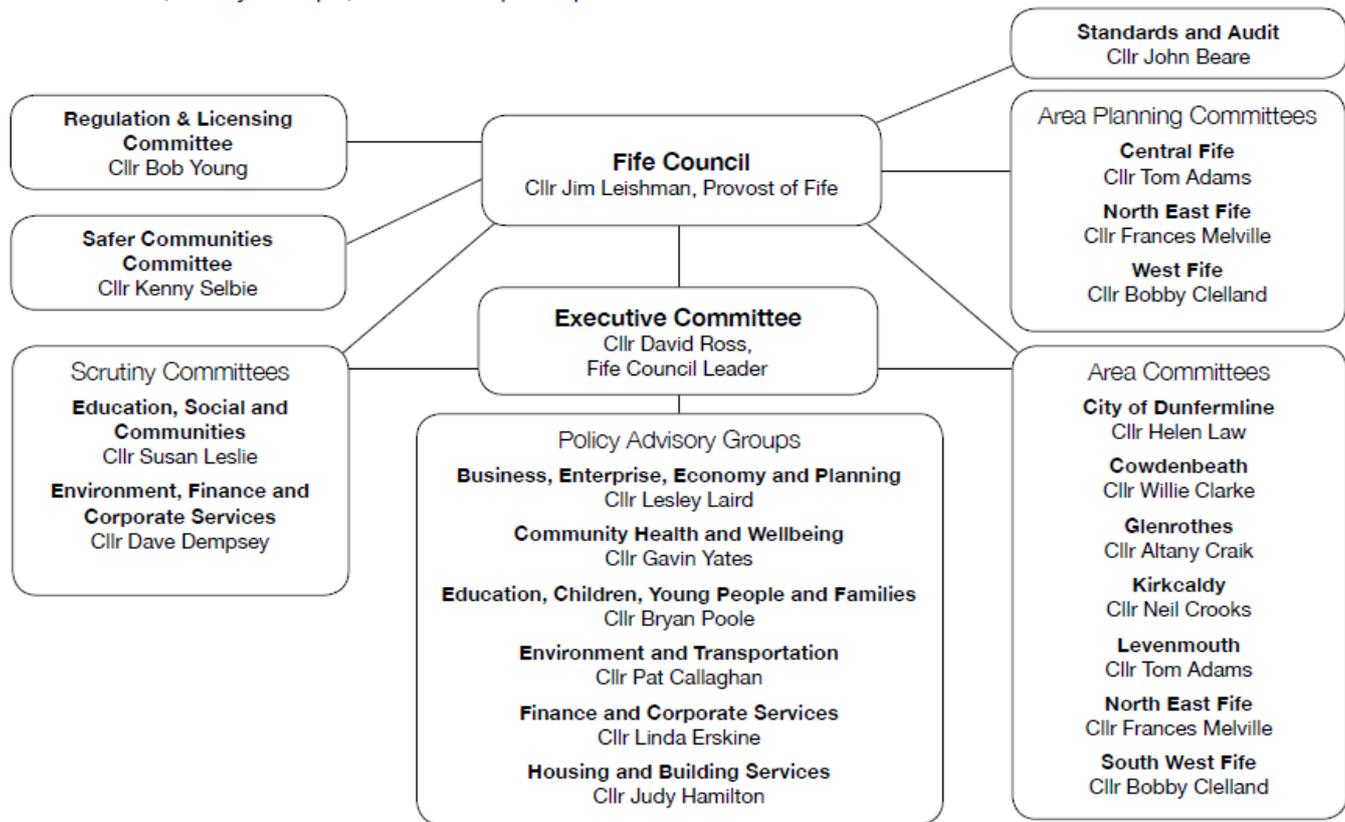
In all the Council's committee meetings, councillors vote on specific issues - policy, finance or legislative – agree on plans to help Fife Council meet its aims and objectives, and receive regular reports from all Services to assess how well Fife Council is meeting these. For instance, greenspace, biodiversity and climate change reports are submitted to Area Committees annually.

Some councillors also have extra duties - to act as chairperson, deputy chairperson or spokesperson for specific committees. A councillor is appointed as spokesperson for biodiversity.

See below a diagram of Fife Council's decision making structure. For a current list of and more information about Committees visit [Fife Direct](#).

Decision Making Structure

Committees, Policy Groups, Executive Spokespersons and Chairs



Aside from Committees, Fife Council’s decision-making structure also includes the Council Management Team, the most senior management body in the council, made up of the Chief Executive and the five Executive Directors representing the five Fife Council directorates: Education and Learning; Environment, Enterprise and Communities; Finance and Resources; Corporate Services, and; Social Work Services. Its purpose is to set the strategic direction for the organisation in light of council policy priorities and to oversee delivery of services provided by the council.

The Fife Partnership is the community planning partnership for Fife. It provides strategic leadership, overseeing partnership activity to support the delivery of its agreed vision and outcomes as set out in Fife’s Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement.

The Fife Environmental Partnership was formed by the Fife Partnership to lead on environmental aspects of the Community Plan. This Partnership is responsible for the strategic direction to protect and enhance Fife’s environment in a sustainable manner to pass on to future generations. Membership includes Fife Council, NHS Fife, SEPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, Fife College, University of St. Andrews, Fife Rural Partnership, Fife Coast and Countryside Trust, Fife Voluntary Action and an elected member.

A number of key plans are agreed by Council which officers report against:

- Fife Council Plan 2017
- Fife Community Plan 2011-2020
- Service Plans
- Functional Plans

Fife Council Plan 2017

The current Fife Council Plan was approved in May 2013 and is the overarching strategic plan for Fife, with five aims:

- Growing a vibrant economy

- Increasing opportunities and reducing poverty and inequality
- Improving quality of life in local communities
- Promoting a sustainable society
- Reforming Fife's public services

Quality of life targets include:

- Improved use of greenspace, land and buildings in communities

Sustainability targets include:

- Reducing carbon emissions
- Reducing waste
- Increase Fife's resilience to climate change impacts

The Council Plan 2017 draws on the framework and the outcomes laid down in the Fife Community Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement.

Fife Community Plan 2011-2020

The aim of community planning is to strengthen Fife's future by bringing together the Kingdom's public and voluntary organisations to work together with local communities to make Fife a great place to live, work, visit and invest. In order to set a strategic context for this, the Community Plan identifies key challenges and opportunities, one of which is 'sustaining and improving the environment'.

Under this theme, the Plan identifies the following challenges which must be met by 2020:

- Promoting all aspects of a low carbon economy for Fife
- Supporting households, communities, businesses and organisations to reduce energy use
- Promoting and investing in adaptation against climate change
- Investing in green infrastructure to improve accessibility, biodiversity and environmental quality, particularly in Fife's urban areas

The Community Plan sets out three high-level outcomes:

- Reducing inequalities
- Increasing employment
- Tackling climate change

'Tackling climate change' includes two longer-term outcomes:

- Adapting to climate change
- Reducing carbon emissions (including reducing energy use, more sustainable transport and less waste)

The Fife Environmental Partnership is the lead in delivering these two long-term outcomes.

Service Plans

Service planning is an essential process for Fife Council to achieve its priorities and demonstrate continuous improvement. It allows the Council to define actions, monitor progress and report performance as well as prioritising what services need to be delivered to meet the needs of customers. Annual Service Plans are aligned to the priorities in the Council Plan.

Functional Plans

Services also produce their own Functional Plans to further break down aims and actions and monitor progress. For example, the Parks & Open Spaces Functional Plan includes the following sub-actions:

- Continue to develop site based action plans with a view to enhancing and increasing the amount of land managed for biodiversity
- Sustain and improve Fife's natural heritage and support the delivery of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan

- Achieve objectives set out in the Nature Conservation (Scotland Act 2004) and commit to further the goals of the 2020 Challenge For Scotland's Biodiversity

Distinct biodiversity initiatives or groups in which elected members are active

The Fife Environmental Partnership as discussed above.

The Fife Biodiversity Partnership, which steers and delivers the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan, includes representation from the public, voluntary and private sectors, academia, specialist and community groups, as well as an elected member appointed by Fife Council as spokesperson for biodiversity.

In addition, Fife Council is represented on the Board of Directors of Fife Coast & Countryside Trust by four elected members. This non-profit making company with charitable status was set up in 2006 to undertake a range of countryside activities and biodiversity functions in the Fife Council area on behalf of the local authority and its partners including Scottish Natural Heritage. The organisation's outputs are agreed in a Business Plan and Service Level Agreement and are monitored through performance review meetings, operational link meetings and attendance at Board meetings. In 2013-14, the Council contributed £1.332m (2012-13, £1.148m) to the Trust from its own funds.

Leadership

Please provide examples of leadership, such as initiatives that senior staff, board members, elected members or officers have promoted, that have led to nature conservation projects, promoted awareness, action or support for biodiversity initiatives.

Fife Council as a local authority demonstrates leadership with regard to sustainability and protecting the environment

In the current Fife Council Plan 2017, the local authority set itself five aims, one of which is "promoting a sustainable society".

The last Fife Council Plan, which ran until May 2013, Fife Council set out how the local authority would achieve its vision by concentrating on eight key priorities – the 'Big 8'. One of the eight priorities was "making Fife the leading green council in Scotland".

On 13 November 2013, Fife Council signed the Central Scotland Green Network Declaration, which commits the local authority to adhere to CSGN principles and incorporate them into policies, strategies and plans, along with a number of other commitments including the delivery of duties under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and to adopt the goals of the UN Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

Individuals have also shown leadership in nature conservation

The Service Manager for Parks Development & Countryside created a new and permanent post within Fife Council to manage a biodiversity team and widely promote the biodiversity duty within all services of the local authority. The new Team Leader for Biodiversity & Natural Heritage was appointed in October 2012.

The Locality Support Team Leaders for the Glenrothes and Levenmouth areas have led 'Take a Pride' groups – partnerships between community groups and the local authority - which have achieved significant environmental improvements for these areas, including habitat creation and enhancement projects. Examples include wetland and pond creation, community wildlife gardens, a bat roost conversion, wildflower meadow and

orchard creation, and events including tree planting and environmental clean-ups.

In 2011, the Parks Development Manager set up a new Parks Greenspace & Biodiversity group for the Parks & Countryside Development Team in order to promote and share best practice in park and greenspace management for biodiversity. The group produced a Mission Statement for the department: “we aim to enhance, protect and improve biodiversity within all our parks and greenspaces and to increase year on year the areas of land we maintain for biodiversity”. A Biodiversity Good Practice Guide was produced as a reference document for staff with information on ways in which existing habitats can be managed or new habitats created to enhance biodiversity. In addition, a Biodiversity Plan template was created as a standardised way of documenting biodiversity action for sites within Fife’s parks and greenspaces. In particular, this initiative has led to the creation of substantial areas of wildflower and pollinator-friendly meadows in public parks, greenspaces and along urban road verges, which has been very well-received by the public. Many new wetlands and ponds have also been created.

The Beaches & Coast Officer (transferred from Fife Council to Fife Coast & Countryside Trust in 2013) led on a vision to cease mechanical beach cleaning in Fife, both to enhance biodiversity and protect and enhance dune systems. Now only areas of hard standing or sites prone to contamination are cleared of seaweed.

The Information Officer at Fife Nature Records Centre represented Scottish local biological records centres for a two year period as Scottish Director of ALERC, the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres.

Identify any action Fife Council is taking which you feel is a demonstration of leadership in relation to biodiversity conservation, and where principles are being translated into actions.

In addition to the initiatives outlined above:

- Fife Council continues to provide Secretariat to the Fife Biodiversity Partnership and co-ordination of the delivery of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan through the Biodiversity Co-ordinator role. The fourth edition of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018 was published in October 2013 and contains over 200 actions to protect and enhance biodiversity and engage and involve local people.
- Fife Council’s Greenspace Officer continues to lead on delivery of the Fife Greenspace Strategy 2011-2016 with the Greenspace Task Group (recently renamed Local Green Action Group) with the aim to increase access to quality, life enhancing greenspace. One of the objectives is to improve the biodiversity of greenspace. Based on a greenspace audit and the strategy, Greenspace Action Plans have been created and implemented.
- Fife Council’s Access Team developed and continue to lead on the delivery of the Fife Access Strategy 2006-2016. “Safeguarding and improving the environment” as one of five themes and objectives, along with health and wellbeing.
- The second edition Fife Shoreline Management Plan published in 2011 sets out Fife Council’s policies to guide the management of 179km of coastline over the next 20, 50 and 100 years. The plan identifies preferred defence options along the coast taking into account natural coastal processes, existing development, the need for coastal defence, environmental considerations, planning issues and the current and future use of the land.
- Fife produced its own Integrated Habitat Network model with funding from Fife Council, SEPA, SNH and Forestry Commission, which in 2012 was been made available to all Fife Council staff via the local authority’s internal mapping tool.
- The proposed new Fife Local Development Plan identifies green network assets and green network priorities (including biodiversity enhancements) for specific development proposals. This will help to reduce the fragmentation of green networks by new development and highlight opportunities for enhancing biodiversity.
- The Planning service employs a dedicated natural heritage officer.

- The Planning service and Lothians and Fife Green Network Partnership - in partnership with Forestry Commission, SNH and Fife Coast & Countryside Trust - led on the creation of a Fife Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2013-2018 to guide the expansion and restructuring of woodlands in Fife to maximise the wide range of benefits that woods and forests provide.
- Fife Council has developed an Allotment Strategy 2009-2014 to meet the growing demand for local food production. The local authority currently manages 29 growing spaces and has submitted planning applications for a further three, and it is working to improve these spaces for biodiversity.
- Fife Council with support from SNH funds a biological records centre with 1.5 full-time equivalent posts.

Management

Outline how Fife Council has organised itself to provide and improve corporate management of biodiversity. For example, incorporation of biodiversity into programmes, plans and strategies.

The Fife Environmental Partnership was established in 2010 and is responsible for the strategic direction to protect and enhance Fife's environment in a sustainable manner to pass on to future generations. The Partnership's primary responsibility is as part of the Community Planning Framework to deliver on two long term outcomes within Fife's Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement. There is a requirement for the group to report progress against these outcomes on an annual basis to the Fife Partnership Executive Group and the Fife Partnership Board. During the reporting period 2012-2014, the Partnership has overseen the continual delivery of 22 indicators in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), divided between three Task Groups:

- Greenspace Task Group (recently renamed Local Green Action Group) – steering and delivery group for the Greenspace Strategy
- Fife Biodiversity Partnership – steering and delivery group for the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan
- Carbon and Renewables Task Group – set up to assist the Partnership with the delivery of Scottish, UK Government and European legislation and targets on climate change. (After a review of outcomes and how these should be delivered, the group was disbanded in 2013).

Greenspace Task Group (8 indicators in SOA)

CP Outcome Theme 2: Better local environments and a sustainable natural heritage
(3 indicators in SOA)

- Better environmental awareness
- Improved cleanliness index
- Less derelict land
- Better access to quality green space

CP Outcome Theme 5: Better water, air and land quality (5 indicators in SOA)

- Higher quality of bathing water
- Better air and river quality

National Outcome (10) We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need

National Outcome(12) We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations

Fife Biodiversity Partnership (2 indicators in SOA)

CP Outcome Theme 2: Better local environments and a sustainable natural heritage (2 indicators in SOA)

- Maintained and enhanced species diversity
- Improvements in habitat coverage

National Outcome(12) We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.

Carbon & Renewables Task Group (12 Indicators in SOA)

CP Outcome Theme 1: Less Waste (4 indicators in SOA)

- Less biodegradable waste going to landfill
- More recycling

CP Outcome Theme 3: More sustainable transport (3 indicators in SOA)

- Lower carbon emissions associated with travel
- Greater use of public transport

CP Outcome Theme 4: Lower CO2 emissions from energy use (5 indicators in SOA)

- Lower CO2 emissions from energy use
- Lower residential energy use per household
- Lower energy use in the public sector

National Outcome (14) We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production

Take a Pride in Fife groups

In addition, the Fife Environment Partnership receives regular progress reports from this initiative. Each 'Take a Pride' group is a partnership between the voluntary sector and Fife Council which aims to improve all aspects of the local environment by working with a range of partner organisations, whilst also encouraging and supporting local community groups and individuals with environmental projects. In the reporting period, there were groups in Glenrothes, Levenmouth, Rosyth, Kirkcaldy and Inverkeithing.

See below an excerpt from the Fife Environmental Partnership's reporting mechanism showing outcomes and activities under "ecosystems are used sustainably and strengthened" to help meet the Community Plan's target "reducing carbon emissions".

Community Plan	Reducing Carbon Emissions			
CC Strategy	CC4 - Ecosystems are used sustainably and strengthened			
Short term outcomes	More natural habitats are created and existing habitats maintained.	Land is positively managed	Increased habitat connectivity	Improved water quality in rivers and coastal areas
Reach	Landowners, communities, forestry managers, planners	Landowners, developers, planners, communities, farmers	Landowners, developers, planners, communities, farmers	Landowners, developers, planners, communities, farmers
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species maintained and increasing Community action helps manage habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecosystem Services are delivered Carbon sinks Local, organic food produced Derelict sites back in use Existing peatland protected Improvement in the quality of publicly usable greenspace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Path Plan Central Scotland Green Network delivered within the appropriate area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better water quality on beaches to Blue Flag standard Wetlands created to act as mitigation against diffuse pollution and as carbon sinks Better SUDs design for amenity and biodiversity
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure provision of new woodlands are included in Development Plans Increase area of amenity long grass and meadow establishment Support communities to manage habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and protect carbon sinks Promote benefits of local, organic food Establish a 'stalled spaces' project on derelict land. Increase provision of community gardens, orchards, edible and tasty spaces (EATS), allotments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of ponds and wetlands with local community groups Create green corridors by planting native hedgerows and tree-lines Plant native woodland Make use of the Integrated Habitat Network tool to identify priority areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River Basin Management Planning as part of the Water Framework Directive

2. Mainstreaming – integrating biodiversity into corporate projects, plans and strategies

Identify what steps Fife Council has taken to incorporate biodiversity measures into plans, policies, strategies or initiatives.

There are strong links between biodiversity and a range of activities and services. For example:

- Biodiversity can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies
- There are many physical and mental health benefits from access to the countryside and a diverse/biodiverse landscape.
- Use of greenspace and its role in ecological networks is vital to regeneration and planning policies.
- Biodiversity is an important factor in well-designed, sustainable places which provide the services and amenities for day to day living and attracting business.

List plans, policies, strategies and initiatives and where possible outline decision making structures, internal working groups, objectives and outcomes. Please provide links to these documents and detail the specific sections or paragraphs where biodiversity is referenced.

Area	Plans, policies, strategies or initiatives	Biodiversity objectives or areas of work	Working groups	Web link	Page numbers of relevant sections
Corporate / Council-wide	Fife Council Plan 2017	<p>This overarching strategic plan for Fife has five aims, two of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improving quality of life in local communities -Promoting a sustainable society <p><u>Quality of life targets include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improved use of greenspace, land and buildings in communities <p><u>Sustainability targets include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reducing carbon emissions -Reducing waste -Increase Fife's resilience to climate change impacts 	<p>All Committees of the Council have a role</p> <p>Each target is allocated a Service lead</p>	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/topics/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&p2sid=1620A6AA-B760-D61B-66695EBB90C20853&themeid=2B892409-722D-4F61-B1CC-7DE81CC06A90	Pages 7, 16, 21-23
Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreement	Fife's Community Plan 2011 – 2020	<p>The Plan identifies eight key challenges and opportunities, including:</p> <p><u>Sustaining and improving the environment by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Promoting all aspects of a low carbon economy for Fife. -Supporting households, communities, businesses and organisations to reduce energy use. -Promoting and investing in adaptation against climate change. 	<p>Fife Partnership Board</p> <p>Fife Partnership</p> <p>Fife Environmental Partnership</p>	http://fish.fife/fish/uploadfiles/Publications/Community%20Plan%202011-%202020%20rev2013%2007Aug.pdf	Pages 6, 13, 24

Area	Plans, policies, strategies or initiatives	Biodiversity objectives or areas of work	Working groups	Web link	Page numbers of relevant sections
		<p>-Investing in green infrastructure to improve accessibility, biodiversity and</p> <p><u>Three high level outcomes in Fife's Community Plan:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. reducing inequalities 2. increasing employment 3. <u>tackling climate change</u>, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapting to climate change - Reducing carbon emissions (including reducing energy use, more sustainable transport and less waste) 			
Parks & Open Spaces service	Functional Plan	<p><u>Sub-actions include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue to develop site based action plans with a view to enhancing and increasing the amount of land managed for biodiversity -Sustain and improve Fife's natural heritage and support the delivery of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan -Support the delivery of the Greenspace Strategy -Achieve objectives set out in the Nature Conservation (Scotland Act 2004) and commit to further the goals of the 2020 Challenge For Scotland's Biodiversity -Work with the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust and other local partners, including Heritage Lottery Fund, to support the implementation of the Living Lomond's Landscape Partnership <p>Each sub-action is broken down into further actions.</p>	Internal reporting mechanism	Not available online	Pages 2, 4 and 5 in particular
Biodiversity	Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013 - 2018	<p><u>Aim:</u> "to protect and enhance biodiversity for its intrinsic value as well as for the health, wellbeing and enjoyment of the people of Fife"</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain and increase the extent, distribution and connectivity of ecosystems 2. Maintain and where possible improve ecosystem health 3. Involve local people in conservation actions and thereby raise awareness and enjoyment of ecosystems <p>The plan contains over 200 actions.</p>	<p>Internal – Biodiversity Team</p> <p>Fife Biodiversity Partnership (steering group)</p> <p>Five ecosystem working groups which convene to discuss specific topics or projects</p>	<p>http://publications.fife.org.uk/uploads/publications/c64_FBLAP-final.pdf</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Aim and objectives p17</p> <p>Summary table of projects – Appendix 2, p48</p>

Area	Plans, policies, strategies or initiatives	Biodiversity objectives or areas of work	Working groups	Web link	Page numbers of relevant sections
Planning policy and guidance	Fife Local Development Plan (FIFEplan)	FIFEplan Proposed Plan contains specific policies and proposals to protect and enhance biodiversity in Fife. This includes the requirement to assess the potential impact of development on biodiversity with further details of the site appraisal required for natural heritage and biodiversity provided in the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Guidance. It also identifies existing green network assets and priorities for enhancement of green networks.	Fife Council's Economy Planning and Employability service – Development Plan team	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/fifeplan	All
	Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance - to be replaced by Fife's Designing Places Supplementary Guidance during 2015	The Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance supports the policies in the three adopted Fife Local Plans. It provides detailed information on the assessment of natural heritage assets and provision of new green infrastructure as part of new development. It promotes the enhancement of biodiversity as a fundamental principle when designing new green infrastructure. It encourages the Integrated Habitat Network to be considered in site appraisals. Fife's Designing Places Supplementary Guidance will provide the same support for policies and proposals in FIFEplan. It will also include detailed reports on green networks across Fife.		http://publications.fife.org.uk/uploads/publications/c64_GreenInfrastructureSPG.pdf	Throughout, notably pages 4-5, 10, 12-13, 16, 21
	Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Guidance June 2013	The Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Guidance provides protection for natural heritage and biodiversity against potential adverse impacts from wind turbine developments.			http://publications.fife.org.uk/uploads/publications/c64_WindenergySPG.pdf
	Fife Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2013 - 2018	Fife Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2013 – 2018 aims to protect and enhance the environmental quality of Fife's woodlands and forests, and supporting biodiversity is one of its key priorities.		http://publications.fife.org.uk/uploads/publications/c64_FifeForestryWoodlandStrategy2013.pdf	All
Greenspace	Fife Greenspace Strategy 2011 - 2016	To increase access to quality, life enhancing greenspace. One of the objectives is to increase the amount of Fife Council land managed for biodiversity.	Local Green Action Group (formerly Greenspace Task Group)	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/topics/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&p2sid=97331837-65BF-00F7-DFFB08A9218B63F	Throughout, most notably pages 9, 15, 52-53, 55, 59

Area	Plans, policies, strategies or initiatives	Biodiversity objectives or areas of work	Working groups	Web link	Page numbers of relevant sections
	Allotments strategy 2009 - 2014	The strategy sets out the actions required over a five year period to significantly improve the provision of allotments in Fife. This includes a key action to promote the biodiversity benefits of allotments.	Working Group for strategy (five Council Services and external bodies)	D&themeid=98A56687-9A34-4494-A43C-68E07CCAE64E http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/topics/index.cfm?fuseaction=service.display&p2sid=6F929D50-03D5-4D03-8E14-1F4C012CF0F2&themeid=98A56687-9A34-4494-A43C-68E07CCAE64E	Sections 1.9, 5.3, 7.12, 9.2
Climate Change	Fife Council Plan 2017	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Fife's Community Plan 2011 – 2020	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Fife's Climate Change Adaptation Framework	Assessing the potential consequences of the projected climate changes in respect to the Scottish Government's 12 Key Sectors , from a Fife Council context. One of these is Biodiversity and the Natural Environment.	Transportation & Environmental Services	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/minisites/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&pageid=E2A8E526-65BF-00F7-DA6238F1EB3894F6&siteID=430EB347-005B-8681-1629D8206303D4C8	Pages 27, 42-43, 48-51
	Fife Council's Energy Programme Annual Report 2013/2014	Reduce energy costs and carbon emissions Ecological surveys were carried out at possible wind turbine sites. These surveys have been passed to Fife Nature Records Centre.	Energy Programme Board	http://publications.fife.org.uk/uploads/publications/c64_EnergyProgramAnnualReport2013-14v1.7FINAL.pdf	
	Fife Environmental Partnership Climate Change Strategy 2014-2020	Long Term Outcome: Reduce Carbon Emissions is One of four medium term outcomes: Fife's ecosystems are used sustainably and strengthened	Fife Environmental Partnership	See page 9 above	See page 9 above
Access	Fife Access Strategy 2006-2016	To manage access to ensure that the environment is not adversely affected. To use access as a tool for improving the local environment		http://publications.fife.org.uk/uploads/publications/Fife%20Access%20Strategy%20Review%202006-2016-%20Final%20Report.pdf	Pages 27-29

Area	Plans, policies, strategies or initiatives	Biodiversity objectives or areas of work	Working groups	Web link	Page numbers of relevant sections
Housing	Improving Energy Efficiency and Sustainability of Council Housing	Aimed at further improving the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock, focussing on the benefits and returns for the Council, tenants and the environment.	Housing & Neighbourhood Services	Not available online	n/a
Transportation	Shoreline Management Plan	The second edition Fife Shoreline Management Plan was completed in 2011 and sets out Fife Council's policies for managing 179km of coastline. The Plan aims to deliver the greatest environmental, social and economic benefit, consistent with the Government's sustainable development principles. It takes into account natural coastal processes and environmental considerations.	Harbours Flood & Coast	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/minisites/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&pageid=C040877C-B767-3F71-8454BE5167C5BC58&siteID=C03E446A-0241-A6A5-7462DD169B215841	Pages 7, 11-12, 19-20, 26-27, 36-37
	Fife Council Travel Plan	An active document which sets out how the local authority will assist its employees and visitors to travel more sustainably. One of aims is to reduce pollution.	Transportation & Environmental Services	n/a	n/a
	Cycling Kingdom and Bikeability initiatives	Transportation Services is investing £5m in new infrastructure and behaviour change initiatives in Dunfermline and Glenrothes.	Transportation & Environmental Services	n/a	n/a
	Light Fife Green – Street Lighting Policy	Street lighting generates 10% of the Council's carbon footprint. One of aims of this initiative is to reduce carbon emissions.	Roads Lighting	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=feature.display&objectid=EFD6E76E-B5D5-4776-1A8F8276C1799AA5	n/a
Tourism	Fife Tourism Strategy 2007-2015 Fife Tourism Strategy 2014 – 2024	<u>Under the Environmental Sustainability section:</u> Fife has been voted "No 1 for outdoor recreation" for seven consecutive years. Maintaining an environment that is welcoming but not over used is important for Fife, and therefore working jointly with the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, the RSPB and others, Fife will protect its outdoor assets through careful promotion and appropriate maintenance.	Fife Tourism Partnership	http://www.fifetourismpartnership.org/resources/fife-tourism-strategy/	See website for Strategy Review paper; new strategy will be uploaded soon
Education	Early Years Strategy	Production of the 'Passport to the Hills', which was distributed to every primary school child in Fife (through the Living Lomonds	Early Years Strategy Group / Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership	http://www.livinglomonds.org.uk/projects/	All

Area	Plans, policies, strategies or initiatives	Biodiversity objectives or areas of work	Working groups	Web link	Page numbers of relevant sections
	Towards a Sustainable School Estate Strategy	Landscape Partnership) In addition to rationalising school estate buildings, Fife Council is looking to reduce carbon emissions and improve the quality of greenspace of school grounds.	School Estate Team	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/minisites/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&siteID=314C135A-95ED-7C80-50092DC09F860DF1&pageid=31C7891C-A98E-4134-A28E78D514ACF840	n/a
Environmental Services	Keep Fife Schools Bang Tidy campaign	Aim is to make High School pupils more aware of their responsibility to bin their rubbish, while raising awareness of the damage litter can cause to the environment and wildlife in their community	Environment Enforcement Team	http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/topics/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&p2sid=9B04E002-C337-A909-E3D20DF7E9DC3A25&themeid=81E299FB-1BCF-4994-8C8A-233463B738F6	n/a
	WANTED campaign	Focuses on communities playing their part to provide information to enable Fife Council to identify, catch and fine dog fouling offenders. Visit schools to promote responsible dog ownership.	Environment Enforcement Team	n/a	n/a
Social Services	Sustainability policy and action plan	The policy outlines how the Service is committed to environmental good practice and the action plan includes the practical steps being taken to achieve environmental objectives. Social Services recognises that it has a significant contribution to make in helping the council to meet its environmental targets and in promoting environmental awareness and responsibility in the use of its own resources	Sustainability group	n/a	n/a

3. Action – taking action to protect and enhance biodiversity

Action for biodiversity by service

Please provide information on practical actions that your service has taken to protect and enhance biodiversity in the three-year period **between 2012-2014**, including behaviour change initiatives. This could be on local authority land or elsewhere as part of a contribution to a wider project. If you have not delivered initiatives during this period, then please leave blank.

Service	Initiatives
Planning	<p>The Fife Local Development Plan is now at proposed plan stage. It will be consulted on between October and December 2014, before being subject to an examination by Scottish Government Reporters. Policies in the Plan include the requirement to assess the potential impact of development on biodiversity. Further details of the site appraisal required for natural heritage and biodiversity is provided in the new Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance.</p> <p>The Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance was approved in June 2014, it will be incorporated into new guidance – Fife’s Designing Places Supplementary Guidance – which will be progressed throughout 2015.</p> <p>The Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Guidance was finalised in June 2013, and provides protection for natural heritage and biodiversity against potential adverse impacts from wind turbine developments.</p>
Parks Development & Countryside - greenspace	<p>Development and delivery of Greenspace Action Plans for Fife’s seven Area Committee regions, in line with the Greenspace Strategy 2011-2016.</p> <p>A partnership project with Transportation Services, Lothians & Fife Green Network Partnership and SEPA to enhance a key green corridor in Dunfermline, including habitat creation and river restoration. A Water Environment Fund grant was awarded to undertake a feasibility study to de-canalise and restore a section of the Lyne Burn.</p> <p>Implementation of the Allotment Strategy 2009-2014 to meet the growing demand for local food production, and management of 29 allotments including scoping projects to improve these spaces for biodiversity. Planning applications have been submitted for a further three allotments.</p> <p>Development of four landscape-scale, multiple benefit green infrastructure projects in Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Levenmouth and Glenrothes for submission at the end of 2014 to SNH’s Green Infrastructure bid to the European Regional Development Fund.</p>
Parks Development & Countryside - biodiversity	<p>Delivery of projects across Fife to protect and enhance biodiversity in partnership with members of the Fife Biodiversity Partnership, covering two editions of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Development, publication and launch of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018 with the Fife Biodiversity Partnership. There are over 200 projects listed in the Plan (see Appendix 2 starting p48), and delivery started in 2013.</p> <p>Working in partnership with the Parks & Open Spaces Operations staff to increase year on year the area of Fife Council land managed for biodiversity. Most notably this has included the creation of species-rich grassland, ponds and wetlands and a reduction in the area of amenity grassland in public parks, greenspaces and urban road verges.</p> <p>The start of Living Lomonds, a landscape conservation programme awarded £1.8 million by Heritage Lottery Fund, aiming to re-connect people with the living legacy of the Lomond and Benarty Hills through a range of community-based activities and projects. Fife Council is one of 12 partners in the project.</p> <p>Supporting the Fife Golf Trust with their initiative to improve the management of their seven municipal golf courses, amounting to 300 hectares, for biodiversity. Initial biodiversity recommendations were drawn up for the courses and enhancement work of freshwater and grassland habitat has taken place. For support is being given as the Fife Golf Trust works towards</p>

Service	Initiatives
	<p>'GEO Certified', internationally-recognised environmental accreditation.</p> <p>In partnership with Buglife, over £86,000 was secured through grant funding for a Fife-wide wildflower meadow creation project. 'Fife's Buzzing' has started the creation of over 12 hectares of pollinator-friendly habitat – mostly on Fife Council-owned land – over a three-year period involving community groups, schools and volunteers.</p> <p>Fife Council runs a local biological records centre, Fife Nature Records Centre, with support from SNH. As well as acting as a repository for biological data, the Centre offers a biological report service and encourages citizen science through events and training.</p> <p>Supporting Noble Foods at Thornton, an egg packaging site, with the development and delivery of a Biodiversity Action Plan, including creation of a wildflower meadow and woodland, survey of their SUDS ponds, installation of bird and bat boxes, deadwood management and sowing of native bluebells.</p> <p>Supporting the Forth Invasive Non-Native Species programme by assisting with the survey of tributaries to the River Leven.</p>
Transportation	<p>Implementation of the second edition Shoreline Management Plan produced in 2011.</p> <p>The Service has been a lead partner in the Lyneburn Corridor project, an initiative to enhance the multiple benefits of a key greenspace in Dunfermline. The project has secured funding from the Water Environment Fund for a feasibility study, and would involve the restoration of a section of the Lyne Burn, as well as the creation of new habitats and active travel routes.</p> <p>Transportation Services is delivering the Cycling Kingdom project, investing in infrastructure and behaviour change initiatives. The project in Kirkcaldy is now complete and a further £5 million will be invested in Dunfermline and Glenrothes.</p> <p>Bikeability is a programme to promote proficiency, aiming for every school child in Fife to go through levels 1-3 training during the lifetime of the project. The project also looks at increasing provision of bikes and promotion of cycling through events and a website.</p> <p>The Service ran an eight day Fife Cycling Festival in May 2014.</p> <p>Eighteen electric vehicles were purchased for the Fife Council fleet. The local authority and its Community Planning Partners have also worked in partnership with Transport Scotland to set up a network of electric vehicle charging points at main council offices and depots. There are currently 18 charging points which are available for the general public to use.</p>
Housing	<p>Regular contact with Biodiversity Team to request advice on or surveys for protected species, most notably bats and birds, as well as habitat management advice.</p> <p>The department as commissioned and installed external wall insulation and loft and cavity wall insulation to thousands (just under 1000 in 2014 alone) of council and private properties to increase their energy efficiency and reduce their carbon footprint.</p> <p>Working in partnership with contractors to ensure reinstatement of greenspace, most notably in Dunfermline after an insulation project involving 500 properties.</p>
Economic Development	<p>In 2013 Fife Council won the 'Public Sector Initiative' category in the in Scottish Green Energy Awards</p>
Education	<p>Education Services has worked in partnership with Parks & Countryside to develop a biodiverse school ground demonstration project at Lundin Mill Primary School in Lundin Links. This has to date included the creation of a wildflower meadow, orchard, hedgerow and pond restoration, all with the involvement of pupils. The project is still ongoing.</p> <p>A 'Passport to the Hills' was given to every primary school-aged child in Fife in June 2014. Designed and developed by Fife Council's Early Years & Partnership Support Team with the Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership, the passport encourages children to explore and reconnect with the local Lomond and Benarty Hills.</p> <p>An officer from the Sustainable School Estate team is a member of the Local Green Action Group to</p>

Service	Initiatives
	improve the accessibility of quality greenspace in Fife.
Social Services	<p>The Service created a sustainability policy and set up a sustainability group.</p> <p>Social Services took part in the “Green Office Week” national campaign from 14th – 18th May 2012.</p>
Environmental Health	<p>Fife Council operates a strict zero tolerance approach towards dog fouling, littering and fly tipping and issues fixed penalty notices whenever an offender is caught. The local authority wants its open spaces to be clean to encourage use.</p> <p>The Service visits schools to promote responsible dog ownership as well as summer fetes where free microchipping is offered.</p> <p>The Service continues to promote the WANTED campaign, which focuses on communities playing their part to provide Fife Council with information to identify, catch and fine dog fouling offenders.</p> <p>Officers continue to support community clean-ups by providing material. The Service won ‘Programme of the Year’ from Keep Scotland Beautiful for its initiative in 2012 in coordinate the clean-up of over 100 miles of the Fife Coastal Path by 47 community groups.</p> <p>Recently ran the Keep Fife Schools Bang Tidy campaign, which aimed to raising awareness amongst high school pupils of their responsibility to dispose of rubbish and of the damage litter can cause to the environment and wildlife in their community.</p> <p>Officers use bicycles in the summer to carry out patrols. This is more environmentally friendly and efficient.</p>
Tourism	<p>Fife Council has been working closely with the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust so that promotion of protected areas is done in a sensitive way.</p> <p>Fife Council has worked with RSPB relating to the release of Sea Eagles and the protection of their release sites.</p> <p>The Service is carrying out a bird habitat survey in North Queensferry in relation to a potential pontoon investment in the village.</p>
Climate Change	<p>Fife Council has been tackling climate change through the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an energy strategy and reporting progress • Supporting the Fife Environmental Partnership and development of the Climate Change Strategy 2014-2020 • Development and implementation of Fife’s Anaerobic Digestion plant to divert waste from landfill, capture energy from waste and produce a soil conditioner for use locally. • Completing the rollout of the four bin system to householders to reduce waste to landfill and increase recycling performance – currently Fife recycles 55.9% of household waste.

4. Monitoring – recording data and reporting trends

Please tell us about any monitoring you've undertaken to assess the impact of your actions on biodiversity. This may be in the form of wildlife surveys, bird counts or monitoring of biodiversity indicators, for example. Provide links to any reports.

What monitoring have you undertaken?

Please list or describe briefly. Does your monitoring show significant trends or highlight any particular areas of concern?

- Fife Council audits a proportion of its greenspaces and parks under Biodiversity Action Plans each year. Because many of these sites have recently undergone significant changes in management for the benefit of biodiversity, such as the creation of wetlands and species-rich grassland on former amenity grassland, there has been an overall increase in biodiversity.
- Fife Council is promoting and supporting the survey of invasive non-native species (INNS) across the Kingdom, and encouraging sightings to be submitted to the Forth Invasive Non-Native Species project via their dedicated [website](#). The aim is to create an accurate map of INNS distribution in order to be able to target control and eradication efforts.
- Fife's corn bunting population is monitored annually by volunteers, overseen by a local volunteer co-ordinator and RSPB. The corn bunting is one of the fastest-declining birds in Scotland, and is a priority species within the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan. RSPB is leading on the [Farmland Bird Lifeline](#) project and have been monitoring Fife's population for over 10 years. The overall trend is an increase in the number of male territories from 20 in 2003 to 39 in 2013, with a peak of 48 in 2010.
- Fife's key red squirrel populations – also a priority species within the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan - are monitored twice a year in accordance with the nationally-recommended methodology. From 2008-2014, this was co-ordinated by the grant-funded Fife Red Squirrel Project. Monitoring is now co-ordinated by key groups and landowners including Ladybank Forest Users Group, Forestry Commission Scotland, Elmwood College and Fife Council. As a broad overview, the key red squirrel populations appear to be stable and grey squirrels are rarely recorded along the transects.
- Fife Nature Records Centre launched five public surveys of indicator species of ecosystem health in 2014. These surveys will be promoted over the coming four years for the lifetime of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018. An indicator species was chosen for the five ecosystems: woodland; freshwater and wetland; marine and coastal; upland; and lowland and farmland.
- In 2014, a wintering wader survey was undertaken along the entire length of Fife's rocky shore, including the Isle of May, in order to establish a current baseline of non-estuarine wading bird populations in Fife. This survey was originally conducted in the early 1970s, and since then the decline of non-estuarine waders has been well-documented. A further two repeats of the survey will be carried out before conclusions can be drawn.
- Fife Coast & Countryside Trust undertakes monitoring of the sites which they manage on behalf of Fife Council, including the Eden Estuary Local Nature Reserve, Lochore Meadows Country Park and a number of woodlands. This monitoring informs site management, and includes monitoring of indicator species such as breeding birds and seals. An [Annual Report](#) is produced for the Eden Estuary.
- Fife Council and Fife & Kinross Bat Group are also developing a bat database to ensure that bat roosts and habitat are protected.

Where do you hold your data and do you make it publicly available?

Do you share your data with national, publicly available repositories such as National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway or Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS)?

Fife Council, with grant aid from Scottish Natural Heritage, has its own biological records centre covering Fife and Kinross-shire. The **Fife Nature Records Centre** is run by 1.5 full time equivalent members of staff and acts as a repository for biological data as well as playing an active role in the protection of local wildlife by making this information publicly available. Fife Nature Records Centre runs a Data Enquiry Service where users can request biological information. Data is used by a variety of individuals and organisations to assist with development planning, site management, nature conservation, research and education.

Fife Nature Records Centre currently holds over 372,000 species records. It also holds details on more than 150 sites designated for their natural heritage value. The information has been gathered by local and national organisations, professionals and members of the public.

Fife Nature Records Centre has a number of data sharing agreements with other organisations, expert groups and projects which gather biological records. This includes Forth Invasive Non-Native Species project, Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels (Scottish Wildlife Trust). However, it does not at present share data with the National Biodiversity Network Gateway.

Fife Nature Records Centre added the following number of species records to its database in the last three financial years:

- 2013/14 – 20,592
- 2012/13 – 26,284
- 2011/12 – 20,844

The following number of requests for biological data were received and completed in the last three financial years:

- 2013/14 – 113
- 2012/13 - 123
- 2011/21 – 183

A matrix is currently being developed to report on progress of delivery of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018. A similar matrix was used by the Fife Biodiversity Partnership for biannual reporting on delivery of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2011. Fife Council does not at present make use of the Biodiversity Action Reporting System.

5. Partnership working

Please describe and illustrate Fife Council’s involvement in partnership working on biodiversity matters. List and describe any partnership work and, where possible, include web-links to partnerships or initiatives. Also explain whether the partnerships relate to private, public, community or other sectors, or whether they are multi-sector partnerships.

Partnership	Aim	Partnership work from 2012-2014	Sectors involved
Fife Partnership Board	To provides strategic leadership, overseeing partnership activity to support the delivery of its agreed vision and outcomes as set out in Fife’s Community Plan 2011-2020 and Single Outcome Agreement	With regard to the environment, the Fife Partnership has focused on tackling climate change in this period. The Fife Environmental Partnership was also set up to lead on this key area.	Multi-sector including Fife Council, Police Scotland, St Andrews University, Scottish Fife & Rescue Service, NHS Fife, Scottish Enterprise, Fife Voluntary Action, Skills Development Scotland, Fife College, Scottish Government, SEStrans
Fife Environmental Partnership	To lead on environmental aspects of the Community Plan. Responsible for the strategic direction to protect and enhance Fife’s environment in a sustainable manner to pass on to future generations.	In the last three years, the Partnership has focused its efforts on tackling climate change, with key outcomes relating specifically to biodiversity including “ecosystems are used sustainably and strengthened” and “places are adapted to cope with climate change”. See activities listed on p9, as well as pages 7 and 8.	Multi-sector including Fife Council, NHS Fife, SEPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, Fife College, University of St. Andrews, Fife Rural Partnership, Fife Coast and Countryside Trust and Fife Voluntary Action
Fife Biodiversity Partnership	To steer the development of and deliver actions within the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) which aims to “protect and enhance biodiversity for its intrinsic value as well as for the health, wellbeing and enjoyment of the people of Fife”	Delivery of actions within the Fife LBAP 2009-2011, some of which were carried forward into 2012. Development of the fourth edition of the Fife LBAP, launched in October 2012. Commencement of delivery of over 200 projects within the Fife LBAP 2013-2018	Multi-sector with over 40 representatives from statutory and voluntary organisations, local expert groups, academic institutions, land managers and businesses
Local Green Action Group	To report to Fife Environment Partnership on local green action including biodiversity	Greenspace Action Plan reporting to Fife Council’s seven area committees. Strengthen links between Fife Council and community organisations. Report all community actions as part of Climate Change duty.	Multi-sector including Fife Council (Transportation, Education, Parks, Corporate), SNH, NHS Fife, Kingdom Housing
Take a Pride in Fife	Encourages and supports people and community groups to take action to improve their local environment and community	At present there are five Take a Pride in Fife groups in Glenrothes, Levenmouth, Rosyth, Inverkeithing and Oakley. These groups have delivered many projects to improve their local environment, including habitat creation and enhancement as well as environmental clean-ups. Visit the webpage to learn more.	Fife Council, community groups, voluntary organisations and the private sector

Partnership	Aim	Partnership work from 2012-2014	Sectors involved
Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership	A landscape conservation programme aiming to re-connect people with the living legacy of the Lomond and Benarty Hills through a range of community-based activities and projects.	A year was spent developing the project in 2012, after which it the Partnership awarded £1.8 million by Heritage Lottery Fund in 2013. Work so far has included upland habitat surveys, a grassland management project, community engagement, upland path creation to improve access to the hills. Visit the website .	Multi-sector – 12 partners including Fife Coast & Countryside Trust, Fife Council, Falkland Centre for Stewardship, TRACKS, Kinross Museum
Fife Access Forum	To provide advice to Fife Council and the general public on outdoor access and public rights of way.	Has a Forum member to represent the natural heritage and the environment in every access issue.	Multi-sector with 22 members from voluntary organisations, NGOs and Fife Council
Buglife / Fife Council	To deliver 'Fife's Buzzing', a new partnership project to create over 12 hectares of wildflower-rich grassland across Fife with the support and involvement of the local community and school children	The project was developed and funding bids submitted. Over £86,000 was awarded in 2014 and the project commenced in the autumn, with meadow creation taking place with community groups and school children at three sites in Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline.	Public and voluntary
Fife Golf Trust / Fife Council	To enhance the biodiversity of the Fife Golf Trust's seven municipal golf courses, amounting to 300 hectares	Fife Council's biodiversity team is supporting the Fife Golf Trust with the entry of their courses for GEO Certified, an internationally recognised eco-label. This has involved initial site visits and management recommendations in 2014. The Fife Golf Trust de-culverted and restored several burns on their courses in 2013 and also increased the area of long grass management.	Public and voluntary
NHS Greenspace Group	This partnership was set up to enhance the quality of the grounds of eight hospitals in Fife for patient, visitor and staff wellbeing as well as biodiversity	SNH led the production of initial site audits, and delivery began at three sites in 2012 (Stratheden near Cupar, Lynebank in Dunfermline and Cameron near Methilhill).	Public sector including NHS Fife, Fife Council and SNH
Fife Rural Skills Partnership	To increase the number of skilled people who are able to care, manage and make sustainable use of Fife's rural landscape	The Fife Rural Skills Partnership was formed in 2013 to help social enterprises operating in the rural skills sector (woodland, farmland, rural landscape) to develop their capacity and help people train. Currently funded by LEADER in Fife and Forestry Commission Scotland.	Multi-sector – 15 partners including private (small businesses and social enterprises), voluntary organisations, and public (Fife Council Corporate and Employability services and Forestry Commission Scotland)
Forth Estuary Forum	To promote the wise and sustainable use of the Forth	Communication is a key role of the Forum, including members events, annual conferences and production of regular e-bulletins and newsletters. The Management Group meets quarterly. The Forum also supports	Multi-sector - a partnership of people and organisations around the Firth of Forth including business, statutory agencies, voluntary groups and local authorities

Partnership	Aim	Partnership work from 2012-2014	Sectors involved
		beach clean-ups and other initiatives. Visit their website to find out more.	
Tay Estuary Forum	To promote the wise and sustainable use of the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastal zone	Communication as well as delivery of the Tay Estuary Forum Management Plan 2009-2014. The Steering Group meets regularly.	Multi-sector - a partnership of people and organisations around the Firth of Forth including business, statutory agencies, voluntary groups and local authorities
Keep Scotland Beautiful / Fife Council	Fife Council supports several Keep Scotland Beautiful initiatives, helping to contribute to the organisation's aims to improve local environmental quality and sustainability as well as education	Fife Council's Community Events Officer annually supports groups with entry into Beautiful Scotland, a community environmental improvement initiative. Fife Council's Education service is also heavily involved in the Eco-Schools initiative. A river clean-up event was organised with the support of Keep Scotland Beautiful in April 2014.	Public, voluntary, community groups
Cosy Kingdom, Home Energy Scotland and Scottish and Southern Energy (Affordable Warmth heating replacement)	Direct energy efficiency advice and direct promotion of insulation measures and heating upgrades	Home energy advice, visits and promotion through local media. Installation of loft, cavity and external wall insulation. Upgrading heating and boiler replacement.	As before together with potential district heating installation.
Fife Nature Records Centre Steering Group	To steer the work of the Fife Nature Records Centre, the Kingdom's biological records centre	Hosted events in conjunction with National Trust for Scotland. Annual citizen science events programme.	Fife Council, SNH, BRISC, local expert recorders
Lothians & Fife Green Network Partnership	Promoting the economic, social and ecological benefits of green networks across the region. Creating a quality environment through co-ordinated action by communities, agencies and businesses	Publication of the Fife Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2013-2018 . Development of an ambition green corridor project in Dunfermline, which in 2014 was awarded a grant from the Water Environment Fund for a feasibility study involving de-culverting and restoring a section of the Lyne Burn.	Multi-sector including statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and local authorities
Eden Estuary Local Nature Reserve Advisory Group	To advise the management of the Eden Estuary Local Nature Reserve	Delivery of the Eden Estuary LNR Action Plan, including maintaining and enhancing key habitats, breeding bird populations including wildfowl and waders, the estuarine and coastal function, public access and education. See the 2012-2013 Annual Report .	Multi-sector including St Andrews Links Trust, Fife Coast & Countryside, SNH, RAF Leuchars, BASC, Scottish Wildlife Trust, SEPA, St Andrews University, Fife Council
West Sands Partnership	A collaboration to deliver the West Sands Management Plan and West Sands Dune Action Plan, thereby protecting and enhancing the multiple benefits of this landscape	The West Sands Management Plan was finalised in 2012. The partnership has helped fund and undertaken the first two phases of a three phase dune restoration programme. Delivery of the West Sands Dune Action Plan 2011-2025, and monitoring of dune system. Looking into remediation of a former landfill site.	Multi-sector including Fife Coast & Countryside Trust, St Andrews Links Trust, Fife Council, SNH

6. Communication – raising awareness about biodiversity and building capacity amongst stakeholders

Please list and describe what Fife Council has done to communicate the importance of biodiversity and its conservation either internally or to the wider community between 2012-2014. This could include educational and awareness raising initiatives, events, seminars or training. Please explain who the target audiences for the communications or capacity building were, as well as any partners you may have worked with. Where available add web-links to give links to this work.

Communication or capacity building	Format e.g. publication, seminar, new group, training	Purpose	Audience e.g. parks & countryside staff, planners, community groups, farmers
Publication and launch of the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018	Publication and event	To raise awareness about, promote and engage the public and stakeholders in nature conservation in Fife	Residents of Fife, stakeholders, Fife Council
Production of 'Wildlife and the Law' booklet	Publication	To raise awareness about protected species and the law	Internal – Parks & Countryside staff
Establishing 'Parks Biodiversity & Greenspace' group	New group	To promote management of parks and greenspace for biodiversity, exchange best practice and improve communication internally of ongoing biodiversity work	Internal – Parks & Countryside staff
Annual biodiversity events programme	Events	To raise awareness about and engage the public in the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan and biological recording. Information events as well as practical conservation days	Residents of and visitors to Fife
'Beautiful Wild Fife' logo and signage	Logo and signage	To brand Parks & Countryside biodiversity initiatives and inform members of the public that areas are being managed for biodiversity	Residents of and visitors to Fife
New webpages	'Minisite' on Fife Council's website	To provide information on Fife Nature Records Centre, the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan, and specific topics such as invasive non-native species	Residents of and visitors to Fife
Production of a leaflet about the Fife Nature Records Centre and the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan	Publication	To provide information about the work of the local biological records centre, the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan, and how members of the public can support nature conservation in Fife	Residents of and visitors to Fife
Production of an invasive non-native species leaflet	Publication	To raise awareness and encourage recording of invasive	Residents of and visitors to Fife

Communication or capacity building	Format e.g. publication, seminar, new group, training	Purpose	Audience e.g. parks & countryside staff, planners, community groups, farmers
		non-native species in Fife	
Production of biological survey postcards for six species	Publications	To raise awareness about specific species and encourage public participation in biological recording	Residents of and visitors to Fife
Attendance of meadow management training day	External training	To learn about species-rich grassland management to enhance species diversity	Parks & Countryside staff
Bird survey training event	Training	To train and engage volunteers in bird surveying	Residents of Fife, students
Wildlife in the Rough (Sharing Good Practice)	Seminar	To develop skills and knowledge of golf course management for biodiversity	Internal – Parks & Countryside Staff; external – Fife Golf Trust

Building capacity

Are you working with your Community Planning Partnership, communities or other stakeholders to identify shared threats and opportunities, and implement actions? What opportunities were staff given to take part in practical action such as volunteering for local conservation initiatives?

Fife Council works closely with partners in other sectors in order to deliver shared visions and opportunities and tackle threats. Capacity is built through the following partnerships:

- the Fife Partnership, the community planning partnership for the Kingdom
- the Fife Environmental Partnership, which leads on environmental aspects of the Community Plan.
- the Take a Pride in Fife initiative, a partnership between Fife Council and community groups to improve their local environment
- the Fife Rural Skills Partnership
- the Fife Biodiversity Partnership
- the Greenspace Task Group (recently renamed Local Green Action Group)
- the Fife Access Forum
- Fife Council has also supported staff at Noble Foods, an egg packaging site, with the development and delivery of a biodiversity action plan for their grounds

For more information on these partnerships, see section 5.

7. Scottish Biodiversity Strategy – your contribution to delivery

Please indicate ways in which you have contributed to the delivery of the ‘2020 Challenge for Scotland’s Biodiversity: a strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland’ since its publication in 2013. The strategy aims to:

- Protect and restore biodiversity on land and in our seas, and to support healthier ecosystems
- Connect people with the natural world, for their health and wellbeing and to involve them more in decisions about their environment
- Maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth

For key steps and outcomes within the strategy, see <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/5538>.

The following illustrates how Fife Council has contributed to delivering the Strategy, but is not comprehensive:

Protect and restore biodiversity on land and in our seas, and to support healthier ecosystems

- The FIFEplan Proposed Plan (Local Development Plan), which underwent consultation between October and December 2014, includes policies and proposals to protect natural heritage and biodiversity assets as well as requirements for the provision of new green infrastructure and enhancement of green networks and biodiversity as part of new development. The development plan is supported by the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- The Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) continues to be a key mechanism for protecting and enhancing biodiversity across Fife. With the collaboration of over 40 partners from a range of sectors, a wide range of projects is delivered, ranging from species-specific projects such as the Fife Red Squirrel Project, to landscape-scale multiple benefit projects such as dune and saltmarsh restoration in the Eden Estuary. Fife Council continues to act as Secretariat to the Fife Biodiversity Partnership and provide a co-ordination role of the LBAP through the Biodiversity Co-ordinator post. Many other officers in the Council from a range of services also support delivery. The current edition of the LBAP also raises awareness about ecosystems services and the Ecosystem Approach.
- The Fife Greenspace Strategy and Greenspace Action Plans have contributed a great deal over the past three years to enhancing biodiversity in urban areas, ranging from the creation of orchards using traditional tree varieties, a ‘biodiverse school ground’ demonstration project, entering public parks for Green Flag awards, improving the NHS estate for biodiversity as well as users, and developing an ambitious green corridor project in central Dunfermline. The Strategy and Action Plans are led by Fife Council’s Greenspace Officer, and through the Greenspace Task Group is supported by many other officers from the Parks, Transportation, Education and Sustainability services.
- Fife Council’s Parks & Countryside service has an objective to “increase year on year the area of land managed for biodiversity”. Both the Development and Operations teams work to enhance public parks and greenspaces for wildlife, most notably through the creation of habitats such as species-rich grassland and ponds and wetlands and a reduction in the area of amenity grassland. An excellent example is Dunnikier Park in Kirkcaldy, where a large area of cut grass was turned into a wildlife site with a meadow, ponds, wetlands, a bee bank and hibernaculum, deadwood management, tree planting,

Rhododendron control and the eradication of an area of Japanese knotweed.

- Fife Council is one of 12 partners in the Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership, a landscape conservation programme in the Lomond and Benarty Hills which is being delivered through a range of community-based activities and projects and will see the restoration and enhancement of upland, grassland and woodland habitat. Living Lomonds was awarded £1.8 million by Heritage Lottery Fund in 2013 and Fife Council has contributed £150,000 of its own funds.

Connecting people with the natural world, for their health and wellbeing and to involve them more in decisions about their environment

- Fife Council's Biodiversity Team organises and supports an annual events programme including practical conservation days, 'bioblitz' public surveys, environmental clean-ups, guided walks, site open days and agricultural shows. In 2014, the team organised or attended a total of 23 events.
- A 'Passport to the Hills' was given to every primary school-aged child in Fife in June 2014. Designed and developed by Fife Council's Early Years & Partnership Support Team with the Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership, the passport encourages children to explore and reconnect with the local Lomond and Benarty Hills.
- Fife Nature Records Centre, the local authority's biological records centre, encourages the public to get involved in biological recording and citizen science. This is promoted at events and bioblitzes and recently also through the production of survey postcards of under-recorded species or indicators of ecosystem health.
- Fife's Buzzing, a partnership project with Buglife, is engaging community groups and schoolchildren in the creation and management of wildflower meadows across Fife and raises awareness about the importance of this habitat.

Maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth

- The landscape scale dune restoration project at West Sands, St Andrews, is an excellent example of a multiple benefit project which enhances the ecosystem services of a natural system. A partnership project led by Fife Coast & Countryside Trust, St Andrews Links Trust, Fife Council and SNH, the restoration has protected and enhanced biodiversity, strengthened an important coastal defence protecting the culturally and economically important Old Course as well as infrastructure, reduced the risk of flooding and erosion from storm surges and improved recreational use.
- Fife Council signed the Central Scotland Green Network Declaration in November 2013, committing the local authority to adhere to CSGN principles and incorporate them into policies, strategies and plans.
- Publication of the Fife Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2013-2018 to guide the expansion and restructuring of woodlands in Fife and maximise the wide range of benefits that woods and forests provide.
- In 2014, Fife Council developed proposals for four landscape scale, multiple benefit green infrastructure projects in Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes and Levenmouth. Bids for funding for these projects are to be submitted to SNH as part of their green infrastructure funding package to the European Regional Development Fund.

8. Biodiversity Highlights of the Past Year

Please highlight Fife Council's main achievements for biodiversity over the past year (2014), and what you are most proud of. This can include processes, plans, projects, partnerships, events and actions. Looking ahead, outline what you think the main challenges will be.

In conjunction with over 40 partners, the past year has seen the start of the delivery of the new Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018, which was launched in October 2013.

In partnership with Buglife, over £86,000 was secured through grant funding for a landscape-scale wildflower meadow creation project. 'Fife's Buzzing' will create over 12 hectares of pollinator-friendly habitat – mostly on Fife Council-owned land – on 16 sites across Fife over a three-year period involving community groups, schools and volunteers.

The start of Living Lomonds, a landscape conservation programme aiming to re-connect people with the living legacy of the Lomond and Benarty Hills through a range of community-based activities and projects. Living Lomonds was awarded £1.8 million by Heritage Lottery Fund in 2013. Fife Council is one of 12 partners in the Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership and contributed £150,000 capital investment to the project.

In partnership with Lothians & Fife Green Network Partnership and SEPA, Fife Council (Transportation and Parks & Countryside Services) has developed a project to restore a green corridor through central Dunfermline, most notably through the de-canalisation and de-culverting of a section of the Lyne Burn. A Water Environment Fund grant of up to £300,000 was awarded for a feasibility study.

The past year has seen a mainstreaming of long grass management as well as wetland and pond creation within the Parks & Countryside service of Fife Council. Former amenity grassland sites across Fife – including parks, greenspaces and urban road verges – were sown with pollinator-friendly meadow mixes. This work has been particularly well received by the public. Numerous ponds and wetlands were also created to enhance the biodiversity of local authority-owned land.

Fife Council has supported the Fife Golf Trust with their initiative to enter Fife's seven municipal golf courses, amounting to 300 hectares, for 'GEO Certified', the Golf Environment Organization's internationally-recognised environmental and sustainability accreditation. Initial biodiversity plans were drawn up for the courses and enhancement work of freshwater and grassland habitat has taken place.

The proposed FIFEplan (Local Development Plan) includes policies and proposals to protect natural heritage and biodiversity assets and includes requirements for the provision of new green infrastructure and enhancement of green networks and biodiversity as part of new development. The development plan is supported by the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance.

In order to establish a current baseline of non-estuarine wading bird populations in Fife, a repeat was carried out in January of a wintering wader survey originally conducted in the early 1970s. In partnership with ECOS Countryside Services, Fife's mainland coastline and the Isle of May were surveyed with the help of 25 volunteers. The intention is to undertake a repeat of this survey over a further two winters.

Given the continuing and significant financial pressures facing all local authorities in Scotland, the main challenge for Fife Council with regards to protecting and enhancing biodiversity will be the availability of funding, both revenue and capital, to help develop, deliver and sustain local initiatives and projects.