

2016-2021

**Argyll and Bute Council
Biodiversity Duty Action Plan**



**Argyll and Bute Council
Kilmory Castle.
Lochgilphead.
Argyll.**



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Acknowledgements.

The Argyll and Bute Council Local Biodiversity Officer would like to thank those who have contributed to the development and production of this action plan, your time and effort is much appreciated.

Forward

Biodiversity is vital to our wellbeing and key to our quality of life in Argyll and Bute. A healthy and stable environment is central to economic prosperity and the area's desirability as a place to live, work and visit. The state of our biodiversity is a fundamental indicator of whether we are achieving a sustainable future for Argyll and Bute. The council is committed to embedding sustainable development into all services, and conserving biodiversity in its duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. Argyll and Bute has some of the best examples of biodiversity in Britain; it embraces a remarkably varied landscape, a diversity of habitats unparalleled in the west of Scotland. The vital public services that the natural world provides make it imperative to conserve and enhance biodiversity now and for future generations. Biodiversity is central to environmental education and lifelong learning about the world around us; fundamental to our heritage, culture and sense of place; and provides relaxation and inspiration.

Providing access to nature is important for delivering first-class services to the community is set out in the Single Income Agreement (SOA). The Argyll and Bute Biodiversity Duty Action Plan aligns itself with the SOA. Argyll and Bute Council operate a wide range of environmental programmes and are known as an innovative and example of this is our rural regeneration initiative, caring authority concerned about the natural environment.



Cllr. Dich Walsh.

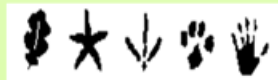
Leader of Argyll and Bute Council

1. Biodiversity- its importance

Biodiversity is the variety of life, including all plants, animals and their habitats. Biodiversity surrounds us in urban areas and the countryside and embraces familiar species that we see every day as well as rare creatures seldom seen. Nature and natural systems underpin life on Earth.

The health of our natural environment is the foundation of our economy and pivotal to quality of life:

- Our natural world contributes to our health and wellbeing through providing relaxation, enjoyment and inspiration,
- Biodiversity helps to mitigate the effects of climate change through locking-up carbon, providing low-carbon sources of energy and moderating temperature extremes,
- Our natural environment provides services such as flood defence and catchment management, filtering of wastewater and polluted air, productive soils,
- Biodiversity provides the basic necessities of food and medicines and the raw materials for building and Industry,
- Nature underpins the tourism and recreation sectors
- Biodiversity is central to the complex web of life. The vital public services that the natural world provides make it imperative to conserve and enhance biodiversity now and for future generations.



2. Introduction.

Welcome to the refreshed Argyll and Bute Council Biodiversity Duty Action Plan.

Biodiversity is a core component to supporting our sustainability, underpinning economic development and prosperity, and has an important role to play in developing locally distinctive and sustainable communities.

The purpose of the action plan is to reflect the activities we carry out in exercising our functions across the council thus ensuring that we as a public body meet our Biodiversity Statutory Duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and contribute to the Scottish Governments' Biodiversity Triannual Reporting under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011

The Argyll and Bute Council Biodiversity Duty Action Plan sets out what we do to meet our obligations under the statutory duty using agreed budgets or using in-situ resources at no cost. The biodiversity duty is about connecting people with and managing the habitats and species that influence our wonderful environment. The activities we carry out are not just about protecting specific sites or species but thinking about how we manage and promote biodiversity in the wider environment. We do this through a variety of management and maintenance plans, for example, property and estate, roadside verges, graveyards, school grounds, the planning and development process, economic development, community and staff engagement.

Our biodiversity duty action plan will assist in an efficient way in gathering information on our activities in order to complete the triannual report for the Scottish Government which is a requirement under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act. We submitted our report in February 2015 with the next report due in 2018.

The refreshed plan is set out in themes, outcomes and linked where appropriate to the Single Outcome Agreement. It is a flexible document where changes can be included at any time.



3. Biodiversity Duty - Legal Context.

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 requires the publication of a report on how public bodies are meeting this duty. This report is due every three years with the latest submitted to the Scottish Government in February 2015 prior to approval by the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee. See Appendix 1 for the link to the last report.



4. Argyll and Bute Council Biodiversity Duty Action Plan

4.1 The action Plan has been divided into 7 themes:

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Legal | 5. Information |
| 2. Planning | 6. Community Engagement |
| 3. Economic Development | 7. Education |
| 4. Asset Management | |

4.2 Outcomes: The themes are linked to the following:

Outcome 1.

Biodiversity action to maintain and enhance within a range of developments- this includes good practice within planning, infrastructure, mineral extraction and where appropriate within the Argyll and Bute Council estate.

Outcome 2.

Sustainable management of our biodiversity- for consistency to meet both social and economic needs in terms of usage and enjoyment of Argyll and Bute's natural resources i.e. Clean air, potable water, soil, native flora and fauna.

Outcome 3.

Biodiversity contributing to community and economic benefits – education (formal, informal and lifelong learning), social inclusion, contributing to sustainable economic development, health and wellbeing and community cohesion,

Outcome 4.

Conservation management for future-proofing biodiversity- this includes environmental activities to management climate change.

4.3 Single Outcome Agreement – Long term outcomes;

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| 1. The economy is diverse and thriving. | 4. Children and young people have the best possible start. |
| 2. We have infrastructure that supports sustainable growth. | 5. People live active, healthier and independent lives. |
| 3. Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all. | 6. People live in safer and stronger communities. |

Outcomes	SOA	Action Theme: Legislation, Policy and Plans	Department and Service	Target	New/ Ongoing	Complete by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
1	all	Contribute to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy by aligning the refreshed Argyll and Bute Council Biodiversity Duty Action Plan	Development and Infrastructure-Development Policy	Engage with Senior Officers in developing the A&BC BDAP and complete draft document.	New	Jan 2016 Yes.	LB Officer	No cost.
3	As appropriate	Assist with the development of strategies and plans by inputting the biodiversity element as appropriate	All relevant departments	Input biodiversity in the preparation of new and revised strategies and plans.	New and Ongoing	ongoing	LB Officer.	No cost
Outcome	SOA	Action Theme: Development Policy	Department and Service	Target	New/ Ongoing	Complete by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
1	1	Take account of Biodiversity in the drafting of the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan	Development and Infrastructure-Development Policy	Contribute biodiversity information to support the development of the next LDP	Ongoing	Ongoing	LB ¹ Officer	no cost
1	1 and 2	Ensure that Argyll and Bute LDP ² continues to take account of the constraints and opportunities for biodiversity including Landfill and Mineral workings	Development and Infrastructure-Development Policy	Biodiversity is fully considered in the LDP with supplementary guidance provided on landfill and mineral workings	New	2020	LDP Team	No cost
1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	Argyll and Bute Council Strategies	All relevant departments	Corporate, Environmental Strategies,	New	As appropriate	Yes	No cost
1,2,3,4		Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan- refresh the current tranche	Development Policy	Report on Progress made on the latest Tranche.	Ongoing	2017	A&BLB P ³	No Cost

¹ Local Biodiversity Officer.

² LDP- Local Development Plan.

³ Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Partnership.

Outcome	SOA	Action Theme: Economic Development	Department and Service	Target	New/ Ongoing	Complete by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
2	1	Biodiversity included in the Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP)	D&I-Economic Development	Provide biodiversity information for sustainable economic growth.	New	Annual review	LB Officer	No cost
1,2	2	Ensure Biodiversity is included in the Argyll and Bute Council Infrastructure Strategy and Transport Schemes	D&I- ED working with DP	Provide biodiversity relevant infrastructure	New	Annual review	LB Officer	No cost
2,3	1	Promote the Business and Biodiversity guide.	D&I with DP	Review the current guidance to ensure that it is up to date	New	Annually	LB Officer and ED Staff	No cost
Outcome	SOA	Action Theme: Biodiversity Information	Department and Service	Target	New/ Ongoing	Complete by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
3,4	3	Ensure Biodiversity information including reports posted on Argyll and Bute Council website are up to date	Corporate Services (CS)	Regular updates to be sent to Communications	Ongoing	As appropriate	LB Officer	No cost
3	3	Promote Biodiversity to Argyll and Bute Council Staff	CS and D&I (Development and Infrastructure).	Survey Monkey	New	2016	LB Officer	No cost
3	3	Promote Biodiversity Species and Habitats on a month by month basis.	CS. Communications and LBAP officer	Month by month species and habitats selected.	New/through Planning Twitter a/c	Ongoing	LB Officer	No cost
3,4	3	Provide advice on Habitat Restoration that involves the eradication of Invasive Non-Native Species via the Biodiversity webpage	D&I/CS	LBAP Officer to provide information and appropriate web links	Ongoing	Ongoing	LB Officer	No cost

Outcome	SOA	Action Theme: Planning	Department and Service	Target	New/ Ongoing	Complete by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
1	1 and 6	Re. Planning Applications including Pre- App and Development Proposals: where appropriate ensure protection, positive management and enhancement opportunities are taken into account.	D&I Planning and Regulatory Services	Screening of wide range of applications with a focus on biodiversity protection, enhancement and restoration in tandem with the Biodiversity Check sheet...	New approach, Ongoing process	DM and LB Officer	Yes	No cost
4	1 and 6	Promote Biodiversity conservation and enhancement in council development proposals.	D&I- Planning and Regulatory Services	Biodiversity Assessment of Council sites using the Biodiversity Check Sheet.	New	Ongoing	Yes	No cost
	6	Officer Biosecurity information for site visits.	D&I- Planning and Regulatory Services	Biosecurity and Biodiversity information for Officer visits	Draft completed.	LB Officer	Yes	No cost
Outcome	SOA	Action Theme: Asset Management	Department and Service	Target	New/Ongoing	Completed by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
2	2	Roadside verges, roundabouts management plans.	D&I	Roadside verge and roundabout maintenance timed to maximise biodiversity	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	Budget in place
1	2	Amenity spaces- parks, public gardens.	D&I	Maintenance timed to maximise biodiversity	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	Budget in place
1	2	Graveyards Maintenance Plan.	D&I	Designated Green Burials sites identified within existing Grave Yards	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	Budget in place
1,2	2	Taking account of biodiversity in other environmental programmes such as waste management, energy conservation and response to climate change.	D&I	Biodiversity information input as required.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	No cost

Outcome	SOA	Action Theme: Community Engagement	Department and Service	Target	New/Ongoing	Completed by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
3	5	Community Planning – Single Outcome SOA 5. People live active, healthier and independent lives.	Corporate Services.	Market guidance on the benefits of biodiversity/nature on our health and wellbeing	New	Ongoing	Yes	No cost in terms of advice
3	5	Promote the benefits of biodiversity to our communities' health and wellbeing by working with the Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust.	Development and Infrastructure Service.	Work in partnership with the Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust	New and ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	No cost in terms of advice
3	5	Adult and Children Care Homes x 23. Audit results to promote low cost measures such as bird feeders, bird boxes and gardening activities.	Development and Infrastructure. (D&I)	Carry out an audit of biodiversity interest in the grounds of Adult and Children's Homes to inform potential opportunities.	New	2018	Yes	No cost in terms of advice
Outcome	SOA	Action Theme: Education	Department and Service	Target	New/Ongoing	Completed by	Resources	
							Staff	Finance
3	3	Promote biodiversity and associated projects to schools through online information and email communication.	D&I- Education	Support schools to develop and deliver plans for the enhancement, management and use of their grounds	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	No cost
3	3	Carry out an bi-annual biodiversity activities survey of all schools in Argyll and Bute.	D&I- Education	Develop a survey suited to on line completion- Survey Monkey.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	No cost
3	3	Provide advice on biodiversity to individual school projects.	D&I- Education.	Help schools link with the Argyll and Bute Action Plan,	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	No cost

Biodiversity Duty Compliance Report .

http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/argyll_and_bute_council_biodiversity_duty_reporting_december_2014_version_3_2.pdf

