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Argyll & Bute Climate Action

A climate change strategy for Argyll & Bute

Contents

Executive Summary

Climate change is one of the most serious threats that we face in Scotland. Rising temperatures, drier summers, wetter winters, sea level rise, and an increased risk of flooding, will all affect our lives. There is a global need to take action to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions which are responsible, but changes in climate will not be completely eliminated by these actions. We also need to find ways of adapting to the effects of climate change.

This is a strategy and action plan for Argyll & Bute. A region wide, community led, net-zero, climate change resilient, adaptation plan, in support of the vision that:

We make Argyll and Bute climate ready by acting together to understand and adapt to our changing climate.

It has been developed through an engagement process managed by the Argyll Countryside Trust[1] (ACT) on behalf of Argyll & Bute's Community Planning [2] Partnership Climate Working Group, with thanks to Argyll and Bute Council, NHS Highland, NatureScot and Argyll & Bute Third Sector Interface for funding support and the Steering Group comprising volunteers from the Climate Working Group for further support.

It links to Argyll & Bute's Outcomes Improvement Plan for 2024 – 2034[3] which focusses on improving the outcomes of Transport, Housing and Community Wellbeing.

[1] Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust
[2] Community planning | Argyll and Bute Council
[3] Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan 2024-2034 | Argyll and Bute Council

The heavy rain in early October 2023 caused £15m damage to transport infrastructure (mainly roads and bridges) in parts of Argyll & Bute

Now and into the future, we want a thriving Argyll & Bute where our collective choices and actions enhance our continued wellbeing in a changing climate.

Our climate change strategy seeks to tackle climate change, by working together to be:

- **Climate Friendly**: Reduce Argyll & Bute's greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change (mitigation)
- **Climate Ready**: Resilient and adapted to unavoidable climate change (adaptation), and
- **Climate Just**: Ensure all of our communities are included (engagement).

Sea level rise and coastal impacts are a concern. 80% of the population of Argyll & Bute lives within 1km of the coast (97% within 10km of coast), and we have over 200km of road within 25m of the sea (at high tide).

Our strategy identifies the key climate risks impacting on Argyll & Bute and the areas in which we can take action to address them:

Climate Risk	Impact
Warmer, wetter winters: Increased rainfall volume and intensity	Increased landslides, flooded water courses and more surface water
Hotter, drier summers: higher average and higher peak temperatures, increased heatwave frequency and longer drought periods	Higher risk of human and animal heat stress, illness and mortality, crop failure, wildfires and freshwater scarcity
More severe, and more variable weather events: Less predictable but more frequent storms, increased variability in wind speed and direction, higher peak wind speeds, higher rainfall intensity	Windblow, forest damage, road blockage, power line damage/power cuts, property damage, flooding, landslides
Sea level rise and storm surges: increased coastal erosion	Coastal infrastructure damage and loss, coastal retreat or protection cost
Multi-hazards affecting people, species and habitats: Combination of hazards compounding climate risks and impacts	Single actions less likely to address mitigation or adaptation. Solutions needs to maximise multiple benefits and work with natural processes
Increased climate unpredictability	Climate forecasts less predictable, actions need to be based on worst-case scenarios, resilience more dependent on agile and diverse actions

Areas for action closest to the CPP's remit and ability to control or influence:

Areas for Action	
Infrastructure	Addressing demand and impacts of better transport infrastructure to reduce reliance on private cars and provide for those who do not have a car; enhancing communications and grid infrastructure through maximising decarbonisation and renewable energy opportunities; natural capital: managing our green and blue infrastructure to reduce emissions and support resilience.
Policy Influence	Influencing national and regional public and non-public policies through the CPP's collective voice in a way that recognises Argyll & Bute's distinctive geography and population.
Skills, Procurement and Supply Chain	Increasing opportunities for individuals to gain the skills required to deliver climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience in an inclusive and just way. Promoting opportunities for climate mitigation, adaptation and community wealth building through improving circular economies within Argyll & Bute.
Risk Assessment	Deepening our understanding of the risks and opportunities, including economic risks and opportunities, presented by climate change to Argyll and Bute as a whole and to specific communities and sectors.
Resilience/Carbon Literacy	Promoting carbon literacy and greater resilience, across all CPP sectors to empower individuals to bring about climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience in an inclusive and just way.
Crosscutting/Other	Encourage individuals, communities and agencies to take multiple actions and to identify new risks and opportunities.

With fuel poverty nearly 50% higher than the Scottish average, and higher again in more rural areas, and private water supplies ten times the national average, our housing is largely insufficient to cope with our current climate and even less with the greater weather extremes forecast.

The principles and approach guiding the Strategy are:

- **An enabling strategy**, rather than creating new duties or replacing existing ones, it identifies gaps and opportunities, especially those made possible by working together.
- **Alignment** with the CPP priorities of Transport Infrastructure, Housing and Community Wellbeing, which in turn are aligned to requirements in our national climate programmes.
- **Embracing diversity**, to recognise significant variation among our communities, places and landscapes, and that we are being affected by climate change in multiple ways.
- **Focussing on common challenges** across the region, such as the length and vulnerability of transport links, and our low population density that can make it harder to secure funding.
- **Adapting** as we build our understanding of the risks and opportunities we face, taking into account local knowledge and also local variations and capacity to adapt.
- **Engaging communities** through networks of community champions linked to **Climate Hubs**[4] centred on the four Argyll & Bute administrative areas.
- **Developing resilience** by developing skills and capacity to adapt to ongoing change alongside longer term transformational capital projects.
- **Ensuring a socially just transition** to a climate ready future: as we prepare for the impacts of the changing climate we do so in ways that are fair and tackle inequality.

In addition to incremental steps to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and transitional steps to enhance our capacity to adapt, there is also a transformational component: as we improve our ability to cope with climate needs we also improve our current circumstances.

An example of this sort of transformational change is the importance of developing our local economy through developing appropriate local skills, produce and markets and the housing, energy and other infrastructure to support them. This reduces our transport and waste emissions at the same time as reducing our dependence on vulnerable, extended transport links and enables us to add value locally and reduce economic leakage, at the same time as supporting transformational growth sectors such as energy and valuing our natural capital.

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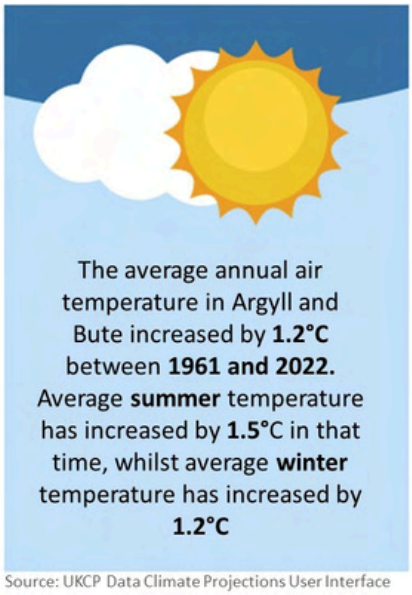
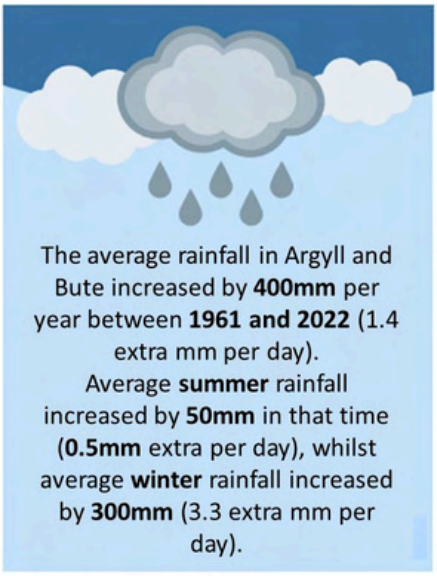
[4] ACT Now | Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust

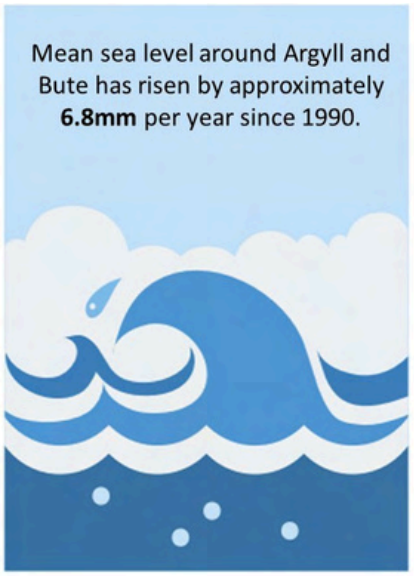
1. What does climate change mean for Argyll and Bute? Identifying risks and impacts

In short, the outlook for Argyll and Bute is overall increasing temperatures, with

- Hotter, drier summers
- Warmer, wetter winters
- More severe weather events, and more variability
- Sea level rise







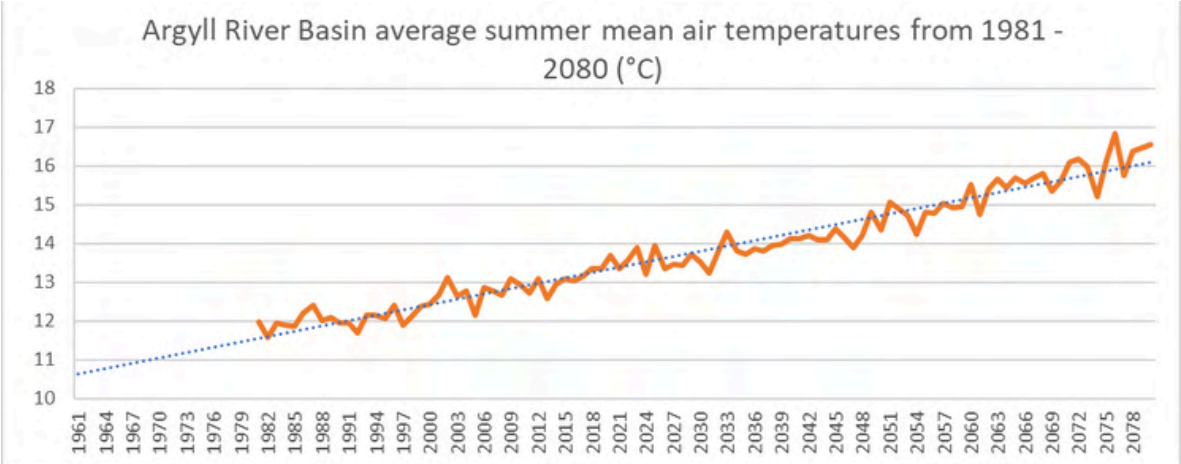
Source: UKCP Data Climate Projections User Interface

There are some common challenges across the region but there is also significant variation within and between communities, places and landscapes. More detailed information based on climate projections for 16 settlements across Argyll and Bute is in Appendix 1 and 2.

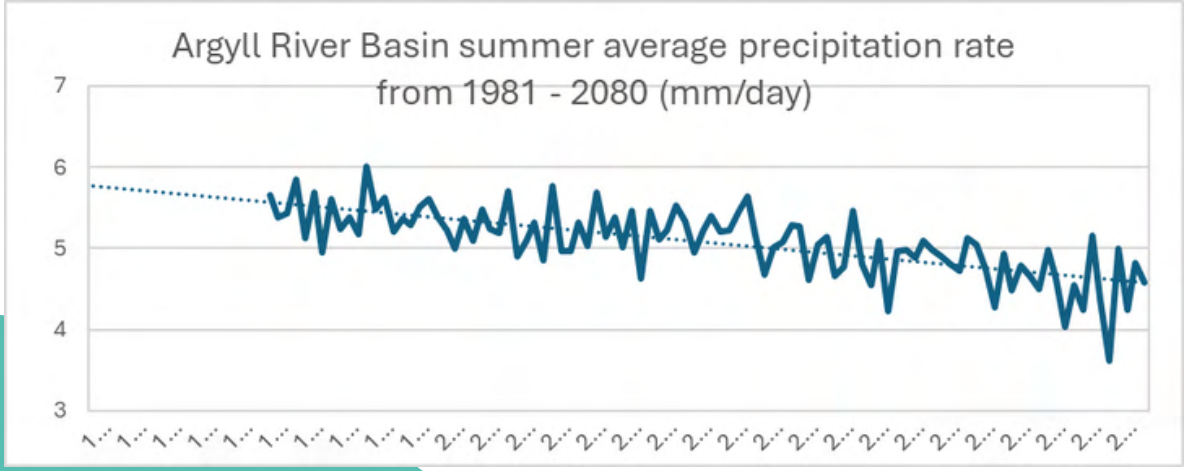
The region's characterising features of high geographical diversity, low population density, long coastlines, largely rural small, isolated and ageing communities and long distances all impact on considerations of what "good" climate action means for Argyll and Bute. However, we also have urban considerations with our largest single centre of population being Helensburgh, and other important settlements with urban issues but rural supply chains and correspondingly long and vulnerable transport and other communications links.

1.1 Hotter, drier summers

Individual seasons vary and the cold and wet summer 2024 is in stark contrast to the hot, dry conditions prevailing in recent summers. Below we see summer temperatures for the overall Argyll River Basin area, which approximates closely to the overall Argyll and Bute area, with observed data and projected rise combined. Further climate projections specific to a representative set of 16 settlements across Argyll & Bute are in Appendix 1.



In terms of the "drier" part, below are average summer precipitation rates for Argyll River Basin.



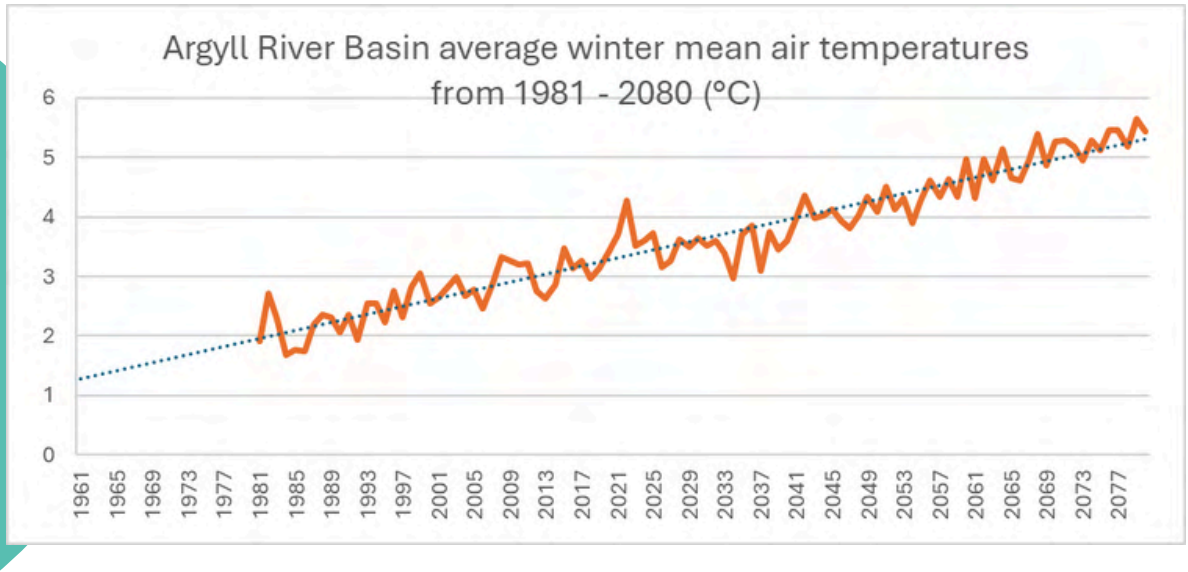
While temperature and precipitation projections indicate trends, another important consideration is minimum night time temperatures in summertime. The reason for this is that when there is less opportunity for buildings to cool down, the phenomenon of heat stress, particularly in vulnerable people, rises considerably. There is a strong link between heat stress and summer mortalities which are a growing trend particularly further south in the UK and Europe as temperatures increase with climate change, and a counterpart to the better known phenomenon of winter deaths due to cold and poorly heated and insulated housing.

Current indications are that Argyll and Bute as a region is less likely to suffer water scarcity in coming decades than other parts of Scotland and the UK, although this does not rule out local impacts and potential infrastructure damage, as indicated in Scottish Water's 2024 climate change strategy[5].

About one third of the population of Argyll and Bute has a private water supply, which is ten times the Scottish average. This presents an Argyll-specific climate risk as private water supplies can be more vulnerable to interruption or contamination in periods of low rainfall or drought.

1.2 Warmer, wetter winters

In contrast to the trend for hotter, drier summers, in winter observed data and projections both point to trends to warmer, wetter winters with fewer days of frost under the overall trend for increasing temperatures.



[5] 290224ScottishWaterAdaptationPlan.pdf

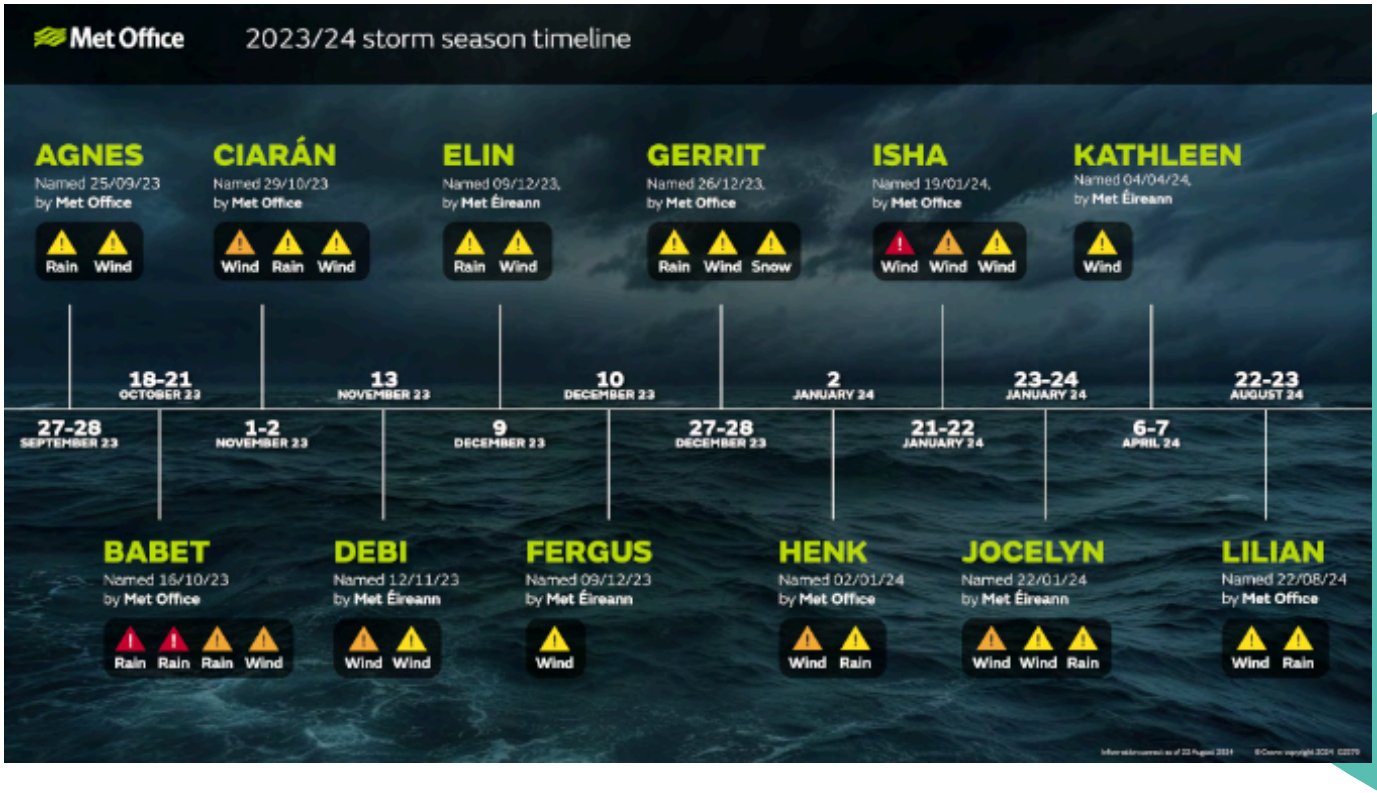
1.3 More severe weather events, and more variability

We can also expect increases in severity and frequency of severe weather events. Damage and disruption from flooding and landslides is one example: the heavy rain in early October 2023 caused £15m damage to infrastructure (mainly roads & bridges) in parts of Argyll and Bute and was not even one of the series of named national storms that autumn. As at February 2025, damage from Storm Eowyn is yet to be calculated but even more widespread, with some communities without power or telecoms for five days.

Severe weather - wind

While we have some sophisticated modelling of future temperature and precipitation, wind is harder to model and the Met Office climate change centre states that
Due to the lack of any observed trends, there haven't been any studies so far which provide a link between changes in UK storminess and climate change[6].

Notwithstanding, the frequency of storm events over 2023-24 and the significance of wind as in the diagrams below in these also point to the likelihood of more potential damage and disruption from wind.



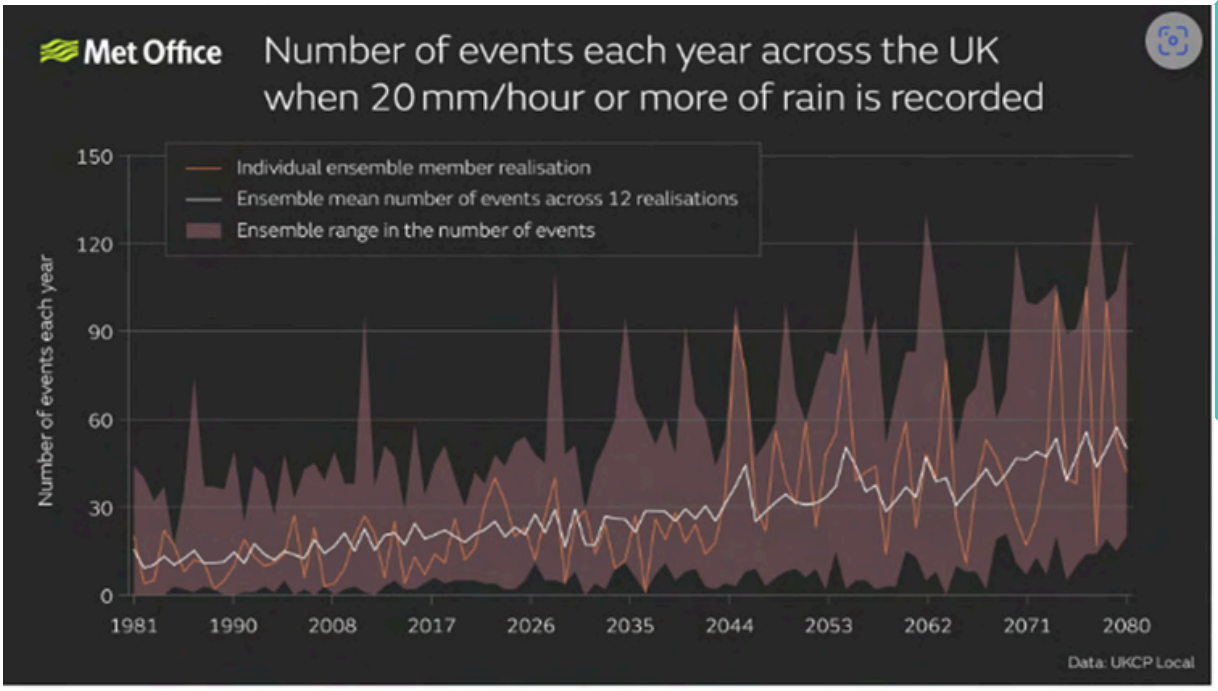
[6] UK and Global extreme events – Wind storms - Met Office

6

Wind direction is of especial importance for Argyll and Bute due to the central role of marine transport in the area. Ferry and marine tourism operators have commented on the significance of wind direction events disrupting services and impacting upon coastal infrastructure, in addition to householders' accounts of damage to roofs due to strong winds from unusual directions.

Severe weather – heavy rain or snow

The graph below shows historic and projected incidence of intense rainfall events, noting that "future changes in extreme rainfall events could be almost 10 times more frequent in Northwest Scotland in 2080 compared to the 1980s, whilst in the south of the UK the value is closer to three times more frequent."[7]

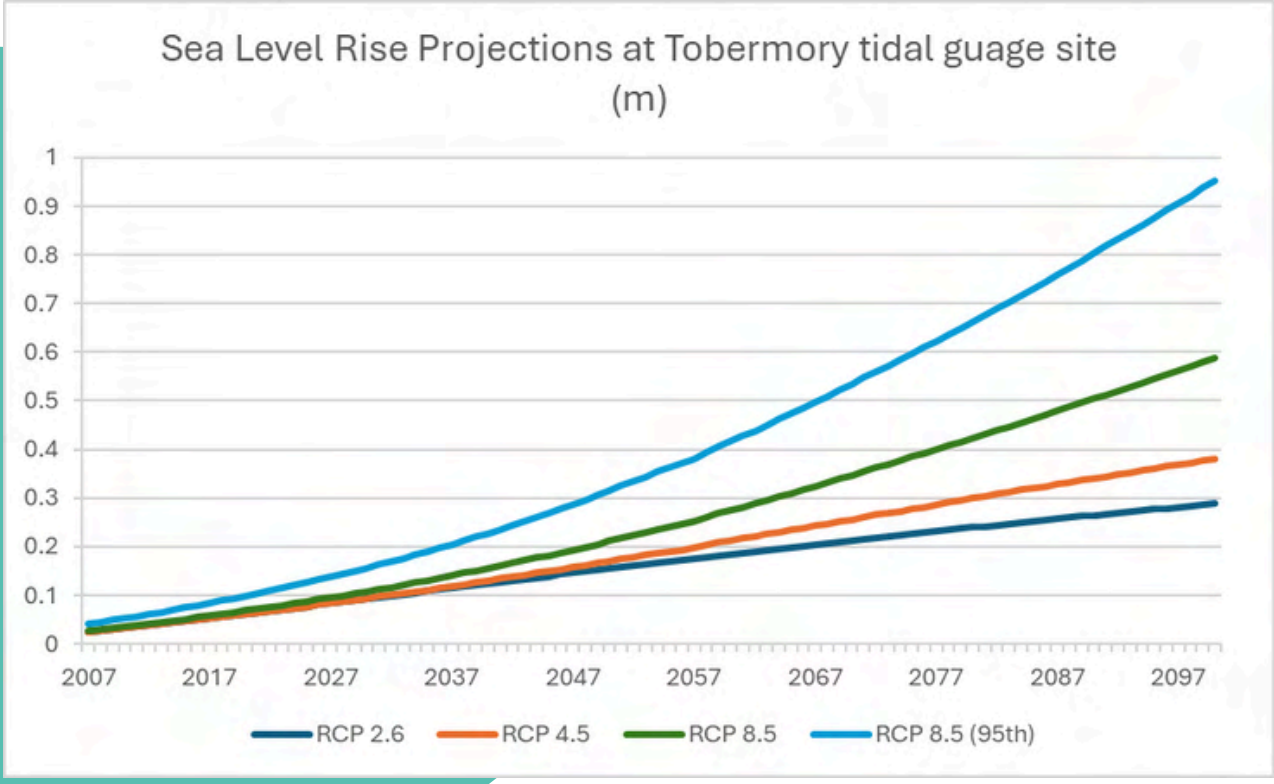


[7] UK and Global extreme events – Wind storms - Met Office

1.4 Sea level rise

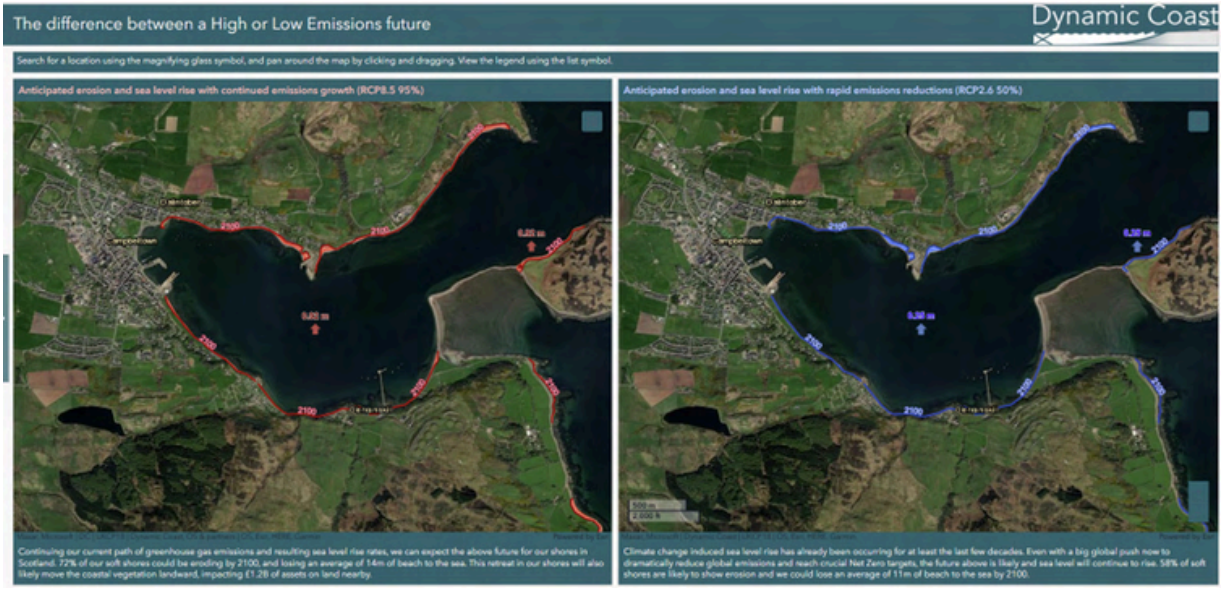
Sea level rise, both absolute and from storm surges, is a major concern for Argyll and Bute. 80% of the region's population lives within 1km of the coast (97% within 10km), and we have over 200km of road within 25m of the sea (at high tide), especially in Cowal and Bute. Replacement costs of sea defences for this stretch were estimated at £300m in 2015 prices. This would be equivalent to approximately £420m today due to inflation alone, with the actual figure likely significantly greater due to increased materials costs and more severe climatic conditions predicted.

Below we see projected sea level rise for Tobermory to the end of the century under a range of carbon emission scenarios. The upper two lines, green and blue, represent the most likely outcomes as these are based on current and historical global emissions trends. The difference between the two is that the green line, suggesting 0.6m rise at the end of the century, is the mid range of the high emissions scenario whereas the blue line, at over 0.9m, represents what is described as the "upper end allowance" to take into account the most severe impact projections, drawn from UK Government guidance on data interpretation to inform coastal flood planning[8]:



[8] Flood and coastal risk projects, schemes and strategies: climate change allowances - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Dynamic Coast project provides an excellent tool[9] to aid visualising impacts of sea level rise which can readily be applied at a scale from one square kilometre upwards. Taking Campbeltown as an example, the image below indicates the effect of a sea level rise under both the likely high emissions scenario and also the potential reduction if global emissions were cut rapidly:



The combined Highland and Argyll flood risk management plan estimates 15,000 homes at risk of flooding (Highland as well as Argyll) increasing to 38,000 by the 2080s due to climate change.

2. Scoping Risk

The processes of developing risk assessments in support of adaptation plans taken by Climate Ready Clyde and other regional climate change plans have started with screening the UK Climate Change Committee's Climate Change Risk Assessment (UKCCRA) to identify a core set of risks and opportunities. For Argyll and Bute Climate Action this comprised a peer group review of the initial scoping by the project manager of the set of 61 strategic risks identified by UKCCRA and grouped into 5 categories: Natural Environment and Assets; Infrastructure; Health, Communities and Built Environment; Business and Industry; and International Dimensions.

[9] HES vs LES dashboard

These 5 categories were then aligned with the CPP outcomes of Transport Infrastructure, Housing and Community Wellbeing. This has necessarily been an arbitrary exercise as many of the risks are crosscutting. “Community” was interpreted to include non human communities in order to fit nature and biodiversity within the set of three outcomes.

An initial scoping In/Out was suggested, with a short rationale for scoping each risk In/Out included, based on the CPP’s remit and ability to take action or have influence in relation to the respective risks. The full spreadsheet is provided in Appendix 3 with the image below providing a snapshot for illustration.

UK Climate Change Risk Assessment: Scoping Risks and Opportunities for CPP - project officer scoping						
Risk/ Opportunity	**Category**	**Description**	**In/ Out**	**Rationale**	**UKCCRA Score**	**CPP Outcome**
	I Infrastructure					
Risk	I12. Transport	High and low temperatures, high winds, lightning	In	Water transport inparticular is highly affected by wind	More action needed	Transport & Infrastructure
Risk	I13. Digital	High and low temperatures, high winds, lightning	In	Digital infrastructure is already vulnerable	Further investigation	Transport & Infrastructure
	B Business and Industry					
Risk	B1: Flooding of business sites	Increase in flood risk	In	Known issue in multiple areas	More action needed	Transport & Infrastructure
Risk	B2: Coastal business locations and infrastructure	Coastal flooding, extreme weather, erosion, and sea level rise	In	Known issue in multiple areas	More action needed	Transport & Infrastructure
Risk	B5: Employee productivity	Infrastructure disruption and higher temperatures in working environments	In	Often underacknowledged as a risk in other areas	Further investigation	Housing
Risk	B6: Disruption to business supply chains and distribution networks	Extreme weather	In	Transport & other links already extended & vulnerable, possible opportunities from pooling resources, early warning systems	More action needed	Transport & Infrastructure
	H Health, Communities, and the Built Environment					
Risk	H1. Health and wellbeing	High temperatures	In	Disproprortionate effects on most vulnerable	More action needed	Housing
Risk	H3. People, communities, and buildings	Flooding	In	Already a known issue	More action needed	Housing
Risk	H4. Viability of coastal communities	Sea level rise	In	Especially when combined with surface water and storm surge	More action needed	Housing
Risk	H5. Building fabric	Moisture, wind and driving rain	In	Already a known issue	Further investigation	Housing
Risk	H7. Health and wellbeing	Changes in indoor and outdoor air quality	In	Potentially also "Housing" due to incidence of damp in housing stock	Further investigation	Wellbeing
Risk	H8. Health	Vector-borne disease	In	Particularly with some species moving further north and impact of flooding	Further investigation	Wellbeing
Risk	H9. Food safety and food security	Higher temperatures (food safety) and extreme weather (food security)	In	Knock on effects of weather on transport infrastructure	Further investigation	Wellbeing

The result is a set of 7 proposed risk groups, cross checked with lived experience drawn from stakeholder meetings and feedback from the ABCAN Climate Action Network:

- Flooding (water courses and surface water)
- Heavy rainfall, storms and landslides
- Temperature change, heatwaves and drought
- Wildfires
- Sea level rise & coastal erosion
- Multi-hazards affecting people, species, habitats
- Anything else?

Following the initial scoping and peer scoping, the findings were presented to the September meeting of the CPP Full Partnership, Climate Change Working Group and Area Community Planning Groups. The Full Partnership meeting was in person and participants were asked to indicate their perception of these risks based on their own experience either personally or upon their organisations or areas of work, with the results being:

- Heavy rainfall, storms and landslides 84%
- Flooding (water courses and surface water) 66%
- Sea level rise & coastal impacts 47%
- Multi-hazards affecting people, species, habitats 25%
- Temperature change, heatwaves and drought 25%
- Wildfires 19%
- Anything else? Possible other unknowns 3%

Several CPP members have risk assessments planned for this year or the immediate future. Various regional adaptation initiatives have commissioned consultant support in developing risk assessments and Risk/Economic Assessment is proposed as one of the set of ten measures in the Gaps and Opportunities section. In support of this, key findings from Highland Adapts' recently published risk and opportunity and economic assessments relating to a set of key sectors comparable to Argyll and Bute are cited in the expectation that these can be replaced with Argyll-specific assessments over the action plan development phase.

This scoping is emphatically not about what risks are the most important, but about what are within the CPP's scope and ability to take action.

Risk and Opportunity Assessments by key Sectors from Highland Adapts

In September 2024 Highland Adapts released their economic analysis of three key sectors which form part of their wider ongoing Climate Risk and Opportunity Assessment.

The analysis includes circular economy considerations which resonate strongly with Argyll and Bute's proposed approach to Community Wealth Building.

This includes risks to:

	Currently	2050s to 2080s
Salmon production	£0.5m-£5m/year	£5m-£25m/year
Whisky production	£5m-£25m/year	Over £25m/year
Impact on forestry from wildfires	£5m-£25m/year	£18m-£80m/year

Assessment of risks facing local communities including their health and wellbeing is proposed as the priority area closest to the CPP remit.

[10] Economic Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Highlands (highlandadapts.scot)

3. Identifying the actions that will address them

3.1 Mitigation to reduce our climate change gas emissions: Climate Friendly

Crucial to efforts to mitigate our contribution to climate change is the concept of "net zero". This is the approach to mitigation adopted by the Scottish and UK Governments on the basis that while we can seek to reduce emissions from our actions and processes we cannot always eliminate them altogether. Net zero requires that where we are unable to reduce emissions to zero in some areas we need to ensure that in others we go beyond zero such as by appropriately managed afforestation, peatland and marine (blue carbon) restoration and more controversially through carbon capture and storage technology. This is of particular significance to Argyll and Bute with extensive areas of forest and peatland, extensive coastline and a small population relative to the area. A critical point is that these existing reserves do not constitute carbon reduction: only restoration or creation of new reserves would achieve this.

The Operational Plan underlying the strategy notes that, "it is expected that Mitigation will mostly be directed and mandated through national regulatory and incentive programs" in order to

- identify the opportunities for Argyll and Bute to reduce emissions at least in line with national targets
- maximise the sequestration of carbon in our natural landscapes
- highlight areas where action is needed in the next five years to prepare the ground for these changes
- what we can leave to national processes to deliver, and where we can help quicken the pace of change
- identify region-wide approaches and also take account of the variation in opportunities across different communities, places and landscapes

Most of the CPP partner members have Public Body Climate Change reporting duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act based on the current (2022-23) set of reports as published by the Sustainable Scotland Network[11], and collectively these organisations bodies have averaged reductions of 41% since their baseline reporting years. Reductions are presented as percentage rather than as gross figures because many of the bodies cover wider geographic areas than Argyll and Bute. These are summarised in the Emissions 2023 tab of the spreadsheet GORE Gaps Opportunities Risks Emissions reproduced in Appendix 3.

- Not all bodies have a published Carbon Management/Decarbonisation Plan. Some report that this is planned or in progress and there are potential opportunities in joint working and skill and data sharing across the CPP to support this.
- The Scottish Government expects to develop templates for area-wide emissions to complement individual bodies' reports over the next year to 18 months, which may bring wider emissions within scope of the CPP partner bodies' duties. Similarly, the Scottish Government have work in progress to make reporting requirements around Scope 3 emissions (supply chain) clearer and more robust.

Currently the two emissions data sets specifically covering the Argyll and Bute boundary are Argyll and Bute Council's emissions figures as presented in its Climate Change Duties Report[12], [13] and the Local Authority Greenhouse Gas Map[14] from the National Atmospheric Emissions Laboratory.

Due to the high area of afforested land, land use in Argyll delivers a net saving of 532 ktCO2e making our total emissions across all sectors only 257 ktCO2e despite being the second largest county by area.

This also translates to 3 tonnes per capita which is 25% under the global average of 4 tonnes (although to have the best chance of avoiding a 2°C rise in global temperatures, the average global carbon footprint per year needs to drop to under 2 tons by 2050).

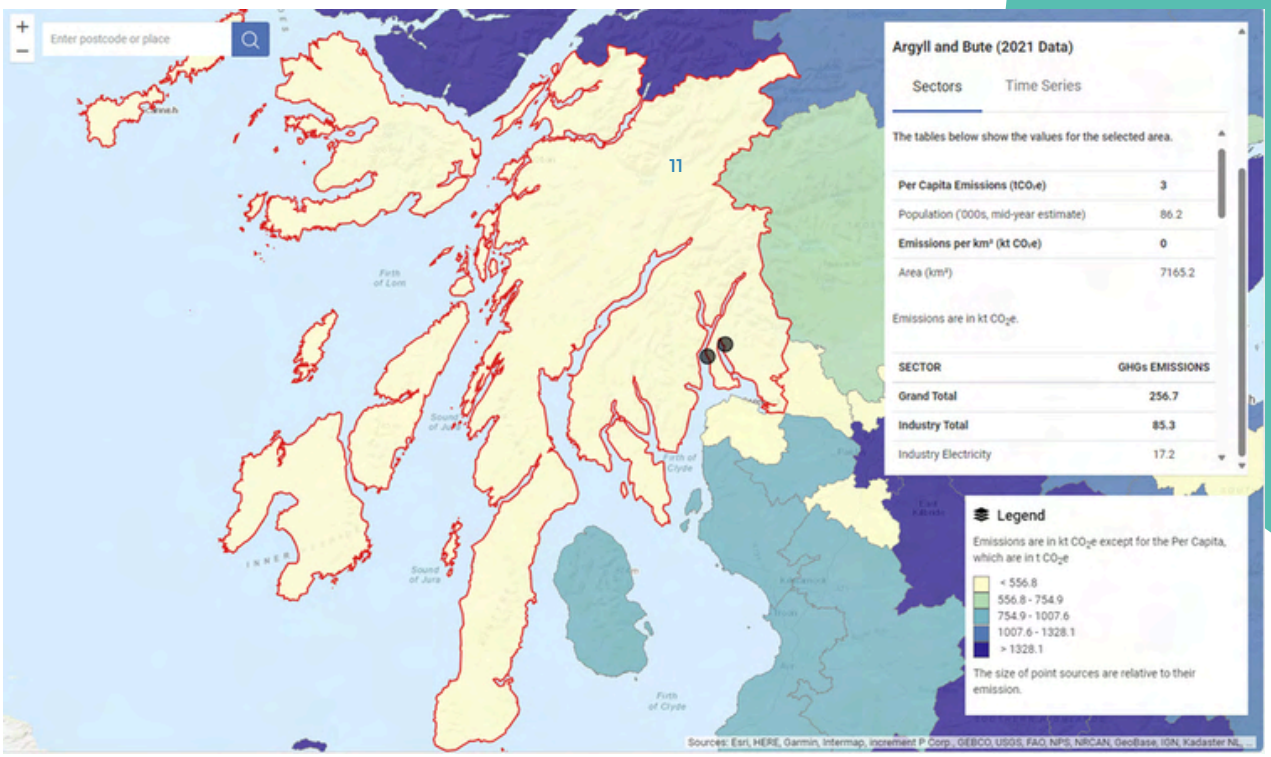
These can easily be interpreted as a recipe for inaction, but if we discount the forestry figure, our regional emissions come to 676 ktCO2e with our per capita emissions up correspondingly.

[11] Reports (sustainablescotlandnetwork.org)

[12] https://sustainablescotlandnetwork.org/slickr_media_upload?id=2005

[13] 2021-22 figures used. 2022-23 figures have been published but GHG Map still using 2021.

[14] Local Authority GHG Map (beis.gov.uk)



Argyll and Bute Council's emissions figures refer to its own operations rather than to the area as a whole, so the figures are not directly comparable with the Local Authority Greenhouse Gas Map.

Other public bodies operating in the region produce their own emissions plans and reports. Meetings to date have identified that for some of these they are currently revising decarbonisation/carbon management plans.

However, the other public bodies operating in the area work to different geographical boundaries, with some operating only in part of the area, and others covering wider regional areas such as Argyll and Highland, or operating nationally, so again this means that figures for the various organisations from these reports are not directly comparable.

In order to enable some form or comparison, the gap and opportunity analysis exercise looked at percentage emissions changes for these organisations in order to enable a picture of the overall relative direction and pace of travel.

Collectively, the public bodies in Argyll with climate reporting duties have achieved an average reduction of 41% in carbon emissions over the period in which they have been reporting (usually around 10 years) and common consensus is that the easy wins have long since been made with further reductions largely dependent upon major infrastructure developments to support lower carbon energy and transport.

Argyll and Bute Climate Action: Summary of CPP Public Body Climate emissions

From partners covered by Climate Duty reporting requirements

CPP Member	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3	Total emissions	Emissions trend from baseline	Emissions change from baseline	Geography
Note	Direct emissions from sources that the organisation owns or controls directly	Indirect emissions and purchased energy	Everything outside Scope 1 and 2. Also value and supply chain, waste, commuting and home working		All bodies have had fluctuations including from changing reporting requirements	Baseline years vary and all bodies have benefited from decarbonisation of electricity	
Argyll and Bute Council	8700	3780	14000	26500	Down	Down 33%	A&B
UHI Argyll							A&B
Health and Social Care Partnership/NHS Highland	19620	6211	731	26560	Down	Down 25%	Highland and A&B
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	147	165	183	495	Down	Down 67%	H&I,A&B
Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park	123	73	47	243	Down	Down 37%	Multiple LA Areas
Police Scotland	26557	9929	2874	39360	Down	Down 43%	Scotland
Scottish Ambulance Service	23500	930	1150	25600	Down	Down 9%	Scotland
Scottish Enterprise	372	195	738	1300	Down	Down 78%	Scotland
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	10837	3632	777	15246	Down	Down 35%	Scotland
NatureScot	352	216	346	915	Down	Down 42%	Scotland
SEPA	395	510	837	1742	Down	Down 47%	Scotland
Skills Development Scotland	158	198	1682	2038	Down	Down 47%	Scotland
SportScotland	[blank]	584	106	690	Down	Down 60%	Scotland
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport	447	2466	291	3204	Down	Down 68%	Clyde
HITRANS		1	6	7	Down	Down 56%	H&I, A&B
VisitScotland	79	203	617	899	Down	Down 73%	Scotland
Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)	40000	28154	6600	74850	Down	Down 31%	UK
Crofting Commission	0.5	3	12	15	Down	Down 23%	Scotland
Forestry Commission (Scottish Forestry)	40	45	213	298	Up	Up 12%	Scotland
Forestry Commission (Forest & Land Scotland)	2352	511	556	3418	Down	Down 9%	Scotland
CALMAC -CMAL							Scotland
Scottish Water	39000	85000	93000	217000	Down	Down 53%	Scotland
						Average reduction 41%	

A useful piece of terminology to help understand how carbon emissions are reported is the distinction between Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions. Scope 1 refers to direct emissions from sources that the organisation owns or controls directly, such as emissions from fleet vehicles or boilers for heating buildings. Scope 2 is indirect emissions and purchased energy such as purchased electricity for heating buildings or running equipment. Scope 3 is more complex as this covers everything outside Scopes 1 and 2, including procurement and the wider supply chain, commuting and homeworking and also waste. For most CPP partners, Scope 3 is the hardest to measure category of emissions.

Beyond the public sector, emissions information is much less readily available and there is limited scope for the strategy via the CPP to place requirements on other bodies to take action or make information available, although there is some potential such as via incentive uptake rates where these are reported and this will be an important consideration for the route map.

The operational plan makes specific reference to sequestration. This is the term for capturing, stabilising and storing carbon rather than have it escape into the atmosphere and contribute to global warming. Estimates for economic opportunities for carbon sequestration range from £8.7m, based on restoring 10% of local degraded peatland, to more than £3bn when looking at longer-term high value integrated projects[15].

[15] Carbon sequestration Argyll and Bute research | HIE

Steering Group partners have emphasised the importance of ensuring that sequestration measures and any emissions reductions claimed are genuine, and also the risk of the high amount of forestry in Argyll and Bute artificially reducing per capita and per hectare emissions and that this could be misinterpreted as a recipe for inaction and complacency on climate change.

An important point of clarification is the distinction between commercial forestry, typically involving a single tree species planted and then harvested on a 35-40 year cycle, and native woodland with a wider variety of species, including ancient woodland and rainforest. Fast growing commercial species capture carbon more quickly while growing, but if used for biomass once harvested this carbon is then released again into the atmosphere, and the disturbance of soil during planting and harvesting releases further carbon (forest soil typically stores twice as much carbon as the trees). The Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy notes that "While new woodland is an excellent means of sequestering atmospheric carbon and will play an important role in Scotland's response to climate change mitigation, protecting sensitive peat soils – major carbon stores in their own right – is critical to prevent unnecessary carbon liberation" and that "Maintaining and expanding the native woodland resource will also be important in generating longer-lived carbon stores".

Discussions of carbon sequestration are further nuanced by the concepts of offsetting and a newer and less well known alternative, "insetting". This concept will be of increasing importance for Argyll and Bute. Offsetting refers to the buying of carbon credits to offset carbon emissions that a body is unable or unwilling to reduce, and has been the subject of repeated criticisms concerning how robust the models employed are and how genuine and lasting any emission savings are. Insetting has been described by the Carbon Literacy Project as "carbon insetting focuses on doing more good rather than doing less bad within one's value chain. Instead of investing in projects outside their value chains, companies engaging in carbon insetting invest in reducing carbon emissions within their own value chains. At the same time, these projects can also create positive impacts on communities, landscapes and ecosystems."[17]

ACT are participants in the Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland (FIRNS), working to develop a project integrity charter and a governance and enterprise model. The outcome of this project and the other 26 FIRNS projects currently being worked through in Scotland will help to define how natural capital finance can work in Scotland and support delivery of climate action specific to Argyll and Bute, while also potentially helping to address widespread perceptions that more could be done to improve the social and economic as well as environmental impacts of land use, land use change and forestry. Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland (FIRNS) project | Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust

[16] https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/woodland_and_forestry_strategy_april_2011_ac.pdf

[17] Carbon Insetting vs Carbon Offsetting - The Carbon Literacy Project

The subtleties of offsetting and insetting are of major potential significance for Argyll and Bute. Research by the Scottish Association for Marine Science for Highland and Islands Enterprise on optimising carbon sequestration opportunities in Argyll and Bute[18] indicates that terrestrial ecosystems in Argyll and Bute hold between 587-990 MtCO2e (million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent), of which 510-898 MtCO2e comes from soils to 1 m depth and 77-90 MtCO2e is held within the aboveground vegetation, half of which is held within the woodlands and forests. Put another way, soil stocks alone hold more than ten times Scotland's annual greenhouse gas emissions. For the marine environment, the same research indicates that the marine sediments of Argyll and Bute hold an estimated 166 MtCO2e carbon.

Argyll has some of the finest remnants of temperate rainforest in all of Europe. Restoring the rainforest and associated habitats of Argyll & the Isles will give rainforest biodiversity the best chance to adapt to our changing climate, to sequester carbon and to prevent soil erosion and flooding. Scottish Rainforest restoration projects are creating the equivalent of 40 new full-time jobs and investing £3.2 million in rural communities, with over half of that investment being in Argyll.

Distinctions between mitigation/reducing carbon emissions, and adaptation/taking action to reduce the impacts of unavoidable climate change can be blurred and in the case of CPP partners, and opportunities for reducing emissions through working in partnership, this is even more the case.

The examples above indicate the amount of carbon stored in land and the potential for enhancing carbon storage through land management, but bringing, for example, peatland and woodlands into positive management also offer opportunities to reduce flood and wildfire risk as well as enhancing biodiversity, local amenity and creating job opportunities.

Another example is the CPP's role in prevention and enhancing resilience and addressing vulnerability: if collective action on resilience and community wellbeing can reduce demand on emergency services this can also reduce Scope 1 emissions due to fleet emissions for these organisations, which for this category of services is their greatest single source of emissions.

[18] https://www.hie.co.uk/media/13011/optimising-carbon-sequestration-opportunities-in-ab-sams-wp1-and-3.pdf

3.2 Adaptation to unavoidable impacts of climate change: Climate Ready

With global carbon emissions continuing to rise and increasing incidence of different and extreme weather events and temperature records, the importance of adaptation continues to grow. Mitigation is expected to be mostly driven by existing national plans and targets, complemented by partnership opportunities, and many of the easy wins have already been made. Adaptation is less explored and at the same time frequently of greater understandable importance and immediacy to communities: impacts of road and other transport closures, floods and high rain and winds all provide recent examples felt by all throughout the region.

These threats are compounded by the length and vulnerability of transport links and also the low population density making capital funding harder to access, but conversely where taking measures to support community resilience, compounded with building upon local knowledge and experience and wider reviews such as the 2023 Scotland Adaptation Progress Report[19] can identify opportunities.

As with mitigation, key achievements or opportunities are indicated where possible and recurrent or major themes are brought into a short list of potential measures.

Organisations do not currently have to have published adaptation plans but this is under review and the Scottish Government may mandate this in future for public bodies.

Although addressed to the Scottish Government, the top ten of the 51 recommendations from the Progress Report are also relevant at local level:

- Ensure that support for adaptation alongside decarbonisation is included in key building policies
- Address data gaps on impacts to buildings and adaptation actions by utilising already available data to track resilience of the building stock, monitoring of samples of existing buildings in at-risk locations, and home resilience reporting that include assessments of flood and overheating resilience.
- Proactive adaptation measures for overheating and flood resilience in buildings.
- Identifying at-risk buildings, awareness raising, training and engagement on property-level flood protection.
- Address data gaps on Scottish business preparedness, availability of capital and insurance for adaptation, and the effectiveness of business adaptation actions.
- Measures for reducing water use by business.
- Supply chain resilience to climate hazards
- Adaptation reporting requirements

[19] https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/adapting-to-climate-change-progress-in-scotland/

- Initiatives for place-based and cross-sectoral adaptation and including support for vulnerable areas and sectors
- Long-term planning, including monitoring of weather-related incident response

The UK Climate Change Committee's 10 adaptation principles applied to Argyll & Bute

	Principle	Progress/Opportunities for Action
1	A vision for a well adapted UK	Proposed vision: "We make Argyll and Bute climate ready by acting together to understand and adapt to our changing climate"
2	Integrate adaptation into other policies	Examples include links with flood resilience plans, community risk register, housing and transport policies, sustainable procurement, carbon literate training.
3	Adapt to 2°C; assess the risks for 4°C	Always work to high emissions scenarios
4	Avoid lock-in (eg building new homes without designing in adaptations to future conditions such as extreme heat)	This links well with integrating with other policies, by seeking to identify co benefits and also to avoid reliance on a single action or technology. The geographic scale and diversity of Argyll and Bute also mandate this approach. Also the importance of factoring climate into eg major infrastructure projects.
5	Prepare for unpredictable extremes	This requires an acceptance that the unexpected can happen and emphasises the need to enhancing overall resilience in addition to specific flood/heatwave etc measures
6	Assess interdependencies	This is one of the great strengths of the CPP model where many of the key agencies and partnership working can help to address interdependencies. Many adaptation measures can also have strong links with mitigation.
7	Understand threshold effects	Things happen fast after thresholds or tipping points are crossed (eg algal blooms when water is over 17 centigrade), meaning a new course of action may be needed, but adaptation plans have often focussed on gradual changes over time. Building up a bank of threshold effects appropriate to Argyll can inform how to take these into account.
8	Address inequalities	Working through the CPP priority outcomes around Transport Infrastructure, Housing and Community Wellbeing provides a strong basis for this. There are well documented links between climate vulnerability and social inequality and the community remit of the CPP can support prioritising accordingly.
9	Consider opportunities	Meetings with key partners and literature review to inform the gap and opportunity analysis have identified 6 main opportunity areas for action: • Infrastructure • Policy Influence • Procurement and Supply Chain Collaboration • Risk/Economic Assessment • Resilience/Carbon Literacy Training • Skills Development
10	Funding, resourcing, metrics, research	A specific task in the operational plan is to identify funding and pilot opportunities.

Adaptation: Risk Assessment

A climate risk assessment for Argyll and Bute will be required as part of ongoing work, and one proposed priority area for action is to collaborate with Community Planning partners who are starting their own processes of developing adaptation plans who need to undertake climate risk assessments.

The first draft of this strategy circulated in March 2023 proposed the set of 15 headline "Consequences[20]" identified by Adaptation Scotland as a starting point for scoping climate risk in Argyll to inform future risk assessment work.

- The productivity of our agriculture and forests: potential to improve growing conditions and increase the productivity of agriculture and forestry, but also threats from more variable and extreme weather to the spread of pests and diseases.
- The occurrence of pests and disease
- The quality of our soils: We rely on soils to sustain biodiversity, support agriculture and forestry, regulate the water cycle and store carbon. Soils and vegetation may be altered by changes to rainfall and increased temperatures - as well as the way we use the land.
- The health of our natural environment: Climate change may affect the delicate balance of Scotland's ecosystems and transform Scotland's habitats and biodiversity, adding to existing pressures. Some distinctive Scottish species may struggle and could be lost, invasive non-native species may thrive, while a degraded environment may not be able to sustain productive land or water supply. Temperate rainforest is especially susceptible to the impacts of climate change: Argyll has some of the best examples of this in Europe, with unmitigated climate change, climatic suitability for temperate rainforest could be lost from Argyll by the end of the century.
- The security of our food supply: Although Scotland may be able to grow more food, this will not offset the impact global disruption has on us. The effects of increased volatility in the global commodity market due to exposure to extreme climatic events has an impact on supply and cost of food.
- The availability and quality of water: Summer droughts may become more frequent and more severe causing problems for water quality and supply.
- The increased risk of flooding
- The change at our coast: More coastal flooding, erosion and coastline retreat.
- The health of our marine environment: The changes will present both threats and opportunities to our commercial fisheries and aquaculture.

- The resilience of our businesses: Climate change and associated extreme weather may disrupt transport, energy and communication networks in Scotland and around the world. This could impact on markets, affect supply chains and raise insurance costs.
- The health and wellbeing of our people: A warming climate may provide more opportunity to be outdoors and enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle, while reducing mortality in winter. However, it could affect patterns of disease and other health issues. Climate change and associated extreme weather may disrupt the lives of individuals and communities, limiting access to vital services and impacting on people's physical and mental health.
- Our cultural heritage and identity: The changing climate is already altering our unique Scottish landscape and threatening our historic environment through coastal erosion, flooding and wetter, warmer conditions.
- The security and efficiency of our energy supply: In addition to local generation and transmission, impacts on global energy markets may also affect energy supplies in Scotland and consequently our overall energy security.
- The performance of our buildings
- Infrastructure – network connectivity and interdependencies: Our infrastructure is closely inter-linked and failure in any area can lead to wider disruption across these networks.

In line with the methodology developed by Climate Ready Clyde and subsequently adopted in modified form by subsequent regional climate initiatives, these and the set of 61 risks identified in the UC Climate Change Committee's Climate Change Risk Assessment (Summary for Scotland) were put through a screening and scoping exercise by the project manager and peer groups to identify a set of key risk areas, and also presented to the CPP Full Partnership, Climate Change Working Group and Area Community Planning Groups for corroboration with their own experience.

3.3 Engagement: Climate Just

We are using “climate just” as shorthand for Just Transition. The Scottish Government has defined just transition as “A just transition is both the outcome – a fairer, greener future for all – and the process that must be undertaken in partnership with those impacted by the transition to net zero. Just transition is how we get to a net zero and climate resilient economy, in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice.” [21]

In the context of developing a climate change strategy for Argyll and Bute, engagement spans:

- Core Community Planning Partnership partners
- Wider CPP partners
- CPP technical partners
- National technical partners and networks
- Wider Argyll & Bute institutions and networks
- Communities across Argyll and Bute, including
    - Administrative areas
    - Individual locations and settlements

The three guiding principles underlying the ABCA business case are fundamental to the engagement approach:

- Argyll and Bute communities, places and landscapes are being affected by climate change in different ways. There are likely to be common challenges across the region but there will also be significant variation within and between communities, places and landscapes.
- The proposed climate risk and opportunity assessment and follow on mitigation, adaptation planning and implementation must identify region-wide climate risks and opportunities for action and take account of local variations and capacity to adapt.
- All aspects of the initiative will be carried out in an inclusive and accessible way and reflect on just transition. Priority will be given to ensuring that communities, physical or virtual, are engaged in these processes and that local knowledge and experience is valued and used.

[21] https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2021/09/transition-fairer-greener-scotland/documents/transition-fairer-greener-scotland/transition-fairer-greener-scotland/govscot%3Adocument/transition-fairer-greener-scotland.pdf

Parallel to ABCA strategy development is the Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network (ABCAN)[22] project with Scottish Government funding in support of outcomes including:

- Widen participation by engaging new communities and strengthening existing activity.
- Increase in community led climate change mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity projects, driven by communities themselves, contributing to a fair and just transition to net zero.
- Increasing community resilience and knowledge of how to respond to climate change;
- Strengthened and increased collaboration and knowledge sharing across and between community groups, public, private and 3rd sector partners leading to an acceleration in community action
- Minority and disadvantaged communities are visible, confident and active within the network, taking part and leading climate action activities.
- Increase in community climate literacy, which directly leads to a 5 - 15% reduction in participant's carbon footprints.
- Increase in involvement in policy setting, decision making and local place planning with climate lens by communities.

This parallel initiative greatly enhances the reach of the overall ACT/CPP climate effort. Although separately funded and staffed, the two projects are working in close collaboration and a basis for distinction is that ABCAN Hub has more of a grassroots and community focus whereas ABCA Strategy is slightly more oriented towards institutions, but can also ensure that the grassroots activity and aspirations from the Hub have a strategic voice.

This collaboration includes working with Argyll and Bute Council to support the inclusion of the "Climate Lens" in developing Local Place Plans with community councils and other bodies across the region.

[22] ACT Now | Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust

4. Vision, outcomes and objectives

Vision

Our vision is that

We make Argyll and Bute climate ready by acting together to understand and adapt to our changing climate

Outcomes

Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership has three priority outcomes:

- Transport Infrastructure
- Housing
- Community Wellbeing.

This principle is followed here and in Appendix 5 the CPP outcomes are aligned against national and wider climate outcomes including National Performance Framework Net Zero Nation, UN Sustainable Development Goals and most significantly for this strategy the five outcomes of the Scottish National Adaptation Plan (SNAP3)[23]:

- Public Services and Infrastructure: Public services are collaborating in effective, inclusive adaptation action.
- Communities: Communities creating climate-resilient, healthy and equitable places.
- Nature Connects: Nature connects across our lands, settlements, coasts and seas.
- Economy, Industry and Business: Economies and industries are adapting and realising opportunities in Scotland's Just Transition.
- International: Scotland's international role supports climate justice and enhanced global action on climate adaptation.

[23] Climate change: Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

The alignment of the five outcomes of the Scottish National Adaptation Plan with the CPP outcomes is:

Scottish National Adaptation Plan Outcomes	Argyll & Bute Community Planning Partnership Outcomes
Public Services and Infrastructure: Public services are collaborating in effective, inclusive adaptation action.	Transport Infrastructure
Communities: Communities creating climate-resilient, healthy and equitable places.	Housing, Community Welbeing
Nature Connects: Nature connects across our lands, settlements, coasts and seas.	Community Wellbeing
Economy, Industry and Business: Economies and industries are adapting and realising opportunities in Scotland's Just Transition.	Transport Infrastructure, Housing
International: Scotland's international role supports climate justice and enhanced global action on climate adaptation.	Transport Infrastructure, Community Wellbeing

Objectives

The objectives for the strategy are grouped under three work packages agreed by the CPP

- Governance and leadership
  - Identifying leadership and champions (organisations and community)
  - Liaison and reporting with CPP structures
  - Vision and theory of change
  - Engagement strategy
  - Logo, branding and image
- Understanding the challenge
  - Audit & gap analysis
  - Mitigation
  - Adaptation
  - Engagement

- Planning and implementation
  - Quick win opportunities
  - Pilot projects
  - Training
  - Funding
  - Scope options for planning and implementation (Transport, Housing, Community Wellbeing)

Proposals for taking forward specifics under these are listed in the Task List in Appendix 6.2. This refers to working up the strategy. The Action Plan is then to be developed with partners in the remaining half of the project to take forward delivery under the principal Areas for Action identified through the gap and opportunity analysis.

5. Identifying opportunity areas for action

We started with a need to find out what is already happening and where there are gaps or opportunities and greatest risks. This cuts across mitigation, adaptation and engagement. This has been informed through:

- Review of CPP partners' Climate Change Duty reports
- Review of partners' climate change plans where published
- Review of other regional climate plans
- Review of other plans and strategies relevant to Argyll and Bute
- Support from Sniffer/Adaptation Scotland and Sustainable Scotland Network
- Meetings with stakeholders including CPP representatives
- Feedback from the wider community mainly via the A&B Climate Action Network Hubs

In Argyll and Bute, the most comprehensive and consistent information relating to the overall picture of current climate action comes from the Climate Duty reports provided by the public bodies operating in the area. This provides a strong although not perfect match with the main bodies in the CPP and consequently this can provide an illustration of both activity within the CPP and potential gaps where the CPP may have agency or capacity to take action, either collectively or by constituent bodies.

These are complemented by published climate strategies but not all organisations have these and some treat items such as risk assessments as confidential internal documents

Meetings with stakeholders have included suggestions relating to other organisations, and these are currently excluded from the analysis as “informal”, although they may inform discussion on developing the action plan.

Likewise, meetings with stakeholders outside the public sector have revealed a wide range of action but less regarding reporting requirements relating to these. Future work including business grants and agricultural/land management payments will include elements of carbon and other environmental reporting but these are currently work in progress to be captured within the Action Plan as this is developed over 2025.

A collaboration with Argyll & Bute Third Sector Interface is under development to undertake a comprehensive audit of the sector across Argyll and Bute including elements on climate readiness which can further inform the development of the Action Plan in support of this strategy over 2025.

A collaboration with Argyll & Bute Third Sector Interface is under development to undertake a comprehensive audit of the sector across Argyll and Bute including elements on climate readiness which can further inform the development of the Action Plan in support of this strategy over 2025.

Developing the Action Plan also needs to be informed by local knowledge from partners and the wider community, requiring ongoing engagement to complement the literature review and meetings held to date.

Building upon the literature review and engagement, a set of opportunity areas for action was developed, aligned against key findings from the partners’ published Public Body Climate Duty reports:

- Infrastructure
- Policy Influence
- Procurement and Supply Chain Collaboration
- Risk/Economic Assessment
- Resilience/Carbon Literacy Training
- Skills Development (Subsequently combined with Procurement and Supply Chain)
- Other

These categories of measures were reviewed by peers via a spreadsheet with three columns of drop down boxes in order to prioritise measures associated with the Climate Duty reports to establish a group of thematic measures appropriate to the CPP's remit and scope of control and influence in order to inform ongoing development of the Action Plan.

Action: Summary of Opportunities from Community Planning Partners' published Climate Change Duty reports and meetings								
Carbon Reduction Plan	Climate Adaptation Plan	Climate Duty Report: Mitigation section completed	Climate Duty Report: Adaptation section completed	Climate Duty Report: Procurement section completed	Climate Duty Report: Wider Influence section	Emissions change from baseline	Geography	Includes - formal (from Climate Duty reports and also published climate strategies)
Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Down 33%	A&B	Footprint, decarbonisation plan with monthly reporting to Climate Change Board, no formal adaptation strategy but planned and major transport/flood/EP activity. Waste face obstacles beyond single organisation's control and waste reduction/promoting the waste hierarchy through community education is viewed as a potential win by multiple other stakeholders. Collaborate on Adaptation Plan. Align with Place and Area Plans. Waste reduction. Community wealth building, Economic Strategy and LHEES both have potential to advance climate work significantly. Grid capacity a major consideration for LHEES, EV infrastructure and wider renewables development. Funding needed to renew flood and coast protection strategies
		Y	N	Y	N		A&B	Footprint, campus CMPs, proposals to integrate sustainability in all courses. Less breakdown of Argyll v UHI as a whole: developing the process of collating data with other Academic Partners to improve and refine processes
Y		Y	Y	Y		Down 25%	Highland and A&B	Via NHSH and Living Well Partnership. CMP. Has done NHS Scotland Climate Change Risk Assessment to inform development of adaptation plan over 2024. Business continuity plans for clinical waste collection and logistics & supply chain. Member of H & I Local Resilience Partnership. Plan to review Sustainability Prioritisation Tool and implement in tender process. Argyll and Bute has been factored in and out of footprint at various stages since baseline year.
		Y	Y	Y	N	Down 67%	H&I,A&B	Future grants carbon dependent. Climate risk in some project business cases. Intent to use AS Capability Framework, employer and stakeholder engagement on resilience, rep to join AS Programme Board.

Opportunity Areas for Action

5.1 Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a primary concern in Argyll and Bute, with the length and vulnerability of the transport network to flooding, landslides and coastal impacts attracting comment from nearly all stakeholder and community meetings. The region's geography also

that marine and air transport links are major considerations in addition to road and rail.

There is less consensus among stakeholders on the extent to which this is a concern for the Community Planning Partnership as distinct to the specific groups within the CPP with expertise and responsibility for transport infrastructure and links with flood resilience planning.

There is more consensus among stakeholders on the CPP's role in addressing demand and impacts upon transport infrastructure including propensity to travel and potential to influence travel choices to reduce reliance on private cars, noting that 30% of households in Argyll and Bute do not have a car.

Communications and grid infrastructure are also major concerns: enhancing grid capacity is a key element of decarbonising both transport (electric vehicle charging) and housing as well as enabling further renewable energy developments in the region which is seen as a key economic and climate opportunity. Addressing digital exclusion is a priority for Argyll and Bute and the resilience of telecommunications links in the face of climate change was a repeated theme in stakeholder meetings, including some concerns over the switchover from physical copper-based landlines to internet-based services.

Natural or Green/blue infrastructure is a major consideration for Argyll and Bute, with nature based solutions such as natural flood risk management to complement hard engineering where appropriate as well as the carbon saving opportunities – and potential economic opportunities – associated.

5.2 Policy Influence

"Policy influence" covers areas that are not within the CPP's ability to control but where the collective voice of the CPP or its individual members may seek to inform or influence policy. This is seen as an important role for the CPP by many, with a common perception that many climate-related policies are more suited to densely populated and predominantly urban areas rather than to Argyll and Bute's distinctive geography and population.

5.3 Skills, Procurement and Supply Chain

Community Wealth Building is seen as a major climate change opportunity including in terms of shortening supply chains, strengthening local markets and the local economy, supporting jobs and skills development and a just transition to a greener economy.

Multiple stakeholders commented on the potential for the CPP's combined procurement activity to support community wealth building in addition to potentially reducing duplication and transport impacts. Procurement is a tightly regulated area and all CPP budgets are under pressure, so there is a need to balance climate change considerations alongside affordability, availability value for money, fitness for purpose and other best value considerations. This is an area that falls within Scope 3 emissions, and as such likely to be subject to increasing reporting requirements. Several CPP partners have provided instances where local providers have been able to deliver in preference to large providers from outside the region, enabling money to stay within the region and supporting local employment and skills at the same time as delivering best value. Supplier engagement programmes have been seen as a valuable tool and an area where there are further opportunities for reducing economic leakage and shortening elements of some supply chains.

Natural or Green/blue infrastructure is a major consideration for Argyll and Bute, with nature based solutions such as natural flood risk management to complement hard engineering where appropriate as well as the carbon saving opportunities – and potential economic opportunities – associated.

Skills development and education is seen as one of the most important areas to address the trend to a declining and ageing population in Argyll and Bute as well as to strengthening the economy and community wellbeing. In the context of climate change, this is further important through the role of skills development in supporting a just transition to a lower carbon and more resilient economy. Skills development, including education, is presented separately to resilience and carbon literacy training on the basis that resilience and carbon literacy training are specific and well defined exercises as distinct to the much broader range of activity around skills development and education across Argyll and Bute.

5.4 Risk Assessment

Several CPP partners are at similar stages of starting climate adaptation and associated risk assessment processes. Stakeholders have indicated the potential value in working together on this as well as sharing existing information, and several have also emphasised the importance of factoring in economic assessments. Examples of risk and economic assessments and methodologies from Highland Adapts are included in the appendices. Commissioning a risk assessment for Argyll and Bute with emphasis on community wellbeing is proposed as the best fit with CPP outcomes, with the opportunity to do this from existing project resources.

5.5 Resilience/Carbon Literacy

The new Scottish National Adaptation Plan emphasises the need to support people and communities most vulnerable to climate impacts and building resilient, healthy, and equitable places, including rural, island and coastal communities. The Scottish Government defines resilience as “Communities and individuals harnessing resources and expertise to help themselves prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, in a way that complements the work of emergency responders”.

As the group of organisations and community representatives working together to achieve improvements across Argyll and Bute in ways which promote prevention, reduce inequalities and build community capacity, the CPP is strongly placed to work in multiple ways to develop overall resilience in the community in addition to measures more specific to climate change. There are also opportunities to integrate this with place planning in addition to developing and delivering resilience training at multiple levels across the region, such as the online climate resilience training currently being piloted by the Argyll & Bute Community Action Network. Carbon Literacy training is more well established and recognised and this in addition to enhancing individuals’ empowerment and agency with regard to climate change can also support employability.

5.6 Crosscutting/Other

When presenting the set of proposed areas of action to the CPP Full Partnership for attendees to indicate their priorities, some respondents indicated “other”: subsequent discussion with these respondents indicated that this was from desired actions that cut across multiples of these areas of activity rather than fitting into any one category.

6. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Because the Argyll & Bute Climate Change Strategy is not a statutory requirement, it cannot place reporting or other duties upon the CPP partners and the Climate Change Public Body Duty reporting requirements provide a means by which the partners’ climate activity can be monitored and reported.

Funding for Argyll & Bute Climate Action runs until October 2025 meaning that there is no dedicated resource for monitoring and reporting of the strategy as a whole after October 2025.

Feedback from meetings with partners to date has been supportive of an approach based around existing Public Body Climate Duty reporting requirements, such that ongoing activity can be captured and new projects brought within the same framework wherever possible.

This has the potential to offer a basic level of monitoring not only of the activity of public sector partners but also through the “Wider Influence” section where they in turn can have broader impact through partnership or client working.

The Sustainable Scotland Network does a national level assessment of the Public Body Duty reports, typically made available in May-June after individual bodies’ reports are submitted at the end of the calendar year. At present there is no provision for regional-level assessment although this is a recognised issue. There may be some potential for Sniffer/Adaptation Scotland to provide some assistance with evaluation of the adaptation components of the strategy beyond the funded period but this would not replace the need for ongoing monitoring and reporting.

This approach seeks to reduce extra reporting as much as possible there would still be resource implications associated. This would entail a requirement for the CPP to identify an individual and make time available (suggested two days) to review the partners’ published reports and SSN national assessment, and present this to the Climate Change Working Group autumn meeting.

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