

Argyll and Bute Council  
Development and Infrastructure Services

# Planning Performance Framework 2016/17



*Plana-leasachaidh Ionadail Earra-ghàidheal is Bhòid*









## Foreword

Once again it gives me great pleasure to introduce Argyll and Bute's Annual Planning Performance Framework. Now in its sixth version, the report displays the ongoing commitment to continual improvement and consistent high quality reporting within our planning service. It also demonstrates the dedication and enthusiasm from all Council officials and funding partners, our Communities and our development industry, that collectively drive forward positive change and evolution in our built and natural environment.

These changes do not happen overnight and many of the case studies represent an iterative snapshot showing the progress and development of projects from one year to the next.

Scottish Government feedback over recent years has been positive and I am confident this year's PPF maintains the high standards we have achieved in previous years.

As the Scottish Government has identified, planning is about "Place" I believe our PPF showcases the many truly outstanding places within Argyll and Bute that are being improved, created, regenerated, and most importantly enjoyed by our residents and visitors alike.

Councillor David Kinniburgh



## Introduction

This document captures the annual performance of the Argyll and Bute Planning Service for financial year 2016/17. All Local Authorities are required to produce a Planning Performance Framework (PPF) Annual Report which reports on performance against a broad range of areas including speed of decision making, quality, resources, successes, achievements and engagement. This document shows that our Planning Service is 'open for business' as we give priority to supporting sustainable economic growth whilst at the same time protecting the qualities which make our Council area so special.

Pippa Milne Executive Director  
Development and Infrastructure  
Services



We have reflected the most recent Scottish Government guidance in formulating this year's report. In terms of changes from last year's format, most significantly, National Headline Indicators have been moved to Section 4, and Official Statistics have been moved to Section 5, in order to make a document more attractive to the reader. Readers will note that certain indicators are new, or have been removed, and some are recorded in a different manner. In addition the summary of annual work and performance for both distinct parts of the planning service (development management and policy) are to be found at the beginning of Section 5.

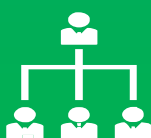
As in previous years we will actively use the PPF document to showcase the diverse activity of the planning service and all its partners, and we will openly report the feedback we receive from Scottish Government to relevant Council Committees.

We hope you find the document stimulating and enjoyable, and as always we welcome your direct feedback on any of its content.



Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratories,  
Yacht Marina and Isle of Mull





# Planning Performance Framework

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Colchester Square, Lochgilphead



Müssel Farm, Loch Cieran

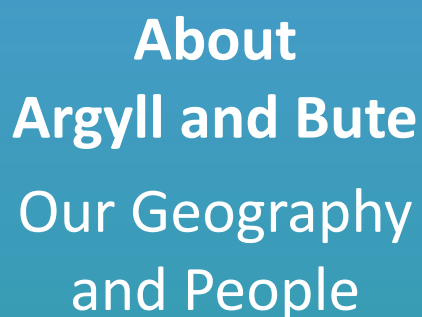


Port Askaig, Isle of Islay



Main Street, Campbeltown

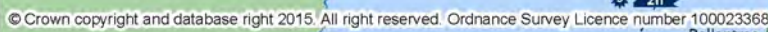




Around 55% of all passenger journeys made by ferry within Scotland start and / or finish in Argyll and Bute. (Scottish Transport Statistics 2011)

**Sustainability** – ensuring a sustainable

Planners work to support the ambitions of individuals while protecting the interests of the wider community. Our teams are located in key towns throughout the area, allowing them to be close to and engage with the environment and communities that they help to shape.





## Part 1: Defining and measuring a High Quality Planning Service

## Quality of Outcomes

### Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

#### Quality of Outcomes

##### Delivering High Quality Development on the Ground

The adopted Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015 (the LDP) includes specific policies that require the protection, conservation and enhancement of our environment, and which place a strong emphasis on the production and execution of a high standard of appropriate design in relation to the siting, layout, density and design of new development. The plan led approach is supported by the Council's own Sustainable Design Publications, bi-annual design awards and promotion of exemplar design solutions as identified in **Case Study 5**. In practice these provisions have proven to be effective in encouraging a wide range of appropriate design solutions; **Case Study 3** highlights an award winning, contemporary dwellinghouse in a stunning rural location in west Argyll whilst **Case Study 4** looks at an affordable housing solution for a prominent town centre gap site in Dunoon.



There are 32 conservation areas across Argyll and Bute providing protection to the areas historic built environment. Some of these important locations have suffered from a number of years of under investment with consequent adverse effect upon the fabric of buildings and the amenity of the locale. The Council has continued to successfully pursue investment in these locations through establishment of Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THIs) and Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes (CARS). During 2016/17 members of the Planning team have been involved in preparing bids for new projects in Dunoon and Rothesay. **Case Studies 1 & 2** provide an update on existing CARS projects within Campbeltown and Inveraray where officers have been involved in projects which have realised the aspiration to deliver significant investment and improvement to the fabric and appearance of these historic town centre locations.

The Council has committed over £30m investment in its CHORD Regeneration Projects (Campbeltown, Helensburgh, Oban, Rothesay & Dunoon) with a particular focus on the revitalisation of civic spaces and the public realm. The Council has sought to create "Great Places" using quality design and materials in the new public places. The Council's public realm improvements to Colquhoun Square in Helensburgh won 3 awards and were nominated for a further 7 during the period 2015-17. **Case Study 6** provides an overview of the CHORD project delivering public realm improvements to Oban town centre which were completed during 2016/17.

The Planning team have also been involved in smaller scale projects which aim to deliver significant improvements to the local environment through the greening and reuse of derelict land. **Case Study 7** looks at the Council's investment and project work on 'Stalled Spaces'

Award Winning Outdoor Museum,  
Colquhoun Square, Helensburgh



Design Award Winners,  
Park Square and Aqualibrium, Campbeltown





# Case study 1: Heritage led regeneration in Campbeltown

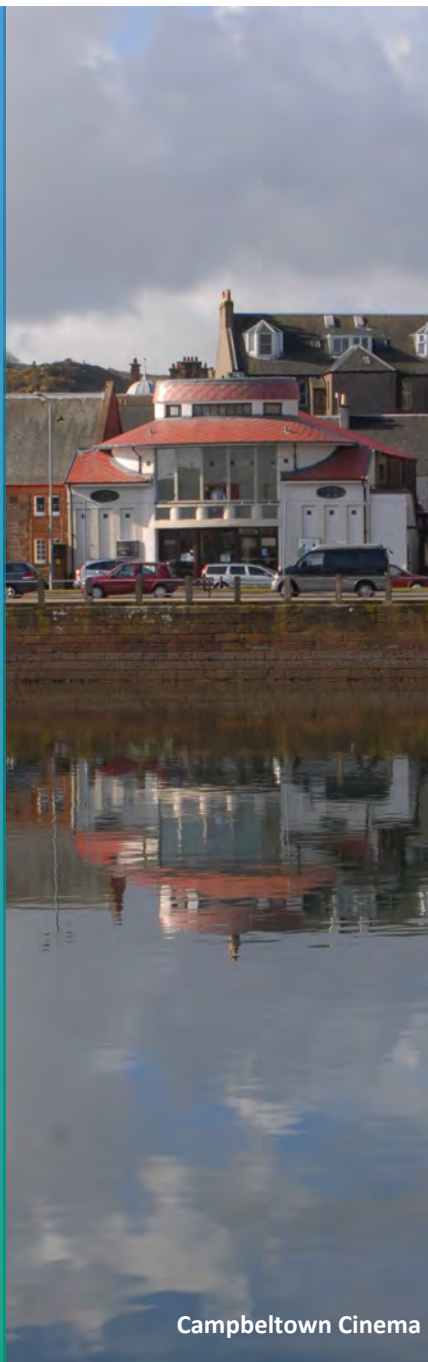
## Key statistics so far (2007 to 2017)

- Awarded over 100 grants totalling £2M - leading to over £8M being spent on over 40 town centre buildings;
- Brought over 2,700 square metres of vacant floor space back into use;
- refurbished 17 shopfronts;
- repaired and saved 168 original timber windows;
- involved over 40 local contractors in the work;
- trained over 400 people; and engaged with over 1000 people.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/campbeltown-regeneration>

*“Community based regeneration projects are a key part of our constant drive to improve our towns, making them places that people can be proud of and that, crucially, create the correct environment for economic growth, which means secure and well-paying jobs.”*

CLlr Dick Walsh



Campbeltown Cinema

## Heritage Led Regeneration in Campbeltown

The heritage led regeneration of Campbeltown has now entered its third phase via the Round 6 Campbeltown Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). The latest initiative runs from 2015 to 2020 and builds on the investment and improvements delivered via the successful CARS Round 1 (2007 to 2012) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) (2009-2016). By 2020 over £10million will have been spent repairing and refurbishing historic buildings in Campbeltown town centre via CARS and THI. In addition to this the £3million restoration of the 'A' Listed Picture House is due to be completed this year following extensive repairs and improvements. The Planning Team have been involved from pre-app to consent monitoring stage involving Development Management and Conservation Officer resources. CARS Round 6 includes funding for repairs to a number of prominent tenements in the Main Street and Longrow South areas, a Small Grant Scheme and a training and education programme. Safeguarding the future of these properties will protect over 70 jobs and could lead to five vacant commercial units being brought back in to use. To date one priority building has been completed at 10-20 Longrow South and a second project is on site at 9-15 Longrow South.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2015/mar/%C2%A322million-boost-campbeltown%E2%80%99s-historic-town-centre-will-protect-70-jobs>

The CARS training programme provides traditional skills training courses for local contractors and building professionals. In addition to this a number of events will be held to raise awareness, understanding and enjoyment of Campbeltown's rich heritage. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/chord/training-events-updates>



Campbeltown Bay



Heritage trail customers





Defining and Measuring a  
High Quality Planning Service  
Quality of Outcomes

### Campbeltown Town Hall

Following the transfer of the asset to South Kintyre Development Trust the building was fully repaired and brought back in to use in April 2016 as a multi-purpose facility and focal point for community activities. Since re-opening the venue has hosted a range of events from weddings, ceilidh's, concerts and coffee mornings. This was the largest project delivered via the THI and Council staff played a key role in the project from initial development through to completion.

The building won a 'Judges Award' at the Herald Property awards in 2016. For more information see

<http://skdt2014.wixsite.com/skdt/single-post/2016/09/30/Herald-Property-Awards>

*"The centre of Campbeltown, one of Argyll's most important towns, has been transformed thanks to significant National Lottery (HLF) investment. Grants of over £2m from the Heritage Lottery Fund have help restore a number of key historic buildings in the centre including the Town Hall and Old Schoolhouse."*

Lucy Casot:  
Head of Heritage  
Lottery Fund in  
Scotland







## Case Study 2: Inveraray C.A.R.S. Scheme

Total budget of £2.1 million including  
£970,059 from HES and £350,000  
match funding from Argyll and Bute  
Council.

*Training events / no. trained*

*11 events providing training to 160  
delegates to date.*

***“It is really pleasing to see the  
regeneration work in Inveraray,  
which started in 2013, reaching  
this visible stage. The town is  
looking great and will help our  
ambition of attracting visitors to  
come to our historic town.”***

Cllr Aileen Morton

### Inveraray CARS Scheme

Inveraray is located at the foot of Glen Aray and overlooking the western shores of Loch Fyne. The town is situated on the A83 Tarbet – Campbeltown road and is the traditional county town of Argyll and the ancestral home to the Dukes of Argyll who reside at Inveraray Castle. The distinctive identity of the town, castle, surrounding designed landscape and their striking relationship to Loch Fyne and Loch Shira has led to Inveraray becoming a popular tourist destination. The existing conservation area encompasses the planned layout of the historic 18th century new town to the south of the castle, stretching southward to take in Newtown.

Following expressions of concern from the local community that the appearance of the town was not as pristine as expected of a historic town such as Inveraray Argyll and Bute Council was successful in attracting a CARS grant from Historic Environment Scotland.

Inveraray Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) is a heritage-led regeneration project running from April 2013 to March 2018 offering grant funding to property owners to assist with the repair of historical buildings.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/icars/inveraray-cars-scheme>



Relief Land in 2012:



Relief Land in 2017:





Main Street West, Inveraray



**Continued:** Co-funded by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Argyll and Bute Council, Inveraray CARS has supported major repair and conservation works to 5 category A listed priority buildings as well as 6 small repair grant projects covering 54 properties in total. Delivery of the CARS objectives has been supported by the Council's Development Management team with a dedicated case officer resource provided to work closely with the CARS officer, HES, and conservation architects to deliver positive outcomes across a range of pre-application enquiries in relation to permitted development works, listed building consents, planning permissions, and tree works; the Development Management team have also remained closely involved during the course of building works to inspect works, and to provide further guidance in the discharge of conditions.

The CARS programme is now at an advanced stage with four of the five priority buildings – The Town House, Chamberlain's House, The Old Temperance Hotel and Relief Land completed. Works remain ongoing within the remaining priority building, Arkland, and are due for completion in Summer 2017.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2017/mar/inveraray-town-centre-regeneration-reaches-visible-milestone>

In addition to building works Inveraray CARS has also organised a number of skills events for local contractors to provide them with information and techniques which helped them secure work through the various projects. The CARS scheme has also facilitated community engagement and has funded an options appraisal for the Old Community Hall.

The Inveraray CARS scheme will continue until March 2018; the final months will concentrate on completing the remaining projects and showcasing the results of CARS projects through events such as Doors Open Day 2017. Pupils from the town's primary school will also benefit by working with the Walking Theatre Company to explore the history of the town, its buildings and its people.



Inveraray Parish Church, Main Street



Front Street, Inveraray





## Case Study 3: RIAS 2017 Award Winning Dwelling - Due West, Lunga Craobh Haven

*"This house is more than a match for the challenge of its dramatic site,"*

*"Uncompromisingly rectilinear, its interior gains maximum benefit from the extraordinary views which it commands. In keeping with the exposed rock faces which embrace the building, its materials are robust."*

RIAS panel - source BBC.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-40277112>

### RIAS 2017 Award Winning Dwelling - Due West, Lunga Craobh Haven

This contemporary dwelling designed by cameronwebster Architects was a winner at the RIAS 2017 awards. The house takes advantage of the existing contours of a natural geological fissure at the top of an existing cliff in order to largely conceal the building from view further inland but allows the interior of the building to open up to the spectacular coastal views without breaching the tree covered skyline of the cliff top.

The house is designed 'upside down' with the rear driveway/courtyard level with the upper floor giving access to the main living areas while the bedrooms are positioned below. The development is finished in a palette of high quality materials including natural stone, timber, powdered aluminium and pre-weathered zinc.

<https://www.rias.org.uk/awards/rias-awards/rias-awards-2017/>

<http://cameronwebster.com/project/lunga/>



Front (West) Elevation, Plan and Section - Due West, Lunga Craobh

Photos copied from BBC website (link above) and Scottish Construction Now - <http://www.scottishconstructionnow.com/18233/royal-incorporation-of-architects-in-scotland-announces-strong-awards-shortlist/>



## Case Study 4: Affordable Housing Development – Site of Former St. Cuthbert's Church,

### Affordable Housing Development – Site of Former St. Cuthbert's Church, Dunoon

The site formerly housed St. Cuthbert's Church, which was demolished in 1994. The church occupied a large rectangular footprint in the lower part of the site but set back from Argyll Street, in line with the Burgh Hall. Apart from planning permission for 15 flats in 1997, there had been no recent development interest in the site.



The development site formed a prominent gap site within the town centre and lies immediately adjacent to and south of Dunoon Burgh Hall. The site is also bounded by Argyll Street and Church Street to the east, Albert Crescent and Royal Crescent to the west. The Burgh Hall is a Category B listed building and is undergoing extensive repair works to bring the building back into active use as a community based arts facility. The application site also lies in close proximity to St. John's Church, a Category A listed building. The site slopes steeply from Royal Crescent eastwards towards Argyll Street with a platform in the central portion then falling steeply to Argyll Street.

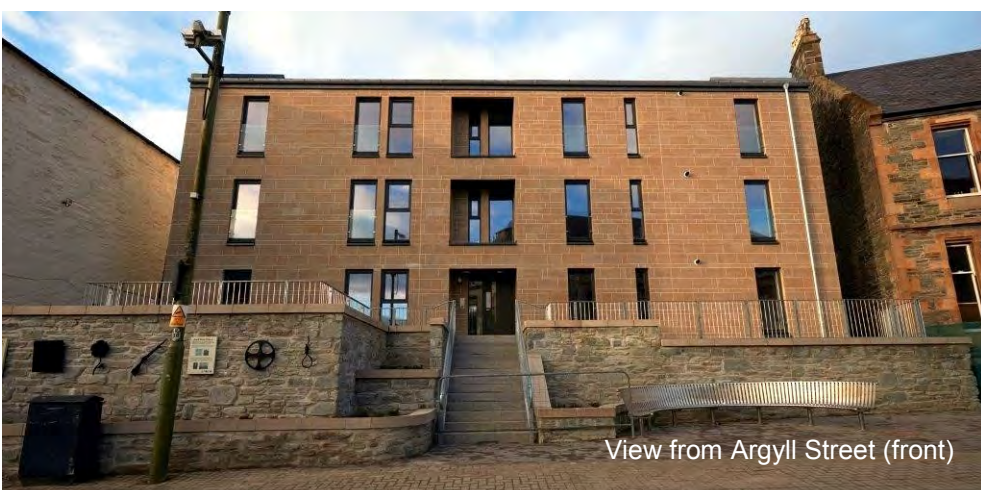
The proposed development was for the erection of 17 no. flats within two 2 detached blocks. The three-storey Block A on Argyll Street contains 9 flats with a mix of 6 x 1 bed units and 3 x 2 bed units. This block is rectangular with pitched and gabled slated roof and natural stone faced front elevation. This block has been designed as 'car-free' and has no physical link to the upper block. The two/three-storey Block B on Royal Crescent contains 8 flats with a mix of 6 x 1 bed units and 2 x 2 bed units. This block is split-level,

rectangular shaped with pitched and gabled slated roof and natural stone feature panels on main elevations. Block B is accessed from Albert Crescent where parking for 4 cars will be provided for the 8 flats.

The topography of the site in this part required retaining wall features and the have been built in brick but faced with treated vertical larch boarding to soften the visual impact. The area fronting Argyll Street has been landscaped to create additional public realm.

The success of the development is due to early and productive pre-applications engagement between Fyne Homes, their architects and the council. Various suggestions and improvements in terms of design, materials and access were suggested by officers and taken on board by the applicant and agents who played a positive role in the planning process. The revised scheme incorporated the use of re-cast stone on principal elevations and traditional features e.g. natural slates, roof skews and vertical fenestration patterns which have all helped to integrate the proposed blocks within the traditional townscape. The main revisions to the original scheme was the splitting of the site into two distinct components with a 'car-free' block facing Argyll Street, reduction in flats from 19 to 17, improved design articulation and the introduction of natural stone to principal elevations.

Public reaction was mixed with 35 objections and 18 letters of support however, now that the development is complete and partly occupied, positive feedback has generally been made regarding a successful flatted housing development in terms of high quality urban design and harmonious relationship with traditional buildings. The buildings represent high quality design on a difficult sloping site with many design and access constraints that were all resolved during the planning process. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/property/former-st-cuthberts-dunoon>







## Case Study 5: Promoting High Quality Design

### Promoting High Quality Design

The Council recognises that new development within Argyll and Bute will play an important part in its future success as a sustainable, economically viable and high quality place to live and work. The Council's design strategy aims to achieve high quality new development that respects the local environment and provides a sense of place.

The requirement for a high standard of design is embedded within the Local Development Plan and the key principles set out within associated Supplementary Guidance.

In addition, the Council has published its own Sustainable Design Guidance which seeks to promote good quality, sustainable and contemporary building design and where appropriate innovative solutions, suited to the distinctive landscapes, towns and villages of Argyll and Bute. These documents explain the key principles of quality design and sustainable development, identify points to consider when siting and designing buildings so that they do not spoil their landscape or townscape setting; the guides also identify what kind of information is needed for each stage of the planning process.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/design-guides>

### Exemplar Design Website

One of the main objectives of the Council's sustainable design strategy is for the Council to lead by example and demonstrate sustainable design by providing case studies to illustrate the principles set out in the Sustainable Design Guides. Publication of these case studies on the Council's website is intended to promote good design and provide inspiration to prospective developers through identification of completed projects which are considered to be exemplars of high quality design. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/examples-good-design-argyll-and-bute>

The bi-annual Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Awards provides a less regular but nonetheless higher profile platform for promotion and discussion of high quality design within the Council area. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sustainable-design-awards-2015>



Square House, Taynuilt



Portavadie Leisure and Spa



House No 7, Tiree



## Case Study 6: Oban Town Centre Public Realm Improvements

### Oban Town Centre Public Realm Improvements

Oban is the most northerly of Argyll's mainland towns located within the spectacular setting of Oban Bay. The town is an important transport hub and gateway for the West Islands and Highlands with connections by rail, road, ferry and air, and is one of Scotland's most popular tourist destinations with plenty to offer visitors to the area.

The regeneration of Oban town centre has been part of the Council's CHORD programme to secure public realm improvements as part of the Oban Bay regeneration project. The Oban Bay regeneration proposals comprised a range of public realm improvements stretching from the North Pier to Station Square in the south.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/chord-project/oban-bay-harbour-project>

The works were delivered through three separate but interlinked proposals which will tie the proposed Marine Visitor Facility (MVF) on the North Pier through public realm improvements to the transport hub around Station Square to the south. The three parts of the regeneration proposal were as follows:

- Demolition of the 'White Building' to allow for the proposed MVF;
- Reconfiguration of the streetscape and development of Stafford Street public space to include pedestrianisation and the formation of outdoor café seating areas;
- Public realm works to the remainder of the regeneration area to tie in the developments from the North Pier and Stafford Street through George Street to Station Square to the south.

The elements of the regeneration scheme all taken together link the refurbishment and reconfiguration of the North Pier with the pedestrianisation of the Stafford Street area which has formed a single open space for pedestrians and which has significantly improved the visual appearance of the area at the same time as providing an improved public gathering space. This has a positive influence on the trading of the businesses on Stafford Street by allowing them to provide outdoor eating areas providing a café culture within this part of the town centre.

With the exception of the proposed MVF, the town centre works have been completed and represent a significant visual enhancement of the townscape within this part of the town centre improving pedestrian facilities.



Stafford Street, Oban Town Centre



Stafford Street, Oban Town Centre

*"The investment in  
public realm works is  
intended to make Oban a more  
attractive place for residents,  
visitors and investors".*

ABC website





## Case Study 7: Stalled Spaces

### Stalled Spaces

With use of £10k of council funding matched with £10k secured from Architecture + Design Scotland, 6 areas of underused land across Argyll and Bute benefited from grant funding to revitalise these areas over a 2 year period. Planning advice was sought in each case and members of the Planning Team have remained involved as projects have progressed.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/stalled-spaces-scotland>

The areas include an active community garden on NHS grounds in Lochgilphead which has helped the people involved grow not only vegetables, but also their confidence. Local people in Helensburgh adopted a park in disrepair and have begun to create a natural play area, and in Tarbert a previously unkempt area near the village hall has been given a new lease of life. In Rothesay, Argyll College UHI worked with community groups to create a garden on the site of a demolished tenement and were helped by willing volunteers from the Syrian refugee community. In Oban, the funding was used to improve the environment of the former Rockfield School whilst the local community develop plans for the derelict building, and in Campbeltown a site earmarked for Housing Association development was turned into a temporary park, with elements that can be moved to another site once construction begins.

Stalled Spaces Argyll and Bute is part of Stalled Spaces Scotland, a Legacy 2014 programme inspired by Stalled Spaces Glasgow, and supported by Architecture and Design Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council and the Scottish Government.

The main objectives for the project are to:

- Support the community to enhance stalled spaces within their town centres.
- Involve young people.
- Encourage people to lead healthier lifestyles.
- Encourage potential for learning and sharing of skills at each of the sites.

The desired outcomes from which are:

- The wider community recognise the area is visibly improved.
- Young people feel more engaged with their community.
- People feel that the project has helped them to lead a healthier life.
- People feel that they have learned new skills.



Bute produce



Tarbert Healing Garden Centre



Glenorchy and Innishail Community Orchard



## Part 1: Defining and measuring a High Quality Planning Service

## Quality of Service and Engagement

<http://www.gigaplusargyll.co.uk/>



### Quality of Service & Engagement

#### Open for Business – Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth



The LDP continues to set the context for delivering the sustainable economic growth of Argyll and Bute and identifies that the success of the local economy is fundamental to helping retain local population and in attracting new people to the area. The LDP also recognises that the natural and built environments are both key to the economic success of the area and seeks to safeguard and enhance these assets. The LDP is supported by a comprehensive suite of Supplementary Guidance which has been augmented by

adoption of additional SG relating to coastal development and renewable energy in December 2016.

The LDP is closely aligned to the Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement / Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and the focus continues to be on delivering the strategy and allocations of the plan. The Council's Action Programme continues to focus action on priority proposals and allocations and to identify work which is required to enable development. The Council has sought to build partnerships with developers to deliver a number of significant development opportunities, **Case Study 17** provides an overview of the Lorn Arc proposals where the Planning team is working in partnership with internal and external stakeholders on a project intended to deliver over 600 dwellings and mixed use commercial and business development along with necessary infrastructure improvements.

Achieving positive planning performance and therefore delivering outcomes on the ground is essential to the Council delivering the Single Outcome Agreement – particularly in relation to Outcomes 1. 'The economy is diverse and thriving' and 2. 'We have infrastructure that supports sustainable growth'. Certain aspects of the service such as the Access Officer and the Planning Policy Team also directly shape Outcome 5 'People live active, healthier and independent lives' through delivery of recreational and green networks.

**Case Study 13** highlights that during 2016/17 the Planning Team's free pre-application service continued to be well used with the number of submissions up 15% on the previous year. The high volume of demand, budget pressures and limitations of staff resources have necessitated the introduction of charging for pre-application advice for larger development proposals during 2017/18. To offset the effect of charging the Council will seek to review and where necessary improve the existing planning advice and guidance available on its website during 2017/18 although **Case Study 12** demonstrates the work has already undertaken to improve the accessibility and usability of online LDP maps.

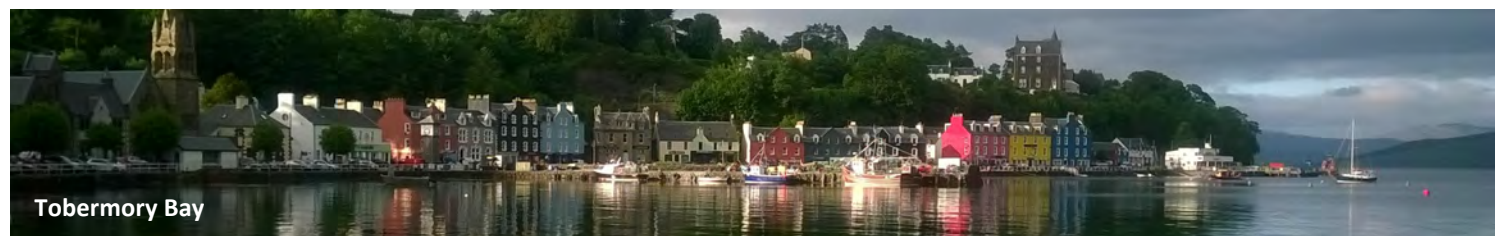


During 2016/17 the Council has worked in partnership with Machrihanish Airbase Community Company on their bid badged up as 'Discover Space' for selection as a location for a UK spaceport which would bring with it significant investment; an overview of this partnership is set out in **Case Study 10**.

The Development Management team worked closely with private developer AB Internet and their Community Partners during 2016/17 to consent 21 planning permissions required by the GigaPlus Argyll Broadband Project which will deliver a telecommunications network for the provision of superfast broadband to remote mainland and island locations in the west of Argyll.

Whilst the Development Management Team remain focussed on meeting performance standards for timely determination of planning applications they continue to do so with an emphasis on securing positive outcomes wherever possible. This approach is evident with an approval rate of 97.4% during 2016/17. **Case Study 9** provides customer feedback from the planning application process where significant officer input was required to reach a positive outcome; **Case Study 11** provides evidence of the Planning Team's commitment to prioritising economically important applications.





## Certainty

A plan-led system is very much dependent on having a robust and up to date development plan at its core. The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan is two years old and remains relevant in addressing local demand for development; this is reflected in the low number of applications approved as departures to the LDP. This amounted to 23 applications or 1.72% of decisions made in 2016/17.

Argyll and Bute has a strong culture of working in partnership with our customers, stakeholders, communities and other organisations to deliver Masterplans. Developing masterplans can add certainty to a proposal / allocation and underpin investment. It can also speculate on longer term or aspirational opportunities without prejudicing earlier phases capable of being delivered now. The experience within Argyll and Bute to date would suggest that masterplanning improves the deliverability and design quality of development. **Case Studies 16 & 17** provide examples of recent masterplanning exercises. Notably during 2016/17 the Planning Team have provided updated Technical Guidance confirming when a masterplan is required, what it should contain and the process involved in its development.

In line with National objectives the Council is focussed on the effective delivery of sites and allocations. Case Study 14 provides insight into the Call for Sites process developed by the Planning Policy Team which is intended to ensure that sites brought forward to the next LDP are realistic, deliverable propositions. **Case Study 15** highlights internal working arrangements between the Planning Policy Team and Development Management to share knowledge and collectively develop design briefs to better inform delivery of Allocations within the existing LDP.

## Communications, Engagement & Customer Service

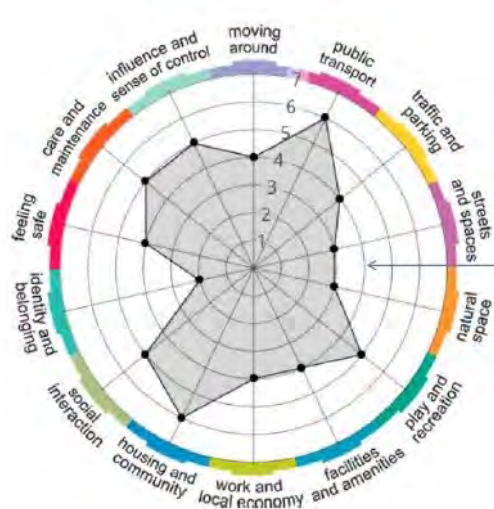
The Planning Team always seek to place the customer at the heart of the service. **Case Study 18** provides evidence of our annual user forum and project work commenced during 2016/17 with the intention of attaining Customer Service Excellence Standard during 2017/18. **Case Study 8** highlights the Planning Team's commitment of resources to engaging efficiently and effectively with one of the key players in the Argyll and Bute economy.

**Case Study 19** provides an example of the Planning Team's efforts to ensure that new Technical Guidance is subject to appropriate engagement with customers and key stakeholders. The Planning Team has continued to support a wide range of channels allowing customers a range of options for engaging with the Planning Service.

The Development Management Teams are located in four offices within the main settlements across the extensive Council Area providing relatively easy access to planning officers for a large proportion of the population; customers on remoter mainland and island locations are able to access services at Customer Service Points. The Planning Team also support website and telephone based services and continue to use of social media as a tool for customer engagement. **Case Study 23** details efforts to engage with 'Hard to Reach Groups'. Officers have also been involved in engaging with our communities and placemaking by facilitating a Community Led Design Review Process with Architecture Design Helensburgh (A+DH), Architecture + Design Scotland (A+DS) and Persimmon Homes. It is understood that A+DH are the first community led design panel in Scotland, further details are provided in **Case Study 20**.

In last year's PPF we provided details of community planning and engagement activity on Tiree and in the communities set out along the Crinan Canal. **Case Study 21** provides an update on this activity and promotion of the Place Standard Tool while **Case Study 22** sets out the Development Management Team's efforts to build bridges with Connel Community Council following a number of contentious planning decisions within their locality.

## Spider Diagram





## Case Study 8: Aquaculture Forum

*“The annual Aquaculture Planning Liaison meetings, between representatives of fish and shell fish farming companies and officers of the Argyll and Bute Planning Service, have been taking place since 2011. Although the initiative for such meetings came originally from the Planning Adviser to the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation, the idea was taken up enthusiastically by the head of the Service, Angus Gilmour, and the planners most involved in formulating aquaculture policy and dealing with planning applications for fish farm development.”*

Feedback received from the SSPO which endorses their satisfaction with the manner in which the Planning team regularly liaise with industry.

*“We would be fully supportive of the comments made in this submission as they equally reflect the position of the shellfish cultivation sector. In addition to this annual liaison meeting, the Planning Service also meets with individual companies several times a year to discuss issues relating to future development strategies and to identify issues capable of being addressed in advance of forthcoming development proposals.”*

ASSG commentary on SSPO feedback.

### Aquaculture Forum

Aquaculture continues to be an important sector within the economy of Argyll and Bute as companies seek to expand production in response to market demand leading to planning applications for the modification of existing farms and for the establishment of new sites. It is a sector our Community Plan, Single Outcome Agreement and Corporate Plan all seek to support given the contribution it makes in both direct and indirect employment within a rural area.

The Planning Service is committed to support the sustainable growth of marine finfish and shellfish aquaculture across Argyll and Bute and strives for continued improvement of the aquaculture planning process. To that end, it represents the Council on the Ministerial Group for Sustainable Aquaculture and associated working groups, and works closely with other Highlands and Islands planning authorities to present consistent and shared input to identified actions. This has included recent input into the development of a planning circular and the review of Permitted Development Rights, standardisation of validation requirements, and the development of environmental monitoring requirements to mitigate potential impacts relating to the interaction between farmed and wild salmonids. This liaison is developed further through an annual two day meeting of aquaculture planning authorities, focussed on sharing good practice and ensuring consistency in approach and delivery of the planning process.

Beyond that, the Planning Service is committed to an annual liaison meeting with local aquaculture industry



representatives to discuss progress and agree actions for improvement. Meetings are arranged jointly by Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation (SSPO) and Argyll and Bute Council and involve representatives from SSPO, environmental staff from salmon and trout farm companies, the Association of Scottish Shellfish Growers (ASSG). The Planning Service is represented by the Head of Planning and staff from both Development Management and Development Policy. An agenda agreed between the parties focuses on planning policy, the planning application process, any issues arising from recent applications and national workstreams, and highlights changes in both planning and industry operations. Agreed actions are implemented and reviewed at subsequent meetings.

There are annual Aquaculture Planning Liaison meetings with all five of the Councils most involved with fish farming development (Highland, Argyll and Bute, Orkney, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, and Shetland) however the meetings in Argyll and Bute and Highland are the best attended by representatives from the industry.

The attendance at these meetings of the head of the Planning Service, as well as the officers most involved in aquaculture policy and planning applications, is very much appreciated by industry representatives.

SSPO, and all of the member and non-member company representatives who attend these meetings, appreciate the opportunity to discuss ongoing and emerging planning issues with the Council planners. The meetings have helped in building good working relationships between the companies and the planners and have helped improve understanding of the issues facing both the industry and the Council. This is helpful when individual companies engage in more detailed discussions regarding their own specific development proposals. SSPO would wish to see the annual Aquaculture Planning Liaison meetings continue.'







## Case Study 9: Positive Engagement with Developers

### Background:

The project is small scale but nonetheless has proved complex and contentious with sufficient local opposition to trigger a public hearing in advance of the application being determined. In addition to being located within the setting of a category B listed building the proposal required to satisfactorily address concerns that its edge of settlement location might cause harm to the viability and vitality of Lochgilphead town centre. Officers have worked with Harbro to consent a proposal for new retail development which addresses concerns in relation to the town centre and which secures works necessary for the repair and long-term retention of the derelict Clock Lodge building, facilitates its future use by a local community group, and makes provision for management of the wider woodland setting. The case study documents engagement from initial pre-application discussions during 2013 through to wind and watertight works being undertaken to the Clock Lodge building during 2016. The project remains ongoing with the construction of the new retail premises expected to commence during 17/18

### Positive Engagement with Developers

The Planning team seek to engage positively with applicants and their representatives all the way through the development process from pre-application discussions, through the formal application period, and post consent. The following case study content has been provided by Graham Taylor Associates and provides a snapshot of their own experience of working with officers to obtain permissions for a new retail premises for Harbro in Lochgilphead.

*"The Clock Lodge site was selected by Harbro Ltd as the location for their proposed 5,000sq ft Country Store. Their continued expansion created the need for a purpose-built facility comprising storage, retail and office accommodation. Harbro saw the opportunity to develop the site as an enabling project, which involved the restoration of the Clock Lodge, the Grade B Listed Building 19th century gatehouse which over the last few years had been subject to vandalism, fire damage and water damage.*

*The project also involved the local community group, the Lochgilphead Phoenix Project (LPP) who had previously been in negotiation with the Council over the use of the building as a community facility. Ownership of the site by the Council, was transferred to Harbro via the LPP, upon completion of the Wind & Watertight works to the Clock Lodge by Harbro, in exchange for a lease. The Wind & Watertight stage, as part of an approved Schedule of Works, comprised repair works to the roof, general fabric repairs and drainage works.*

*The nature of the project and it's complexities required extensive discussions with Council Estates, Planning, Building Standards and Conservation departments and Historic Environment Scotland as well as other non-Council stakeholders.*

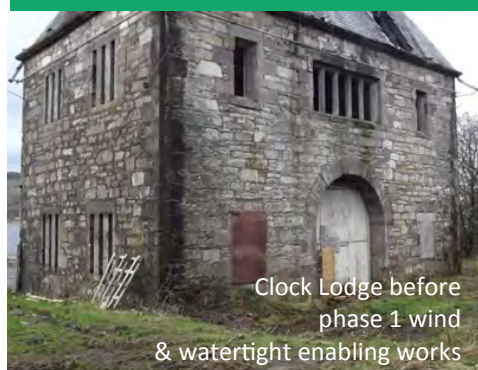
***"Early engagement and pre-application dialogue with the Council Planning department including the Conservation and Development Control sections, was the key to the project. Their guidance, advice and general approach to the project was constructive, practical and positive. That accessibility and approach has been of great benefit to both Client and agent and has been maintained throughout the course of the project to date".***

*Perhaps the stage which exemplifies this approach and flexibility, was the change in strategy with the Clock lodge roof. Due to the extent of deterioration it was decided that a new roof was the preferred solution and not a repair programme as originally planned. A report which, while highlighting the uncertainties of a repair strategy, confirmed that the external appearance would remain the same and materials/detailing would match that of the existing, was able to provide certainty over the long term sustainable future of the building. The consent granted clearly demonstrated the Planning Department's ability to make difficult decisions despite there being conflicts with Conservation principles.*

*Site attendance by the Planning department during the reconstruction of the roof to witness the full extent of the problems vindicated the Council's decision. There has also been a good working relationship with the Building Standards section throughout the various stages of the project. The Wind & Watertight stage was successfully completed in December 2016."*



Clock Lodge after phase 1  
wind & watertight  
enabling works



Clock Lodge before  
phase 1 wind  
& watertight enabling works



Artist impression of proposals



## Case Study 10: Machrihanish Spaceport Bid

Councilor  
Aileen Morton:

*Argyll and Bute Council's Policy Lead for Sustainable Economic Growth, said: "The reception was an extremely successful event and an ideal opportunity to inform representatives from the aerospace industry and MPs of the progress being made on our ambitious plans."*

*"Our site offers enormous scope with a runway of more than 3,000 meters and large areas of land available for development, allied to a positive and supportive planning framework put in place by Argyll and Bute Council."*

Tom Millar, Chairman of Discover Space UK and Machrihanish Airbase Community Company:

### Machrihanish Spaceport Bid

Argyll and Bute Council is working in partnership with the Machrihanish Airbase Community Company (MACC) and their subsidiary Discover Space UK (DSUK) to promote Machrihanish airbase during the UK Government consultation seeking to identify a location for a UK spaceport. The Planning Team have helped deliver LDP allocations and a masterplan for the site.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/content/argyll-and-bute-council-news-round-12th-august-2016>

<http://www.discoverspaceuk.com/>

On January 24 2017 Brendan O'Hara MP sponsored an event at the Palace of Westminster to allow the DiscoverSpace UK (DSUK) Consortium to brief MPs and industry experts on the benefits of Campbeltown/Machrihanish as a site for a UK spaceport.

The event was organised by Argyll and Bute Council's Economic Growth and Marketing staff and MACC and supported by Brendan O'Hara's office. The cost of the event was shared by MACC. The event was attended by 23 MPs/Peers and 15 industry representatives with further interest expressed from parties who could not attend on the day and served to provide a platform to deliver a clear outline of the Campbeltown offer for a spaceport. The picture was one of a facility with the necessary infrastructure required, stringent safety criteria as well as the backing of the Local Authority, enterprise agency and local community. The event was also provided a platform to announce Memorandums of Understanding with Qinetiq and Telespazio Vega underlining the credibility of the Campbeltown / Machrihanish bid.

In addition to significantly raising the profile of MACC/DSUK, and the Council, the event has also served to highlight at a UK level that Argyll and Bute is a location which is open for business.

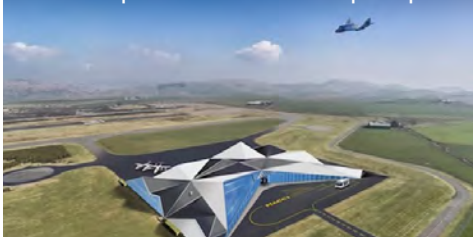


Event at the Palace of Westminster

Aerial view of Machrihanish



Concept visualisation of Spaceport







## Case Study 11: Fast Tracking Economically Important Applications

*“Argyll and Bute Council provided clear and concise advice during pre-application discussion, which enabled the design team to submit an application with all of the necessary information. The application phase was managed effectively to ensure all necessary consultees provided responses timeously. During the process any requests for clarification or further information were issued quickly and the planning officer was available and willing to discuss these issues. The application was determined within the statutory time period providing great assistance to the delivery a major development.”*

The Head of Planning at NORR  
Consultants Ltd

### Onshore Aquaculture Development - Barcaldine

The aquaculture sector is one of importance to Argyll bringing direct and indirect employment into rural locations as well as making an important contribution to the national economy. The Council is keen not only to facilitate the expansion of marine fish farms where this is appropriate but also to secure associated onshore development, such as hatcheries and processing plants, in order to be able to maximise the economic benefits able to be accrued locally from the production of farmed fish.

To that end, the Council has actively supported a project promoted by Scottish Sea Farms Ltd by providing a ‘fast track’ service for processing of their application for the construction of a large scale hatchery development at Barcaldine on Loch Creran. This process involved pre-application consultation with the company and their environmental consultants and architects, discussion with consultees, Major Application consultation via the PAC process, EIA screening and consideration of the resultant planning application, which involved modifications to the draft proposal having regard to comments received during this initial process. EIA screening was completed in 14 days and further to proactive engagement with consultees the Major Application was granted within 10 weeks (inclusive of Christmas/New Year holidays).

The Head of Planning at NORR Consultants Ltd commented on behalf of Scottish Sea Farms at the conclusion of the planning process, below - left:

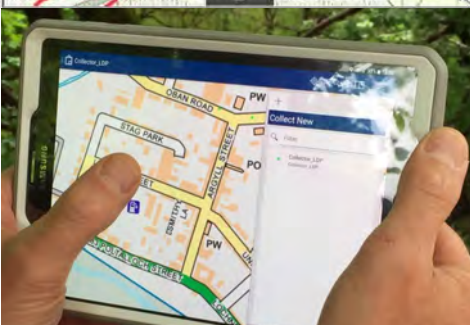
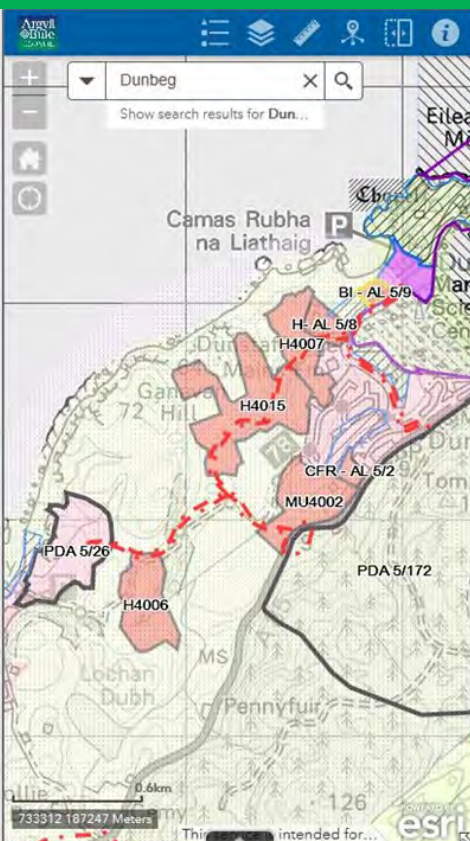


Onshore Aquaculture Development - Barcaldine



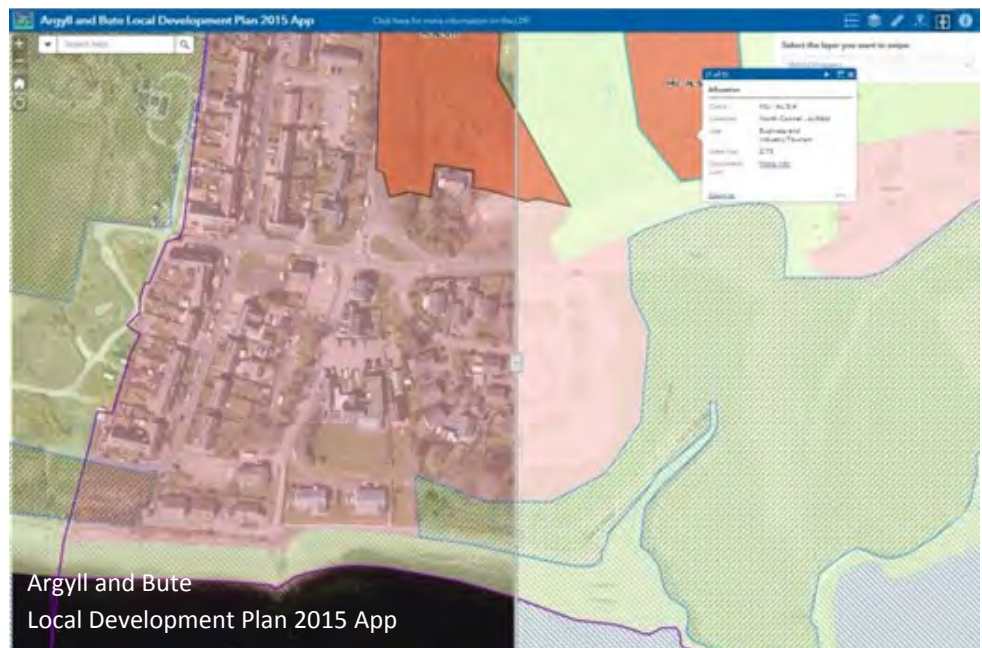
## Case Study 12: LDP Online in GIS and on Mobile Devices

Below: ESRI mobile phone and tablet apps



### LDP Online in GIS and on Mobile Devices

The Adopted Local Development Plan Proposals Maps are available on line in pdf format but are also available in a new interactive mapping system. In the last year the Proposals Maps were transferred into the ESRI map app. This allows officers and members of the public to access the Local Development Plan Proposals Maps interactively through the online system. This can be accessed via a PC, smart phone or tablet. Argyll and Bute is the second largest planning authority in Scotland and the plan covers the whole of this area. This means that in order to cover each settlement area and the allocations at a reasonable scale a significant number of static pdfs are required. The Proposals Map hard copy book contains 220 maps and is supplemented by 8 A0 sheets. The interactive online map provides a much simpler and quicker way to navigate to the area people wish to view and is a more efficient solution in terms of digital storage space.



The ESRI map app for the Local Development Plan is easy to use and is intuitive, in particular for people who already use other mapping packages such as google maps. It contains a help tool, which gives details of the different elements within the package such as the legend, how to turn layers on and off, how to measure distance or area, how to obtain a latitude and longitude, summary data for that view of the map, a swipe tool to see the map without a specific layer by swiping it on and off and a contact email if further assistance is required. The user can also add aerial photography to the view by clicking on "World Imagery". Many people prefer this resource to the standard Ordnance Survey map, finding it easier to interpret.

Locations can be found in a number of ways, each taking the user quickly to the area they wish to see. The ESRI app contains a "my location" button which can geo-locate the person who is using the system. This is a useful on site tool for planners seeking verification of exact location in relation to a site as well as a quick way for members of the public to zoom to their house. It also allows users to type in an allocation reference, a post code, street name, house name, town or village in order to zoom to the area. Hovering over an area gives an OS 12 figure grid reference – bottom left of screen.

The map is interactive in terms of navigation, zoom facility and with information in the LDP Written Statement. The user can easily move to the area they want to see and have it as the central focus on the screen. The underlying mapping changes as the user zooms in and out to give the most appropriately scaled and detailed background mapping. Clicking on the map gives information about the layers that are at that point for example which Development Management Zone or if the area is within a National Scenic Area or other designation. Clicking on allocations, Potential Development Areas or Areas for Action gives summary information including a hyperlink which takes the user directly to the LDP Written Statement, opening up the appropriate page in another tab.

The system is providing a benefit internally across council services and externally to developers, key agencies and the public, with over 585 hits every month and improving access to the LDP.





## Case Study 13: Pre-application Service and Processing Agreements

### Pre-application Service

The Council's Pre-application service 'Planning for Firm Foundations' has been up and running since 2011. This service is promoted actively by officers and via the Council website encouraging all customers to engage with the service so that officers can assist to add value to projects, identify issues, enhance certainty and negate abortive work.

The pre-application service is of particular value where early engagement allows officers to identify constraints/issues, and where appropriate engage with other stakeholders to allow early identification of the requirement and scope of any additional supporting information which will be required during the planning assessment. The pre-application process also provides an opportunity to highlight any potential requirement for developer contributions at an early stage in proceedings.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/pre-application-guidance>

To date pre-application advice has been offered as a free service however in response to budgetary pressures and increasing workload pressure created by the volume of enquiries, the Council has decided from 2017/18 to introduce charging for pre-application advice on 'major' applications and 'locally significant developments'. Advice in relation to householder enquiries, permitted development and 'small' scale development proposals shall still be provided free of charge.

Reflective of the importance of pre-applications to our customers we monitor Council performance in terms of the speed of response. The performance indicator '*% of Pre-application Enquires responded to within 20 working days*' now appears on Planning

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
No. of Pre Apps Processed	929	951	1,093	1,260

and Regulatory Services Scorecard, Development and Infrastructure Scorecard and even at monthly Area Committee's where elected Members scrutinise the attainment of the indicator. Development Management staff and their managers use workload reports and weekly team meetings to allocate pre-applications to the most suitable officers and performance levels are monitored / managed to achieve compliance with our customer charter commitment for a timely response. In 2016/17 we responded to 78.2% of pre-application enquiries within 20 working days above our set target of 75%.

### Processing Agreements

During 2016/17 the Planning team did not process any applications which were subject to a Processing Agreements despite entering into initial discussions with a number of developers to highlight the advantages.

Despite the low level of interest in processing agreements the Planning team continue to promote their use for Major applications and Locally Significant projects through the pre-application advice service, through the medium of a dedicated webpage, and publicising them at annual User Forums.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/processing-agreements>

To date customer appetite for processing agreements has largely been indifferent with regular users commenting that they are generally content with processing times within Argyll and Bute, that they already know who the key contacts / officers are, are aware that timescales can be informally agreed with case officers without the requirement for create formal Processing Agreements and that the Planning team has a proven track record of being capable of 'fast tracking' economically important applications when demand arises.



## Case Study 14: Focus on Deliverability & Certainty by Engagement - Call for Sites

### Focus on Deliverability & Certainty by Engagement - Call for Sites

Argyll and Bute Council seeks to use a strong evidence base in the preparation of Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2). This is to ensure that the resultant plan is robust, credible, deliverable and supports both the settlement strategy and Community Plan objectives. One element of this evidence base is the Call for Sites, which was conducted between June and December 2016. The process was aimed at working collaboratively with developers to identify potential sites to meet the various land allocation requirements in the plan period.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/call-sites>

The Call for Sites was widely publicised through a variety of means including emails, presentations, as well as the Council's website and social media. The process required site promoters to submit a range of information, including factors drawn from the Draft Planning Delivery Advice: Housing and Infrastructure, and was aimed at demonstrating that the sites being submitted were deliverable and that elements such as infrastructure had been considered. The Call for Sites guidance provided thorough guidance that included helpful resources and contacts for site promoters to assist them in assembling the required information.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/call-sites-guidance>

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/call-sites>

By using an online submission form the Development Policy team were able to import the responses into their own bespoke back office database making the assessment process

quicker and more efficient. It also allowed for a variety of forms and reports to be created to display the information for a range of users. All of the sites have been digitised into the GIS system allowing for spatial cross referencing against a range of existing data such as flood risk zones and European designations. The information submitted by the site promoters has been 'joined' to the GIS data to create a powerful mapping system for internal officers to view the sites online alongside the corresponding submission information.

The submissions have been sent to the key agencies for comment and the back office database has been expanded to record these comments as well as SEA information in a single resource.

Development policy officers have been conducting site visits to the sites with additional input from Development Management and Roads officers. The same site assessment process as used in the previous year during review of the existing allocations has been utilised for the Call for Sites allowing for both spatial qualities and deliverability factors to be assessed. By drawing together the information from site promoters, responses from key agencies and internal consultees as well as officer site visits and assessments into our back office systems the development policy officers will have efficient and powerful resources for the final assessment of the sites.

Deliverability has been a key theme running through the Call for Sites process recognising the need to consider important infrastructure factors in the promotion and assessment of sites. The overall Call for Sites evidence will allow the inclusion in the Main Issues Report of preferred sites that are robust, credible and deliverable but at the same time being shown to support both the settlement strategy and Community Plan objectives. .



## Case Study 15: Local Development Plan Scheme – Design Briefs

**Local Development Plan Scheme – Design Briefs** Planning Officers are engaging in collaborative working across the Development Policy and Development Management teams through the development of Design Briefs for sites designated as Allocations within the current Local Development Plan.

Desk-based (GIS) analysis has been carried out for all Allocations which includes relevant land-use and spatial planning information such as LDP designations affecting the site, local schools, and other relevant designations such as local nature reserves. The current project comprises the Housing Allocations on which planning permission has not yet been granted (of which there are 74). There is potential to roll the project out to further sites in the future, such as Business and Industry Allocations or Potential Development Areas.

Planning Officers from both Development Policy and Development Management are undertaking site visits to analyse the sites in terms of constraints and opportunities. These may include, but are not limited to, flood risk, access, environmental impediments and architectural context. The analysis will be combined in a database to ensure a comprehensive dataset from which selected information can be extracted. This will enable provision of guidance to developers in terms of the key fundamentals of the site, and will ensure a robust evidence-base from which timeous and informed decisions can be made, supporting sustainable economic growth in the area.

Delivery of the project is to coincide with the Development Policy team's production of the Action Programme and Main Issues Report, demonstrating a clear project management approach.





# Case Study 16 Inveraray Masterplan

Technical Note 1 - Masterplanning was published by the Planning Team in June 2016 - this document contains information and guidance for developers on when a masterplan is required, what it should contain, and the process involved. It also contains a list of the Strategic Masterplan areas identified in the Local Development Plan.

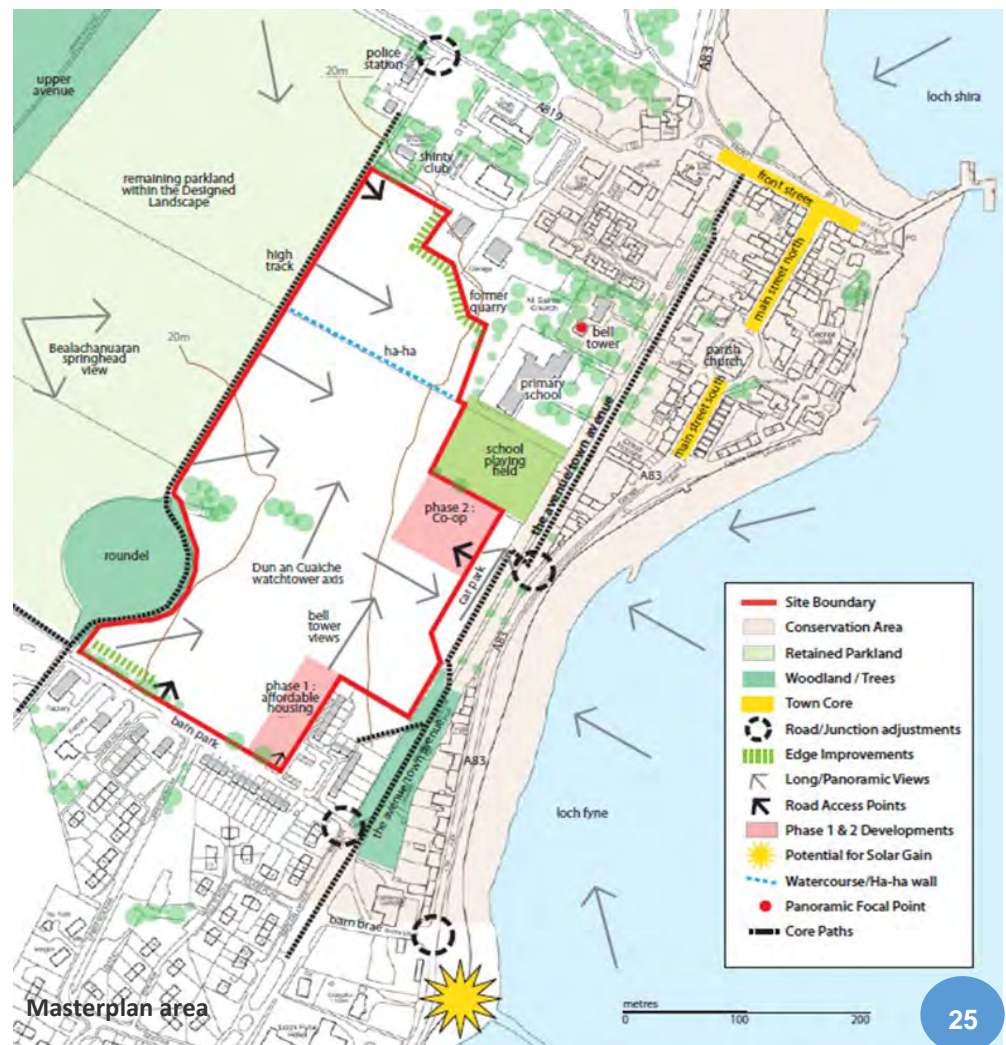
<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp>

## Inveraray Masterplan

Inveraray is one of the most important Designed Landscapes and planned towns in Scotland. It is an iconic town of national significance. The original planned town dating from the 1750's remains largely intact and retains its striking relationship to Loch Fyne, Loch Shira and the surrounding Designed Landscape. More recent 'backland' development is less impressive than the planned town. It is becoming increasingly visible as the town continues to grow and has had the effect of reducing the extent of the parkland area in the middle of the settlement.

The Council's Local Development Plan has recognised the aspirations of Argyll Estates to release land for the purposes of development by identifying a mixed use allocation of almost 9 hectares, for housing, business, tourism and community uses. In order to ensure that this progresses in a co-ordinated manner with due regard to the historic qualities of the town, the LDP has introduced a Masterplan requirement in order to establish a development framework and design parameters, in order to create a place which respects the setting of the planned town and Designed Landscape, and which seeks to create quality development which will contribute to Inveraray's unique character.

The masterplanning process has proceeded in two phases, initially by means of a Framework Document which established key principles and design aspirations, and latterly by a more detailed Masterplan Report addressing the likely balance of uses, layout, materials, phasing and so on. The production of the masterplan report has been via a collaborative process instigated by the Council, involving the estate owner and their agents, Historic Environment Scotland, Transport Scotland, Architecture + Design Scotland and other consultation bodies. The process has also involved consultation with local people, businesses and the Inveraray Community Council. A series of workshop sessions have been held throughout this process at which advantage has been taken of the design and placemaking skills of A + DS, within the constraints imposed by historic environment, access and infrastructure considerations. The purpose of this Masterplan has been to enable change to be managed in a manner which ensures that avoidable impacts are minimised and enhancements are provided at the appropriate time during the phasing of development. It facilitates a supply of development land over the long term, enabling the town to accommodate the new homes, jobs and the services which it requires.







The plan provides for a range of commercial uses focussed on the main car park in the town plus up to 180 dwellings, community uses and open space. The layout accords with principles advocated in 'Designing Streets' and seeks to utilise townscape as a means of creating a sense of place, rather than allowing vehicular access to determine built form. It identifies key frontages, gateways, views and focal points in order to highlight those sensitive locations where value may be added as detailed proposals for individual phases emerge.

By establishing individual character areas, parameters for height and density, and building design guidance, prospective future developers will be well equipped at an initial stage to comprehend what is expected of them and how their development should integrate within the overall vision for the Masterplan area.



Buildings and spaces

The masterplan has been developed over the last four years and will take some considerable time to complete, possibly requiring 15 – 20 years. The process has however recognised that it is important that it should not be an impediment to development which is already capable of implementation and which does not prejudice the aims of the Masterplan. To that end, 12 affordable homes and a small supermarket have already been permitted and completed, and a further phase of affordable housing is under consideration. These are enabling the delivery of some access and other infrastructure improvements, which will in turn improve prospects for the development of the remainder of the Masterplan area.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2017/may/inveraray-regeneration-takes-step-forward>



Inveraray from Dun Na Cuaiche





## Case Study 17: Dunbeg Masterplan Partnership

### Dunbeg Masterplan Partnership

As part of its “Lorn Arc” proposals to deliver strategic scale development in the Oban area, Argyll and Bute Council, working in close collaboration with other internal and external stakeholders, has recently endorsed a Masterplan for 605 dwellings and mixed commercial and business area on land between Ganavan and Dunbeg together with necessary roads infrastructure improvements.

Development of the Masterplan to the stage where it has obtained Council endorsement and has become a significant material planning consideration is the result of the setting up of a delivery framework involving the applicants, local councillors and external agencies to drive the project forward in a collaborative manner in accordance with agreed strategy objectives. Local members and a wide range of internal and external stakeholders sit on strategic and operational boards which have been set up to assist delivery of this development. These boards meet on a regular basis to provide both strategic overview and the opportunity for detailed discussions. This has enabled constructive engagement between all parties in moving the masterplan forward and should ensure a similarly collaborative approach to envisaged future planning applications.

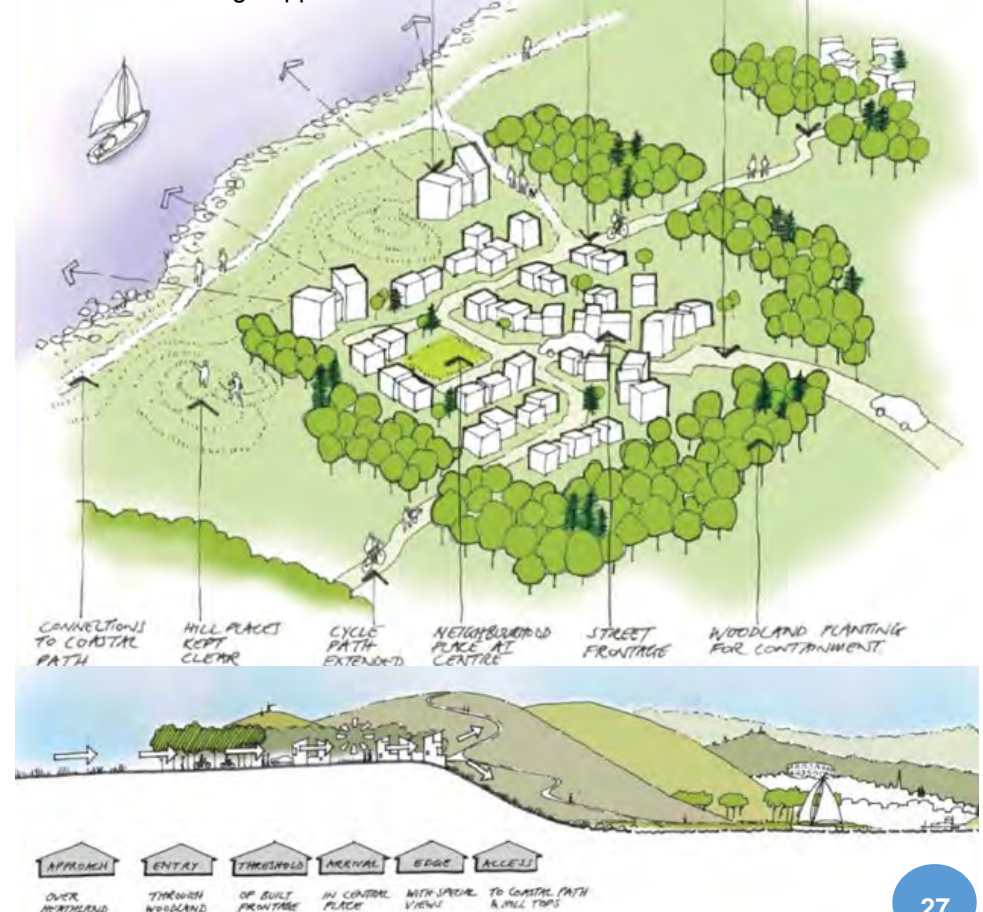
In addition, the partnership has engaged with Scottish Government and HIE with a view to potentially joint funding the up-front infrastructure which will be the key to unlocking this strategic development.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2017/may/major-masterplan-approved-dunbeg>

<https://linkhousing.org.uk/news-resources/latest-news/dunbeg-masterplan-of-600-affordable-homes-approved/>



Illustrations of design approach



Architecture + Design Scotland have noted and acknowledged this collaborative approach to the development delivery, commenting that they :  
*“...welcome the continued aspirations for the project. There appears to have been considerable development since the last workshop with respect to a step change in strategic engagement between Council and Project Team. We support them in developing their partnership approach towards achieving a quality development for this strategically important site that forms part of the Lorn Arc - a ‘gateway to the isles’.”*



## Case Study 18: Customer Focus & Engagement



User Forum in Oban

### Customer Focus & Engagement

The Planning team continue to actively encourage customer feedback and have an online survey on the website for any customers to rate the service they have received. We are rolling out more online customer surveys to dedicated sections of our online services and have continued to targeted applicants by sending out a customer feedback form alongside every decision notice, and as part of our LDP consultation exercise. Customer feedback through these channels is monitored at a departmental level every quarter.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/planning-and-building-standards-customer-satisfaction-questionnaire>

As well as our online and exit questionnaires we also hold focussed User Forums where the Managers of Planning Policy, Building Standards and Development Management meet our regular customers (mix of architects, agents, developers and landowners) to discuss topical issues and seek service improvements. Following User Forums in 2015/16 additional Focus Groups are going to be set up with key customers to review Planning Conditions.

Another series of 1 Day 'Planning ToolKit' workshops is planned for the autumn of 2017 and will replicate the successful user forums which have been held in previous years.

Community Councils have continued to receive presentations on how best to get involved in the Planning Process, with particular emphasis recently being how to make an effective representation to the Development Planning Process and training in how to use the Place Standard tool which has been used to collect pre-MIR input.

All Planning Staff have 'Customer Service' online training as part of their induction and professional development plan. We have recently monitored this and have 100% completion, but a strategy of refresh will be implemented.

### Customer Service Excellence

During the year, in line with and recognising the Council wide corporate objective to put customer service at the heart of everything we do, we have been doing work to prepare a submission for a Customer Service Excellence Standard accreditation. It is hoped that this will come to fruition during 2017/18.

Customer Service Excellence is recognised as being a practical tool for driving customer focussed change in organisations. The standard has particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude; there is also emphasis placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.

Customer Service Excellence is designed to operate on three distinct levels:

- As a driver of continuous improvement by allowing organisations to self-assess their capability.
- As a skills development tool by allowing individuals and teams within an organisation to explore and acquire new skills in the area of customer focus and customer engagement with the aim of building capacity for delivering improved services.
- As an independent validation of achievement by allowing organisations to seek formal accreditation to the Customer Excellence Standard, to demonstrate their competence, to identify key areas for improvement and celebrate their successes.

The Planning team and senior management believe that journey to achieving Customer Service Excellence will make a significant contribution to the continuous improvement of the planning service by ensuring that consideration of customer's needs remains in focus whilst seeking to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning service as a whole.

The project commenced in January 2017; the initial phase of the project consists of a period of self-assessment of existing service arrangements with a view to identifying any areas where improvements may be required in advance of seeking formal accreditation.

<http://www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com/>







## Case Study 19: Public Consultation on Revised Technical Guidance

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/advertisement\\_and\\_signage\\_policy\\_guidance\\_2016\\_v5\\_ppsl\\_version\\_with\\_addition\\_in\\_appendix\\_a.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/advertisement_and_signage_policy_guidance_2016_v5_ppsl_version_with_addition_in_appendix_a.pdf)

### Review of Advertisement Policy & Guidance

A review of current policy on advertisements and signage was undertaken in 2016/2017 with a view to preparing improved supplementary policy guidance that reflected on-going issues with both advance signage in particular hotspots and the proliferation of pavement signs (A boards) in many of our main settlements.

As a component part of the review draft policies on advertising and signage have been widely circulated to chambers of commerce, local BIDS groups, the tourism sector and Transport Scotland. Views submitted through these consultations have been considered and where appropriate incorporated within a revised and up-dated supplementary policy guidance on advertising and signage which clearly sets out the framework for obtaining consent for a wide variety and type of signage commonly required to support businesses.

In addition to a new supplementary guidance policy framework, the existing enforcement and monitoring charter 2015 has been revised and updated to reflect the new policy framework and seeks to clarify the protocol and expectations when planning enforcement officers investigate and pursue enforcement action on unauthorised advertisements and signs.

The Technical Working Note is currently subject to a final round of public consultation targeted at the business community, third sector and disability access groups seeking feedback with particular focus on A-boards, shop fronts, advance advertisements, and enforcement prioritisation. The consultation is in the form of an online questionnaire on the Council website but has also been issued directly to key stakeholders in the business community, third sector and access forums for maximum effect.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/consultations/advertising-and-signage-policy-consultation>

It is anticipated that following completion of public consultation and review of responses, a finalised version of the document will be considered for by the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee at their September meeting, and if approved would become a material planning consideration in the determination of applications.

### Advertising and Signage Policy Consultation

We are looking for your views on the new Advertising and Signage Policy.

The feedback on the draft will inform the final policy which the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing (PPSL) Committee will consider later in the year.

[Read or download the Advertisement and Signage Technical Working Notes 2017](#)

The consultation period closes on Friday 28th July 2017.

Your name

Q1. Do you think that the Advertisement and Signage Policy Technical Working Notes provide sufficient detail to understand what is or isn't acceptable in terms of various types of signage and advertising?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

Any further comments on Q1?

Q2. Do you agree that the proliferation of A-board type pavement signs in our towns is a cause for concern due to the potential for these boards to act as a threat to the free unobstructed movement of disabled and other pedestrians?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

Any further comments on Q2?

**Argyll and Bute Council**  
Fàilte gu Comhairle Earra-ghàidheal agus Bhòid

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- Planning and building standards
- Rubbish and recycling
- Schools, Education and learning
- Social care and health
- Sport, leisure and libraries
- Roads, Travel and Parking
- Community and voluntary sector

### Advertising and Signage Policy Consultation

Knowing whether or not an advertising sign needs permission – either planning or roads depending on the type of sign – can be confusing, which is why Argyll and Bute Council is creating a new policy which will simplify things.

Two different pieces of legislation govern what signs are and are not allowed – the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1992 and the Roads (Scotland) Act 1964. The council's new policy combines these key pieces of legislation and, within the limited scope for manoeuvre the law offers – establishes Argyll and Bute-specific guidance.

We are looking for your views on the draft policy.

The feedback on the draft will inform the final policy which the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing (PPSL) Committee will consider later in the year.

The consultation will run from 16th June to 28th July 2017.

[Read the draft Advertising and Signage Policy 2017](#)

#### How to give us your views on the policy

Online - use our [online comments form](#)

[Download a copy of the consultation questions](#)

Email - [ldp@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:ldp@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Post - written submissions should be sent to: **Argyll & Bute Council, Development Policy, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD.**

Consultation dates:  
16 Jun 2017 to 28 Jul 2017



## Case Study 20: Architecture & Design Helensburgh

*"A+DH owe a huge debt of gratitude to A&BC and A+DS for guiding us through our early months."*

The recent response to an application  
by Persimmon Homes

*"is largely based upon Argyll and Bute design Guidance and planning policies, and the Scottish Government's Place Standard Tool, but the tone of the response is very reliant on the professional assistance we have had from A&BC and from A+DS during our early months. We have come a long way since our inception last August"*

Kathleen Siddle, Architecture + Design  
Helensburgh

### Architecture + Design Helensburgh



In order to provide more detailed commentary and design input on larger planning applications within the Helensburgh Area, Helensburgh Community Council have formed a sub-

group called Architecture + Design Helensburgh (A+DH) with a specific role to evaluate the design and townscape value of applications. It is understood that A+DH are the first community led design panel in Scotland, and are one of the first groups to utilise the Place Standard Tool to assess planning applications. A+DH as an organisation has the following key objectives:

- To deliver consistent, objective and constructive advice to developers, design teams and planners as part of the continuing dialogue during the pre and post application process.
- To promote the benefits of producing development proposals with design excellence at their heart whilst imparting recommendations and advice in line with the Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance.



**Architecture+DesignScotland**  
Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

The Planning team has welcomed this additional local community stakeholder and has assisted A+DH in both forming their constitution and clarifying their relationship to the Helensburgh Community Council and working arrangements with Argyll and Bute Council.

Associated with this assistance being offered by the Council, officers have been recommending that developers engage with A+DH at the earliest possible opportunity in the application process, ideally at pre-application stage, in order to facilitate discussions. Persimmon Homes have taken this opportunity and have met with A+DH to discuss future housing proposals including making a presentation to them and attending a site visit with them:

Architecture + Design Scotland have also provided guidance to A+DH in order to assist them in defining their role and in the establishment of their own design panel.

Although such suggested meetings are not statutory, the Planning Authority has welcomed and promoted this new community organisation as an important local architecture and design group that can add value to development proposals encouraging high quality design solutions and focussing on a place making agenda for Helensburgh.

[http://www.helensburghadvertiser.co.uk/news/15108943.Helensburgh design experts spread their message on a national s](http://www.helensburghadvertiser.co.uk/news/15108943.Helensburgh%20design%20experts%20spread%20their%20message%20on%20a%20national%20stage)



Site visit Helensburgh





## Case Study 21: Integration of Planning & Community Planning

*“One of the key messages of the charrette was the need to work together. Given this approach I’m sure we can create a shared vision that will create even more opportunities for business, leisure and tourism that helps build a sustainable future for the area with the canal at its heart.”*

Fergus Murray, Head of Economic  
Development at  
Argyll and Bute Council

### Integration of Planning & Community Planning

The aim of aligning the Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement and the Local Development Plan is to improve communications, engagement and customer service through greater integration and working to shared objectives. It is envisaged that joint working will lead to a better alignment and delivery of policies and actions both internally within the Council and amongst the Community Planning Partners. As well as achieving greater synergies this approach is considered to be more resource efficient and should help reduce consultation fatigue.

#### Place Standard Tool

The use of the Place Standard Tool (PST) has been promoted by the Scottish Government and its partners as a framework to assess the quality of place. The Council was keen to utilise the tool as it was recognised that the consultation outcomes would be of benefit to the interrelated work of services including planning, economic development and community planning. Its use also dovetailed with work of Development Policy in evidence gathering for the Main Issues Report in order to act as the start of the discussions regarding a variety of spatial matters.

Development Policy liaised with Shetland Council to build on good practice advice and then worked closely with Community Planning and Economic Development to design and implement the launch of the PST consultation in March 2017. As part of the LDP2 pre-MIR consultations the PST was widely publicised via email, website and social media well as presentations to community councils. Alongside this, officers from Community Planning engaged directly with community groups to promote and demonstrate the tool. Approximately 500 responses were received and Community Planning officers are now analysing these in order to publish a summary report. Development Policy will be utilising the familiar PST ‘spider’ diagrams, amalgamated by geographic areas, to provide feedback through its own LDP2 webpages. The spatial elements of the results will be used to inform the preparation of the Main Issues Report set to be published in October 2017.

#### Charrettes

In PPF 5, we reported that community planning and engagement activities had been undertaken in the form of charrettes for Tiree and the Crinan Canal Corridor, an update on this activity is provided below.

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s108687/EDI\\_Charette\\_Update\\_2016.02.29v2.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s108687/EDI_Charette_Update_2016.02.29v2.pdf)



### The Tiree Charrette – Update

The Tiree Charrette, held in early 2016 was commissioned by the Tiree Community Development Trust working in partnership with the Council and HIE. Economic Development, Development Plans and Community Planning from the Council worked closely on this project throughout. Following the Charrette, Tiree Community Development Trust have been progressing the resulting key recommendation:



### Tiree Community Growth Plan 2017 – 2020

the concept of Team Tiree which looks to bring together some of the 50 voluntary organisations on the island, Tirisdich Còmhla – Tiree Together. Tiree Community Development Trust has also produced a draft Growth Plan. Key challenges include housing, sustainable tourism, crofting, food and drink, digital and transport. A number of projects which aim to address some of these challenges have been identified. The Council has continued to work with Tiree Community Development Trust during 2016/17 to inform their plans for the future.



Consultation Draft – May 2017

All responses or comments must be received by 9am on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017.



Isle of Tiree

### The Crinan Canal Corridor Charrette - Update

The Crinan Canal Corridor Charrette (based on Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig) was commissioned by Scottish Canals and Argyll and Bute Council and was held in April 2016 with feedback sessions following in June. The corridor was identified as a key opportunity for tourism, leisure and regeneration efforts with the aim of maximising economic outputs for the wider Mid Argyll area. The final report was prepared during summer 2016 and issued with an associated action plan.

<https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/news/re-think-the-link-crinan-corridor-charrette/>

Spatial elements will be brought forward into the LDP Action Programme with Economic Development and Community Planning working on the delivery aspects. The joint working between community planning, economic development and the development plan team has started an integrated approach to work, which is now being carried through to delivery. Quickly following on from the charrette, the Council continued to work with Scottish Canals on a bid for Regeneration Capital Grant Funding (RCGF) to kick start the redevelopment of the former Gleaner Oil Depot, a key site in Ardrishaig. £580,000 was awarded from RCGF and a planning application has now been submitted. It is hoped that work will commence on site in late 2017. Whilst this longer term proposal is being developed the site has been opened as a pop up art gallery (June and September 2016), offering another opportunity for people to engage with the charrette process. Further temporary uses are being discussed between Scottish Canals and the local community.



Bellanoch Basin, Crinan Canal and River Add

Separate to the charrette, Argyll and Bute Council announced the Tarbert and Lochgilphead Regeneration Fund, a £3 million fund to promote regeneration and economic development within the Mid Argyll area. This will be an important mechanism for delivering the substantial projects coming from the charrette. Seven projects from the charrette action plan are currently shortlisted as potential fund recipients.





## Case Study 22: Engagement with Connel Community Council

*"On behalf of Connel  
Community Council, and of  
course the residents of Connel  
who attended the meeting can I  
thank you for you and your  
staff's attendance last night.*

*We thought the meeting went  
well and we hope this draws a  
line under what has happened  
in the past. We both look  
forward to a positive working  
relationship between Connel  
and the Planning Service."*

Roger Ashforth - Secretary  
Connel Community Council



### Engagement with Connel Community Council

During the course of 2016/17 the Planning team has been engaged in dialogue with Connel Community Council in relation to a number of contentious planning decisions within the locality.



The Community Council had initially raised concern in respect of the outcome of specific planning applications and had queried whether the protocol of officers undertaking the assessment of those applications followed best practice.

The Planning team undertook a full review of the issues raised by the Community Council. Rather than simply addressing the direct issues of concern the Planning team have also made it a priority to rebuild working relationships with the Community Council.

A team of officers comprising representatives from both senior management and the local planning office attended a meeting of the Connel Community Council in early April 2017. Officers provided a presentation which covered the matters of concern previously expressed to the Council, offered an official apology where expected standards of service had not been delivered and identified actions for improvement in the form of staff training / updated protocols, and a plan for delivery and review of these elements. Officers also provided a presentation which was intended to give a general overview of the planning system, the responsibilities and activities of the Council as planning authority, provided an introduction to the local planning team, the role that community councils have to play and guidance on the submission of representations to planning applications. The meeting concluded with a question and answer session with officers that included input from Community Councillors, Ward Members and members of the public.

#### Desired Outcomes

- Restore Connel residents faith and trust in local planning system.
- Build effective relationships and communications between local planning services and Connel Community Council.
- Better understanding of the planning system / process and how we deliver it locally.
- Lessons learned – what improvements are we hoping to bring forward?

#### Improvement Plan

- Staff Training/Reflection on Issues
- Site Visit Records
- Risk Based Approach to Enforcement
- Liaison Group involving Planning Staff & Community Council

The commitment of officers to attend an evening meeting of the Community Council was well received and feedback from the Community Council, elected Members of the Council and members of the public who were present has generally been very positive.







# Part1: Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

## Governance

### Governance

#### Alignment of Staff Resources

The Planning Service is set up with the intention of providing efficient and customer focussed outcomes. Due to the geographic scale of Argyll and Bute, Planning Services operates a decentralised model for Development Management providing customers with the opportunity to directly engage with and build relationships with officers based in their nearest large town. Being immersed in the local community is also positive for officers in terms of their knowledge, learning, accountability and passion for the customers they serve. The majority of officers live within the communities that they plan for. There are however two centralised Development Management Teams – the Central Validation Team who are the gateway to the planning application process, and the Major Application Team who prioritise and handle economically significant and complex applications in the most efficient manner.

We aim to make decisions at the most appropriate level and use delegated powers to make the planning process as efficient as possible. During 2016/17 97.5% of decisions were made using delegated powers allowing Committee to focus their attention on the more significant, major and controversial applications.

Within the context of Argyll and Bute, a centralised Planning Committee (the Planning, Protective Services & Licensing Committee or PPSL) has a number of advantages over an Area Committee model including objectivity, delivery of training, consistency and cashable efficiencies. Planning training is offered to all elected Members but is mandatory for those sitting on the PPSL; **Case Study 26** provides details of ongoing training offered to Members that is organised and delivered by the Planning Team.

Planning Policy staff are dispersed throughout Argyll and Bute working in the most efficient manner to suit their lifestyles as well as being close to the communities that they plan for. All professional staff are issued with laptops and all Planning Services systems can be accessed via a wifi connection either at home, office 'hotdesk' or other private network.

Given the large scale geography of Argyll and Bute and the dispersed nature of area based teams it is recognised that there is a requirement to facilitate team working relationships and inclusion of staff across the wider area. **Case Study 25** provides details of the Planning Team's Annual Planning Conference, an event which offers a chance for all Development Management and Planning Policy staff to meet and take part in workshop sessions.

Service performance is monitored at both Area Committee level and by Senior Management as is highlighted in **Case Study 31**.

#### Team Working and Management Tools

The Planning Policy Team meets on a fortnightly basis. The Development Management Team Leaders meet on a quarterly basis to discuss strategic and operational matters, and to review performance. The Development Management Team Leaders hold weekly team meetings and case reviews with their staff to manage workload, performance and operational issues. Officer workload is monitored through a variety of performance management reports generated from our back office Uniform system; Earliest Determination Reports and Applications on Hand Reports allow officers to focus efforts on identifying priorities within their caseload and determining applications as quickly as possible. **Case Study 27** provides an example where better use of our systems has been pursued to deliver efficiency savings and improve the effectiveness of the service. **Case Study 24** provides an overview of project work which is intended to review and deliver improvements across the whole Development Management process in the handling of applications from pre-application through to determination. A quarterly update of Legacy files is provided to the Development Manager to set targets for teams to clear legacy items; outstanding S75's are also reviewed on a regular basis and items where progress has stalled are challenged with the option to refuse permission where a timely outcome is no longer possible.

The Planning Service forms part of Planning & Regulatory Services that also consists of Building Standards, Trading Standards and Environmental Health. We share Health & Safety, IT, HR and other similar practices and procedures. The service in its current form has been operational since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 and is part of the Development & Infrastructure Services Department. The Planning Service has close working relationships within the Department, one example of effective and efficient internal working arrangements is provided in **Case Study 29** which looks at the role of the multi-disciplinary Area Property Action Groups. Departmental performance is reported on a quarterly basis to the Executive Director by service managers. The Head of Planning & Regulatory Services, who is a chartered town planner, convenes quarterly meetings with service managers and other key members of staff to discuss management issues.

## Council Budget

2016/17 has proven to be year of consolidation where Planning Services have sought to maintain performance levels following reduction in staffing levels during 2015/16 with reductions in Enforcement Officers, Validation Technical staff, Technical Staff, IT software / support and resilience. Budget pressures will continue to reshape the delivery of the planning service as it is currently indicated that Planning Services may require to reduce its budget by up to 50% over the three year period from 2018 to 2021. Looking forward it is expected that budget savings will be delivered by rationalisation and reduction of service delivery, seeking to increase income from both statutory fees and non-statutory charges, and delivering efficiency savings to current processes and procedures which will reduce costs and free up officer time.

## Forming Partnerships and Learning

Effective governance also entails forming productive partnerships that deliver outcomes for the component organisations. Planning Services meet regularly or have/are involved in partnerships with:

Argyll Building Federation	E-Planning and Uniform User Group
Heads of Planning Scotland	Trevor Roberts Associates
SEPA, SNH, Transport Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, Crofting Commission	Highlands & Islands Buying Framework
West of Scotland Archaeology Service	Energy & Resources Committee (HoPS)
Large Rural Authority Benchmarking Club	Strategic Housing Forum (A&B)
User Forum – Local Architects & Agents	North of Scotland Development Plans Forum
Improvement Service	Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum
Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation	Argyll Land and Estates
Scottish Planning Enforcement Forum	Scottish Local Authorities Aquaculture Forum
Ministry of Defence / Royal Navy	Scottish Enterprise / Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Clyde Marine Planning Partnership	Machrihanish Airbase Community Company

**Case Study 28** provides details of the Strategic Delivery & Development Framework providing a basis for joint-working arrangements between the Council, Royal Navy, Ministry of Defence, Scottish Enterprise and other Community Planning Partners. **Case Study 30** provides an overview of Planning Services involvement in an international project studying the effect of climate change upon the historic environment.

Internal Council groups have also been established to look into the following issues:

Issue / Name of Group	Council Services Involved
Aligning Consent	Planning, Roads
Area Property Action Group (APAG) – 4 Working Groups across ABC	Empty Homes Officer, Planning, Building Standards, Environmental Health, Private Sector Housing Officer, Council Tax, CARS/THI Officer.
Flood Risk Management Group	Roads, Planning, Property Services
Economic Development Officers Group	Economic Development, Roads, Planning

## Shared Services

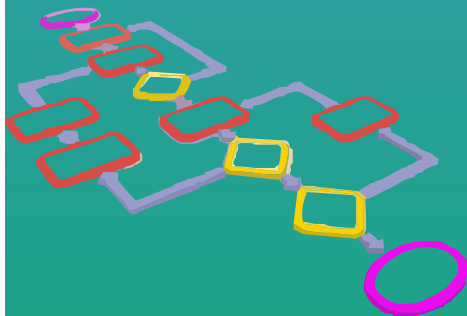
The Council is a member of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS) which is a local authority shared service delivering curatorial advice to 10 Council's and a National Park Authority in the West and Central Scotland. The team maintain the Historic Environment Record (HER) for each member authority, and make information from it freely available to the public online. The service supports member authorities in the discharge of their responsibilities for the historic environment, which largely arise through the planning system. In addition to responding to the planning service's consultations, WoSAS further facilitates sustainable development by providing information and advice to other Council departments and to developers and their agents. The service liaises with national agencies on heritage matters, and participates on behalf of their member authorities in various working groups such as the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site working group, the National Park Historic Environment Working Group, the Scottish SMR Forum and the Regional Archaeological Research Framework for Argyll Working Group.

During the course of 2016/17 the Planning Team have explored opportunities to commercialise its activities with the Development Management team trialing a support service contract for Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park to deliver planning services within the Cowal geographic area. A GIS liaison group has also been set up with the National Park to discuss potential new ways of working. Discussions on opportunities for shared services have been initiated and remain ongoing with the Western Isles and Highland Councils.





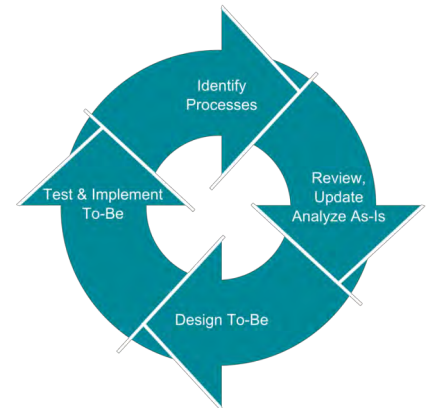
# Case Study 24: Development Management Business Process Re-Engineering Project



## Development Management Business Process Re-Engineering Project

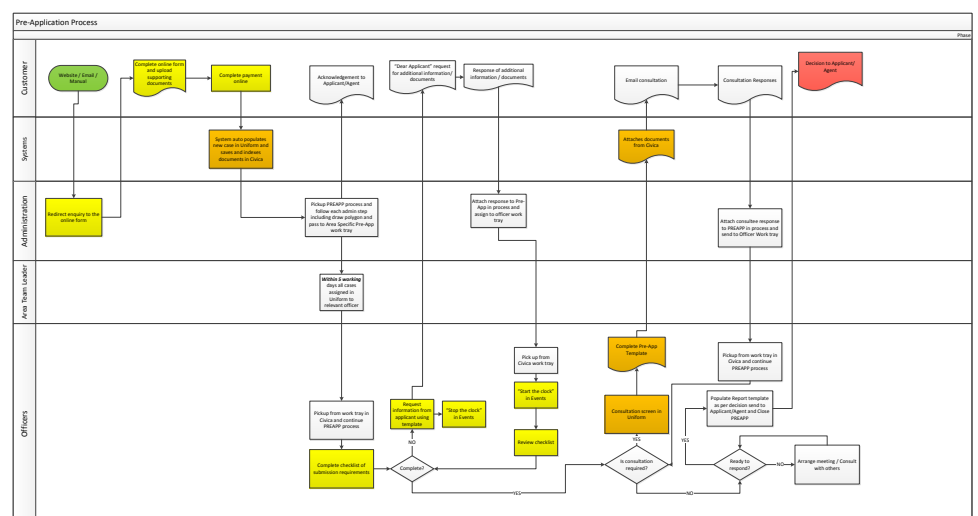
The Development Management team have undertaken the planning and initiation of a project which aims to re-engineer existing internal processes associated with the handling of planning applications and pre-application enquiries in order to bring about efficiencies and reduced costs in the delivery of these services.

The project will seek to examine and challenge all of the processes which are currently in place to facilitate the handling, assessment of planning applications from their inception as a pre-application enquiry, receipt of a formal application all the way through to the issue of a formal decision. The project will aim to stop workarounds and realise the benefits of the various system upgrades which have taken place over recent years. It is hoped that by process mapping and clearly documenting all new procedures, user knowledge and understanding of their system platform will be enhanced. Implementation of the project is expected to release additional work capacity within the existing workforce allowing scope to look at future years' work force planning, resilience of service delivery and succession planning. The streamlining of existing processes and introduction and increased usage of new online working practices where appropriate is intended to reduce duplication of effort and staff handling time, and to remove any unnecessary printing and postage costs. A further aspiration of the project is to provide real time Management Information to assist line managers in the distribution of work and monitoring of performance.



Business Process Reengineering Cycle

The project plan which has been drawn up breaks the workflow processes for handling pre-application enquiries and planning applications down into discrete work packages for completion in a linear manner. Each stage of the application handling process will be looked at in turn within a Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR) Workshop bringing together all stakeholders to review existing processes, identify the need for change and develop their own solutions within a focussed environment. Initial work has concentrated on freeing up the additional staff resources required for delivery of the project; however the series of three BPR workshops which have been held to date have proven to be a successful forum for developing solutions which are effective and generally supported by staff given the involvement of their colleagues in the process. Each BPR workshop has been led by a trained advisor and includes representation from Planning Officers, Business Support Staff, Technical Support Staff, IT, Comms, and the DM management team.



The project commenced in September 2016 and is timetabled to be completed along with any workflow improvements by March 2018.



## Case Study 25: Annual Planning Conference

### Annual Planning Conference

Whilst elements of the planning service regularly meet as teams, and the use of remote working utilising IT has become a normal part of day to day working activities, the wide geographical spread of the Council's planning and other services, combined with relatively slow and long journey times does reduce the opportunities for face to face contact at service wide level.

To attempt to counter this, a regular programme of service wide meetings has been initiated, which involve a 6 monthly service wide meeting of team leaders, and an annual staff planning conference. The aim of both these is to assist staff to engage in collaborative working across a range of topics and an exchange of knowledge and ideas in both a formal organised fashion, and equally and informal setting before and after workshop sessions.

We held a service wide planning conference in March 2017 which was attended by all planning staff and invitees from other services. A wide range of topics were on the agenda including:



Placemaking in Helensburgh, demonstrating how the Council's activities, particularly through development of Helensburgh Civic Centre, town centre street fabric improvements, and Colquhoun Square redevelopment and outdoor museum have transformed the experience of town centre users. Workshop on exploring potential new approaches to development in the countryside and settlement strategy within the forthcoming LDP2

Collaborative working with development management staff to produce mini-development briefs for all Housing Allocations within the current LDP. Training on the planning services' new Supplementary Guidance for Area Capacity Evaluations which is a form of landscape and visual impact assessment to be carried out in certain circumstances for development within the countryside.

An overview of the Marine & Coastal Planning section, the Marine planning framework, Marine Protected Area Network, Priority Marine Features and forthcoming Regional Marine Planning, and Scottish Coastal Changes Assessment  
Demonstration of latest GIS capabilities including Story Map and ESRI Collector app allowing instant geo-tagged photographic uploading.



The conference was held over a whole day with time for informal breakout over coffee and lunch. The result was very enthusiastic and valuable engagement and knowledge sharing within the formal workshop sessions, a number of collaborative work-streams flowing from the day, and just as importantly a better sense of social cohesion amongst the staff as a service group, some of whom have very few opportunities to meet their colleagues face to face. Feedback from the staff has been positive and the events will now be scheduled as a regular occurrence.





## Case Study 26: Member Training

### 2017/18 Training Programme

- Planning Induction
- LDP 2 Main Issues Report
- Public Access Training
- Independent Review of Planning
- Roads Design & Development
- Local Review Bodies
- Flooding
- Wind Energy Capacity Study
- Historic environment
- Inveraray CARS Site Visit

### Member Training

Over the past four years the planning service has delivered a series of short training events for the Members of the Planning, Protective Services and Licencing Committee.

These are normally undertaken in bite size sessions in the hour prior to the commencement of the committee but have also included half day workshops and visits to sites of interest such as the award winning Helensburgh CHORD regenerations scheme.

These training events are generally undertaken by officers so that costs are kept to a minimum.

The training programme for the 2017/18 session, following the Council elections in May, will include a wide range of topic and will culminate in a study visit to the Inveraray Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS).



These events have been well received by Members and ensure that the committee is well informed in topical issues in planning. The events are also open to all Members of the committee should they wish to attend.

Keeping Members up to date and improving the breadth and depth of knowledge on planning procedure and issues most relevant to the types of development proposals being considered at committee undoubtedly supports efficient and effective decision making within the Council's Planning, Protective Services and Licencing Committee.

### Clock Stopping Process

The Planning team make quarterly submissions to the Scottish Government providing details of their performance in the determination of planning applications. Included within this submission is the requirement to identify any application which has been subject to 'clock stopping', the number of times the clock has been stopped, the dates, number of days and reason for each clock stop.

Up until 2015/16, this information was collated manually at the end of every quarter by identifying applications which had taken longer than 100 days to determine and requiring that Area Team Leaders review these cases, provide details and evidence from the file to demonstrate any periods where the clock had been stopped which met with the Scottish Government's guidance and submit these details to the Systems Technician to manually calculate and include within the quarterly returns. This process was recognised as being an inefficient use of staff resource and in response the Systems Technician has introduced a new protocol where officers are required to record all clock stopping instances in the Uniform back office system. The new protocol was rolled out with staff training during FQ1 2015/16 and clock stopping input for the quarterly returns is now identified by a simple system query and has result in a noticeable saving of professional and technical staff

resource. The new protocol has proven to be effective as well as efficient with only one clock stopping instance subject to query in the last (2015/16 FQ 4) submission.

IDOX have since noted the requirement to provide clock stopping details and have introduced a similar procedure for 2017/18 returns.



## Case Study 27: Clock Stopping Process



## Case Study 28: MoD Strategic Development Framework

### MoD Strategic Development Framework

2016 saw the UK Government commit to significant investment in HMNB Clyde in order to develop it, between 2018 and 2032, as the UK's single submarine base. This will involve the relocation of 1400 military personnel to HMNB Clyde bringing the compliment of military staff to 4,800 by 2020 and an associated increase in civilian support and construction staff.

At the same time during 2016, extensive discussions have occurred between the Royal Navy, MoD, Argyll and Bute Council, Scottish Enterprise and other Community Planning Partners in order to establish strong and meaningful lines of communication between all parties going forward, such that collective planning and management of the changes to come can be delivered to best effect.

In Feb 2017, the Secretary of State for Scotland (endorsed by SoFS Defence) along with the Naval Base Commander and the CEO of Argyll & Bute Council signed the Strategic Delivery and Development Framework (SDDF), a joint agreement authorising direct working-level cooperation across the two branches of Government and also OGD, Third Sector and the Private Sector. The SDDF agreed a simple mission statement to: "Provide the framework for an enduring and mutually supportive relationship between HM Naval Base Clyde and Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership to achieve maximum benefit for the Base and the wider community of Argyll and Bute."



A board meeting at senior level will be held twice a year, and subsidiary senior management team meetings will also be held twice a year prior to the board meetings. A number of work-streams have already flowed from this including accommodation & housing, economic development, infrastructure & transport, education, an economic forum with local business users, and joint working on the delivery of a new swimming pool complex in Helensburgh. This approach has been noted as a model for cooperation between MOD establishments and Local Government and is being explored in other locations throughout the UK.

Amongst early output from this and following extensive and productive pre-application discussions the planning service is currently processing a planning application for a submarine training facility which will train submarine crew members and personnel in the appropriate emergency procedures for escape, rescue, abandonment and survival.

The proposed development is a three storey building with a gross floor area of 3558 square metres. The specific components comprise the following elements:

- Abandonment and sea survival training;
- Meeting Rooms;
- Storage Rooms;
- Classrooms;
- Plant Rooms and Toilet / shower areas.







## Case Study 29: Area Property Action Groups

### Area Property Action Groups

To enable a more co-ordinated approach to addressing concerns regarding unsafe/problematic buildings within the 4 administrative areas of Argyll and Bute Council, Area Property Action Groups (APAG) have been established. These groups consist of Officers from Housing Services, Building Standards, Planning, Landlord Registration, Environmental Health and Development Officers.

The aims of the partnership meetings associated with APAG are to identify 'problematic buildings' and to develop a pro-active, co-ordinated and strategic approach for practical and effective Council intervention across services. This method provides an opportunity for Officers to address the relevant issues associated with a variety of buildings and to identify the most effective/appropriate tools and service to liaise with owners/responsible parties.

Whilst there are many statutory powers available that Services can utilise to encourage owners to take action to bring properties up to an acceptable standard, this type of action can result in high costs to the Local Authority with limited scope for recuperation. By linking the different powers and tools available to each service, Officers can now take a more targeted and joined up approach to addressing the particular problems associated with each building that have been highlighted by colleagues, elected members, and/or our customers.

The APAGs have resulted in more pro-active Officer involvement in cases involving problematic buildings. There has been improved communication and sharing of information together with increased knowledge of the statutory duties and powers/resources available to the Local Authority resulting in greater synergy between each service area. The network/action group is creative in promoting pro-active, out of the box thinking and breaking down entrenched solo thinking and systematic barriers that historically evolved between individual services, functions and staff.

The Bute and Cowal APAG has had to contend with a considerable number of problematic buildings, the majority of which are in Rothesay given the abundance of old and historic buildings that have suffered from a lack of maintenance over many years. A good example of a success story relates to the upper floor of 1 Bishop Street, which had lain vacant for a number of years and was on the Buildings at Risk Register. This was one of the problematic buildings identified by the APAG and it was subsequently renovated through funding associated with the Rothesay Townscape Heritage Initiative.



1 Bishop Street  
before refurbishment



1 Bishop Street after refurbishment



## Case Study 30: Adapting the Historic Environment to Climate Change

### Adapting the Historic Environment to Climate Change

Argyll and Bute Council is participating in a three year programme, running between 2017 and 2020, in relation to the sustainable adaption of historic places. Historic Environment Scotland is one of the lead partners on the project, along with Riksantikvaren in Norway. The project is being funded by Interreg NPA, with additional funding provided by the European Regional Development Fund, giving a total budget of €993,000 for the programme.

<http://www.interreg-npa.eu/projects/funded-projects/project/177/>

The project covers the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and selected regions of Finland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Norway, Scotland and Sweden.

The priority is to protect, develop and promote natural and cultural heritage, through processes that are proportionate and effective. The project aim is to assist with achieving sustainable heritage management that actively takes climate change into account.

An online tool will be developed to assess the risks and vulnerabilities of historic places and provide guidance for the planning of strategic adaption measures. The tool will be developed and tested through nine case studies, including one in Argyll and Bute. The hope is that this will lead to the implementation of better management practices in a manner which will mitigate the potential effects of climate change.



Northern Periphery and  
Arctic Programme  
2014-2020

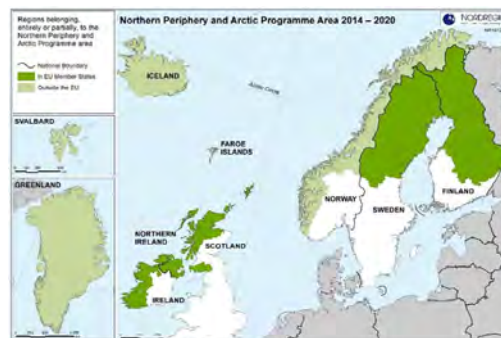


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Directorate for  
Cultural Heritage



### Performance Monitoring by Area Committees & Senior Management

Elected Members of all the 4 Area Committees (Helensburgh and Lomond, Bute and Cowal, Oban, Lorn and the Isles and Mid Argyll) monitor performance of the Planning Services explicitly by including Development Management indicators on their Area Based Scorecards.

Members are able to choose the indicators which are reported and these will vary by Area Committee depending on the local priorities of that group. The ' % of pre-applications responded to within 20 working days' and the ' % of applications determined within statutory timescale' indicators are reported quarterly to the Area Committees and if targets are not met for that geographic area then Planning Officers are asked to attend Committee and explain why targets have not been attained. This makes Area Team Leaders accountable for their team's performance directly to their Members.

Economy	Target	Helensburgh & Lomond	Council
H&L Business Gateway Customer satisfaction	85.0 %	85.0 %	
CC3 Affordable social sector new builds - H&L	0	0	34
% of Pre-App Enquiries Processed in 20 working days in H&L	75.0 %	92.3 %	72.4 %
All Local Planning Apps: Ave no of Weeks to Determine - H&L	12.0 Wks	6.7 Wks	9.3 Wks
Householder Planning Apps: Ave no of Weeks to Determine - H&L	8.0 Wks	5.4 Wks	5.4 Wks
No. of Householder Planning Apps determined in H&L		21	102
No. of Local (excl WK) Planning Apps determined - H&L		14	166
No. of Other Planning Apps determined in H&L		12	84

Corporate performance is also explained quarterly to the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure with a service report card which requires to be accompanied by a quarterly report providing commentary where performance targets have not been met, update on budget management, identifying team successes during the reporting period, and identifying challenges, action points and improvement actions for the period ahead. During 2016/17 the Council has sought to identify Business Outcome Performance Indicators (BOPIs) which link directly to Service Plan and SOA outcomes in order to provide a more qualitative indicator of delivering on Service Success Measures.



## Case Study 31: Performance Monitoring by Area Committees & Senior Management





## Part 1: Defining and measuring a High Quality Planning Service

## Culture of Continuous Improvement

### Culture of Continuous Improvement

#### Service Improvement Actions

A number of Improvement Actions from last year's PPF have been completed such as the production of co-ordinated LDP / Economic Development action programmes / plans (**Case Study 36**) and preparation of two new conservation area appraisals (**Case Study 39**).

Other actions remain ongoing and are referred to in **Part 3**.

#### Investing in Staff & Elected Members

In addition to the Service Improvements identified in the PPF the Planning Service also have internal Service and Team Improvement Plans that are monitored at a departmental level. Every member of staff is required to complete an annual Performance Review and Development (PRD) plan which identifies an annual training programme at an individual level, this information is collated to assist with co-ordination and delivery of training requirements across the service. The Council delivers training in a variety of ways including internal workshops, peer learning, online learning and through the use of external training partners. In 2016/17 we utilised the services of the Improvement Service, Trevor Roberts Associates (TRA) and SNH's Sharing Good Practice to deliver training on a number of relevant topics including Planning Enforcement, Hazardous Substances Consents, Management Skills, and Permitted Development Rights. The Planning Team recognise that sharing knowledge and experience of good practice and technical expertise is a key component in developing staff – in this respect **Case Study 33** highlights the involvement of members of the Planning Team in sharing their professional experience with other organisations during the course of 2016/17.

The Council also operates a monthly series of Elected Member Training Sessions which are aligned with monthly planning committee meetings. The development programme is devised by officers and agreed members at the beginning of each year. Topics covered during 2016/17 included a site visit to look at implementation of public realm improvement works and an affordable housing project, new Supplementary Guidance, Call for Sites Process, Local Review Bodies, and Cumulative Assessment of Onshore Wind Turbines. **Case Study 26** provides detail of the training programme agreed for 2017/18.

#### Marine Planning, Renewables & Biodiversity

As reported in last year's PPF, Argyll and Bute has huge potential assets relating to biodiversity and the marine environment. **Case Studies 32, 34 & 35** provide updates on Marine Planning activity during the past year, the review and updating of the 'Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study', and of the adoption of a new Biodiversity Technical Note for Planners & Developers and associated training activity.

#### Developer Contributions

**Case Study 36** provides an update on work being undertaken across the Council in relation to reviewing our approach to developer contributions in relation to the ongoing preparation of the next LDP.

#### Piloting New Ways of Working

The Planning Team are known for being innovative and being at the forefront in the use of new technology. **Case Study 37** provides some insight into the use of mapping tools and mobile devices to pilot new ways of working in the field. **Case Study 38** highlights the Access Team's use of interactive mapping to encourage access to the outdoors. **Case Study 40** provides details of the work that the Planning Team are undertaking as part of the pilot for Simplified Planning Zones which will assist with the ongoing review of the Scottish Planning System.

#### Managing the Historic Built Environment

**Case Study 39** provides a synopsis of the Dunoon Conservation Area review and proposals to extend the designation.



## Case Study 32: Regional Marine Planning

### Regional Marine Planning

Given the coastal nature of Argyll and Bute and the significant importance of the coastal environment and coastal industries and activities it supports, the Council recognises the importance of a marine planning framework which integrates effectively with and complements the terrestrial planning system.



The Clyde and Shetland Marine Regions have been identified by Scottish Government as the first to start the development of statutory regional marine plans. With almost 70% of the coastline in the Clyde Marine Region, Argyll and Bute Council is a key Member of the newly formed Clyde Marine Planning Partnership (CMPP) and is actively focused on ensuring this new marine plan integrates with and is consistent with our Local Development Plan and Council priorities. There are of course a further eight planning authorities with an interest in the Clyde Marine Region, and it is hoped that closer working between these authorities within a shared vision for the Clyde region, will result in a stronger and more integrated effort to sustainably grow the economy.

<http://www.clydemarineplan.scot/marine-planning/>

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/marine-and-coastal-development)

[and-environment/marine-and-coastal-development](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/marine-and-coastal-development)

With an increased focus on opportunities for maritime industries to contribute to economic growth and tackle population decline it is extremely important that the various work streams of the CMPP integrate with and are influenced by the work of all relevant Council departments and partner organisations. Considerable effort is therefore being made to raise awareness of marine planning amongst elected members and relevant Council departments to ensure we utilise the wide range of knowledge and experience across the Council and maximise the benefits of our engagement in the marine planning process. This has included setting up a shared online location for documents, a Council officers group, in-house training events for elected members and Council officers and the reporting of progress to our Community Planning Partnership.

The Council's involvement in marine planning is led by two Development Policy officers with marine and coastal expertise. The field of marine planning is constantly evolving and to keep up with change these officers undertake a programme of training and continuous improvement through attending specialist workshops, conferences, Marine Spatial Planning Practitioners Group meetings, representing local authorities on the Scottish Coastal Forum, and involvement in European marine planning projects such as Aquaspace and the Marine Ecosystems Research Programme (MERP).

The Marine (Scotland) Act places a duty on planning authorities to take account of marine plans when developing LDPs and likewise Marine Planning Partnerships must take account of terrestrial plans. Marine and terrestrial planning authorities will therefore be required to formally consult each other in the preparation of their plan and collaborate closely throughout the planning process to ensure consistency. This includes mutual support for specific development proposals in marine and terrestrial plans which affect each other. In progressing our next LDP and a regional marine plan for the Clyde, the planning service is working closely with Marine Scotland as a key agency and the CMPP to explore opportunities for integration, including the potential to align the timing of the stages of plan development, sharing of information to inform economic and environmental baselines, and consideration of main issues and planning policy.



Tarbert Harbour





## Case Study 33: Sharing Professional Experience

### Sharing Professional Experience

Despite being a rural area, Argyll and Bute is presented with applications for specialist forms of development demanding particular expertise and thorough understanding of those considerations influencing the outcome of applications. This is notably the case with aquaculture and with renewable energy which are particularly specialist topics within planning. The Council's professional knowledge base accrued over the years affords opportunities to share experience with other practitioners, and also to benefit the interface between particular sectors and the planning system. Recent examples of the manner in which professional experience is being shared include:

#### Re-powering Windfarms

The Council has consented the redevelopment of a first generation wind farm at Tangy in Kintyre, with the intention of introducing larger and more efficient turbines capable of significantly increasing the generating capacity of the site. This was the first permission given for the re-powering of an operational commercial scale wind farm in Scotland. Subsequently the Council presented in Perth at an SNH convened 'Sharing Good Practice' event on Wind Farm Repowering and assisted in the running of workshops held as part of that event. This training event attracted representation from other planning authorities, the renewables industry and landscape and other consultancy interests, and was a valuable opportunity for the Council to explain those additional issues presented by the decommissioning and re-equipment of operational wind farm sites.



[http://www.snh.gov.uk/policy-and-guidance/sharing-good-practice/presentations/document/?category\\_code=SGP&topic\\_id=1710](http://www.snh.gov.uk/policy-and-guidance/sharing-good-practice/presentations/document/?category_code=SGP&topic_id=1710)

#### Visual Representation of Aquaculture in the Landscape

The Council has been proactive in encouraging SNH to produce guidance for the visual representation of aquaculture development in the landscape, having given a commitment to the Scottish Salmon Producer's Organisation to seek to secure such guidance to help improve the quality of application submissions from this sector. Having prompted the production of this guidance, the Council has contributed to the consultation draft and has presented in Inverness at the launch event for the guidance, attended by the aquaculture sector, other local authorities with aquaculture responsibilities and landscape professionals. The guidance has been the subject of further consultation following this event and is now at finalised draft stage.

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A2217961.pdf>

#### The Irish Independent Aquaculture Licensing Review Group

The Council has contributed to the work of the Irish Independent Aquaculture Licensing Review Group, a body convened to make recommendations on the manner in which the aquaculture consenting process in the Republic of Ireland could be improved in the light of experience in other countries with fish farming experience. The Council was put forward to the Review Group by Marine Scotland as being well placed to present a representative local authority perspective on the advantages and shortcomings of the regulation of fish farms in Scotland. Council officers with aquaculture expertise were interviewed by members of the Review Group, which afforded opportunity for an exchange of experience and discussion on the relative merits of aquaculture consenting in both Ireland and Scotland.

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/seafood/aquacultureforeshoremanagement/aquaculturelicensing/aquaculturelicensereview/ReviewoftheAquacultureLicensingProcess210617.pdf>

Scottish Natural Heritage

### Visualisations for aquaculture

Guidance note



Department of  
**Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine**  
An Roinn  
**Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara**



## Case Study 34: Cumulative Landscape & Visual Assessment of Wind Energy

*“Argyll and Bute's abundance of wind, water and wave energy, and the energy potentially generated by biomass, present key sustainable economic opportunities, which if harnessed and managed correctly can offset many of the problems faced by our peripheral and fragile locations.”*

*“Argyll and Bute has a distinguished track record of pioneering and delivering renewable energy developments, including the first large scale Scottish windfarm, a pioneering approach to Community Windfarm Trust Funds, and proposals to develop the world's first tidal power array demonstration project in the Sound of Islay.”*

Argyll and Bute Council website

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/renewable-energy>

### Cumulative Landscape & Visual Assessment of Wind Energy

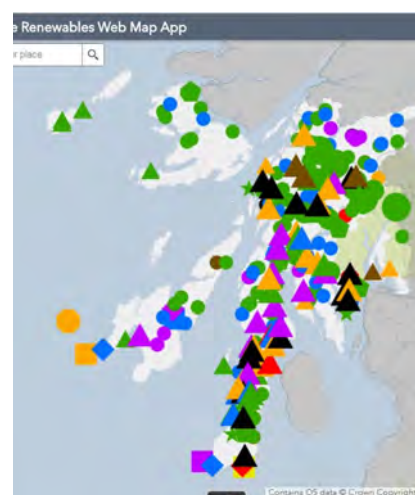
Scottish Natural Heritage and Argyll and Bute Council have jointly commissioned an update to the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study 2012. The updated study covers the whole of the Argyll and Bute area (with the exception of the National Park) and will also replace the Cumulative Studies which were done for the Loch Awe and Kintyre areas which were commissioned as part of a funding package from Scottish Government to help Councils respond to renewable energy developments in 2013/14. The updated study responds to changes in baseline conditions and to reflect current planning policy and guidance.

The study provides:

- A detailed landscape and visual sensitivity assessment for wind turbine/wind farm developments based on landscape character types defined in the SNH Landscape Character Assessment for Argyll and the Firth of Clyde.
- Recommendations as to what size of wind energy development would be appropriate, in landscape and visual terms, within the different landscape character types considered in the study.
- Guidance on which areas are unsuitable in landscape terms for wind energy development.
- Consideration of scope for very large turbines up to around 200m high and for repowering of operational wind farms.
- Information on potential cumulative landscape and visual impacts, identifying where cumulative thresholds for development have been/are close to being reached.
- Siting and design guidance for landscape character types identified as having some potential for development and for smaller turbines <50m high.

Argyll and Bute Council aim to promote the full range of renewable energy resources in our area, in a manner that promotes sustainable economic development and recognises the need for co-existence with other economic activities, our environment, and our communities. To achieve this we are developing partnerships with renewable energy companies to maximise the benefits for our communities.

The online [interactive renewables map](#) allows you to access up to date information on renewable energy developments throughout Argyll and Bute and highlights our track record of innovation and commitment to this sector.







## Case Study 35: Biodiversity Technical Note for Planners and Developers

During 2016/17 the Council's Local Biodiversity Officer produced and published "A Biodiversity Technical Note for Planners and Developers" which is intended to provide guidance on biodiversity considerations to officers, developers and house-holders thinking about new builds, renovations or extensions.

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/biodiversity\\_technical\\_note\\_feb\\_2017\\_4.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/biodiversity_technical_note_feb_2017_4.pdf)

### Biodiversity Technical Note for Planners & Developers

The Biodiversity Technical Note was approved by the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee and published in February 2017 alongside staff training workshops for members of the Planning team. Each of the four area teams- Mid-Argyll, Oban, Lorn and the Isles, Cowal and Bute and Helensburgh and Lomond were given training by the Local Biodiversity Officer on how to use the Technical Note with advice on its promotion to developers through the use of the Biodiversity Check list, Invasive Non-Native Species checklist and Management allied with additional information that will assist with shaping a wide range of development types.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2017/mar/new-biodiversity-technical-note-planners-and-developers>



The Biodiversity Technical Note provides an insight into the European, National and the Local biodiversity and includes the legal implications with supporting information on incorporating biodiversity objectives into a development. One of the key elements of this document is the Biodiversity Checklist and the Checklist for Invasive Non-Native Species which is an initial field guide to aid the basic assessment of a proposed site and to provide a steer on what opportunities there are to protect and enhance biodiversity and what needs further survey work to inform the process and type of development.

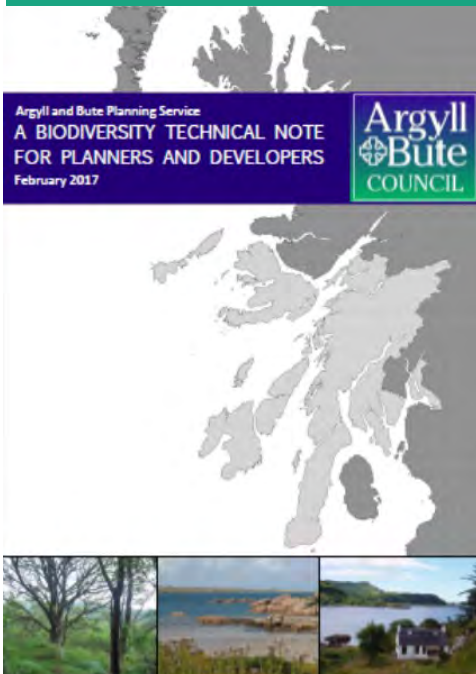
The Technical Note reflects the Local Development Plan SG LDP 3 ENV 1 policy, the legislation for the protection and integration of European1, National2 and Local habitats and species into planning in and around areas for development. This will assist in the promotion of biodiversity as a consideration for all proposals, plans and policies which is one of the key objectives of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy as well as an indicator of sustainable development.



The Biodiversity Technical Note provides a step by step guide that will assist with the shaping of developments and ensuring that biodiversity is considered and factored at the earliest stages in proposals. A key element of this is encouraging prospective developers to utilise the Council's pre-application process by outlining the benefits in seeking advice before making an application:

- It gives developers the opportunity to understand how policies and guidance will be applied to their development,
- It can identify at an early stage where there is a need for specialist input, for example biodiversity (priority habitats and species), ecology, landscape planning etc.
- It may lead to a reduction in time spent by developer's professional advisors in working up proposals, identifying potential problems and sorting them out before an application is submitted
- It may indicate that a proposal is completely unacceptable, saving developers the cost of pursuing a formal application
- It will ensure that developers provide all the necessary information and drawings to enable the application to be registered as validated.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/biodiversity>





## Case Study 36: Developer Contributions

### Developer Contributions

This case study provides an update to the PPF 6 (2016) Case Study 24 in respect of developer contributions. It was previously noted in the Scottish Government's feedback to PPF 6 that the development plan sets out expectations in respect of developer contributions for affordable housing and green / play space provision and that connected Supplementary Guidance was available for this. Where developer contributions are required these will be flagged up to developers at pre-application stage where applicable, or where no pre-application engagement is sought then officers will seek to make developers aware of the requirement and justification for developer contributions as soon as such requirements are identified within the assessment process.

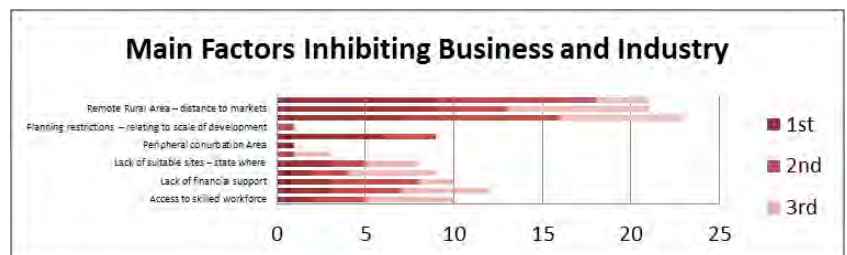
The Local Development Plan was adopted in 2015 and work is underway to replace this. It was also noted that as part of this process detailed guidance for other potential infrastructure requirements, which may require developer contributions, would be examined by the Council. This case study provides an update on progress with this work.

LDP2 is currently at the Pre Main Issues Report (MIR) stage and we are gathering information from a range of sources including, key agencies, developers, communities, councillors, internal colleagues to understand the current and future infrastructure requirements in the area.

Call for Sites – the online form for the call for sites was open until December 2016 and asked a series of questions regarding infrastructure and service requirements that may result from the proposed development. This included the developer being asked to assess water supply and drainage, school capacity, broadband provision, electricity and access in relation to their proposals. Key Agencies are currently assessing the information supplied prior to publication of the MIR. At this stage everyone will have the chance to comment as part of the statutory process.

Workshops - separate workshops have been held with councillors and development management, which included discussion of infrastructure requirements and developer contributions.

Seminars - Development Policy attended the internal Economic Development Officer Group seminar and the Chief Officers and Senior Officers Group (COSO) to raise awareness of the LDP2 process, including potential future infrastructure requirements and how to deal with developer contributions.



Single Investment Plan – This has been drafted by Economic Development in consultation with the Local Development Plan team and has been to the Policy and Resources Committee. The Single Investment Plan for Argyll and Bute is being developed in order to align future infrastructure investment with strategic economic priorities to help drive a step change in economic activity in the area. This will inform the future developer contributions policy.

Sharepoint site – This has been used internally to capture feedback on a range of issues, including developer contributions. Environmental Health, Education, Roads, Transportation, Economic Development and Planning have all been made aware of the sharepoint site through the LDP project Board. Comments have been submitted on this issue.

Internal questionnaire - This was circulated to COSO to tap into expertise and knowledge across the Council. The questions related to Council or other Services that were likely to be impacted on by potential forthcoming development and sought suggestions to minimise these impacts or compensate for them.

Call for Ideas – An on line consultation primarily aimed at communities which built on the spatial aspects of the Place Standard Tool asking for more detailed responses. Communities were asked what they felt was inhibiting economic development in their area, this included lack of financial support, development cost, poor broadband connectivity and lack of infrastructure.

Comparative analysis – developer contribution policies have been gathered from other similar authorities for consideration.

It is considered that the above is an inclusive and evidence based approach to best deliver the further development of the current Argyll and Bute developer contributions policy and guidance. This work will continue through the Main Issues Report and Proposed Local Development Plan stages.





## Case Study 37: Digital Improvement

### Digital Improvement

We continue to look for ways of improving the planning processes through the use of technology, including web mapping applications. New mapping tools can provide efficiencies when working in the field and the use of tablets to collect data and images when out on site has gone through a successful pilot.

This delivers improvements for the planning officer with the ability to label photographs in the field rather than trying to remember the location and reason for the photo when returning to the office and finding the time to annotate them - but notes can be added later if required. The mapping application also allows other officers to view the photographs immediately and in perpetuity as planning history linked to a site rather than being lost in a planning filing system.



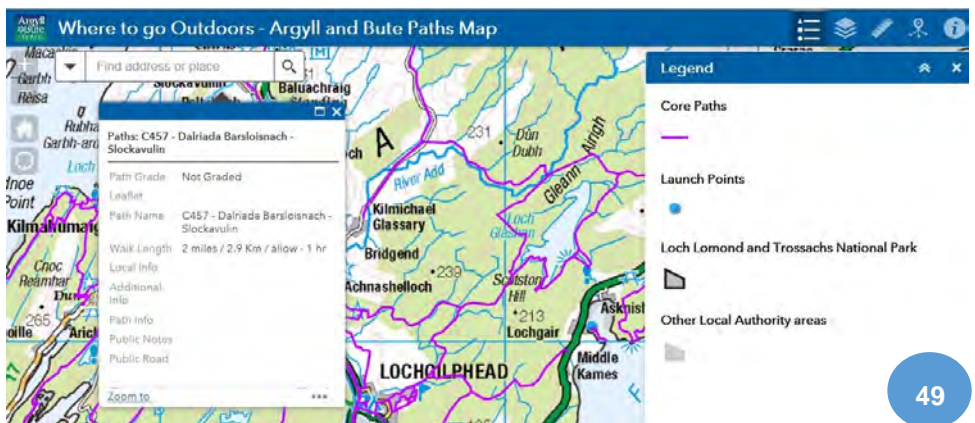
## Case Study 38: Getting Access to Our Great Places

### Where to Go Outdoors Interactive Map

Following the adoption of the Argyll & Bute Core Paths Plan in 2015 the Access Team had to consider how best to promote the 1,167 mile long network of paths to walkers, cyclists, horse riders and canoeists, whether local residents looking for new places to explore or visitors from further afield. The cost of producing a single printed copy of the maps at 1:25,000 was estimated at over £600. The Council's mapping software offered the opportunity to create an interactive map which could provide a better service to the customer and with the support of the GIS Team the "Where to Go Outdoors" map was launched as a free service.

This year the GIS Team has moved the map over to a new software platform ArcGIS. The maps are now much clearer and run faster particularly on mobile phones. They are also much more user friendly. If users select a path a box opens with hyperlinks to external websites where they can find more information including leaflets. The map now receives around 1,100 visits per quarter.

The suite of 14 walk and ride leaflets published last year have been distributed and downloaded over 300 times during the year. They are still available from <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/outdoor-access-argyll-and-bute#bottom>



## Case Study 39: Dunoon Conservation Area Appraisal & Extension, Dunoon and Rothesay CARS Bids

### Rothesay CARS

In parallel with the Dunoon funding bid, CARS funding has also been sought from HES for Rothesay following review and update of the Rothesay Town Centre Management Plan. HES have awarded the Council £500,000 and the Council has committed £200,000 towards the proposed scheme, which the HLF Board are due to consider on 15 June. The CARS is predicated on securing the TH. If successful, the project would commence this autumn and also run until 31st March 2022.

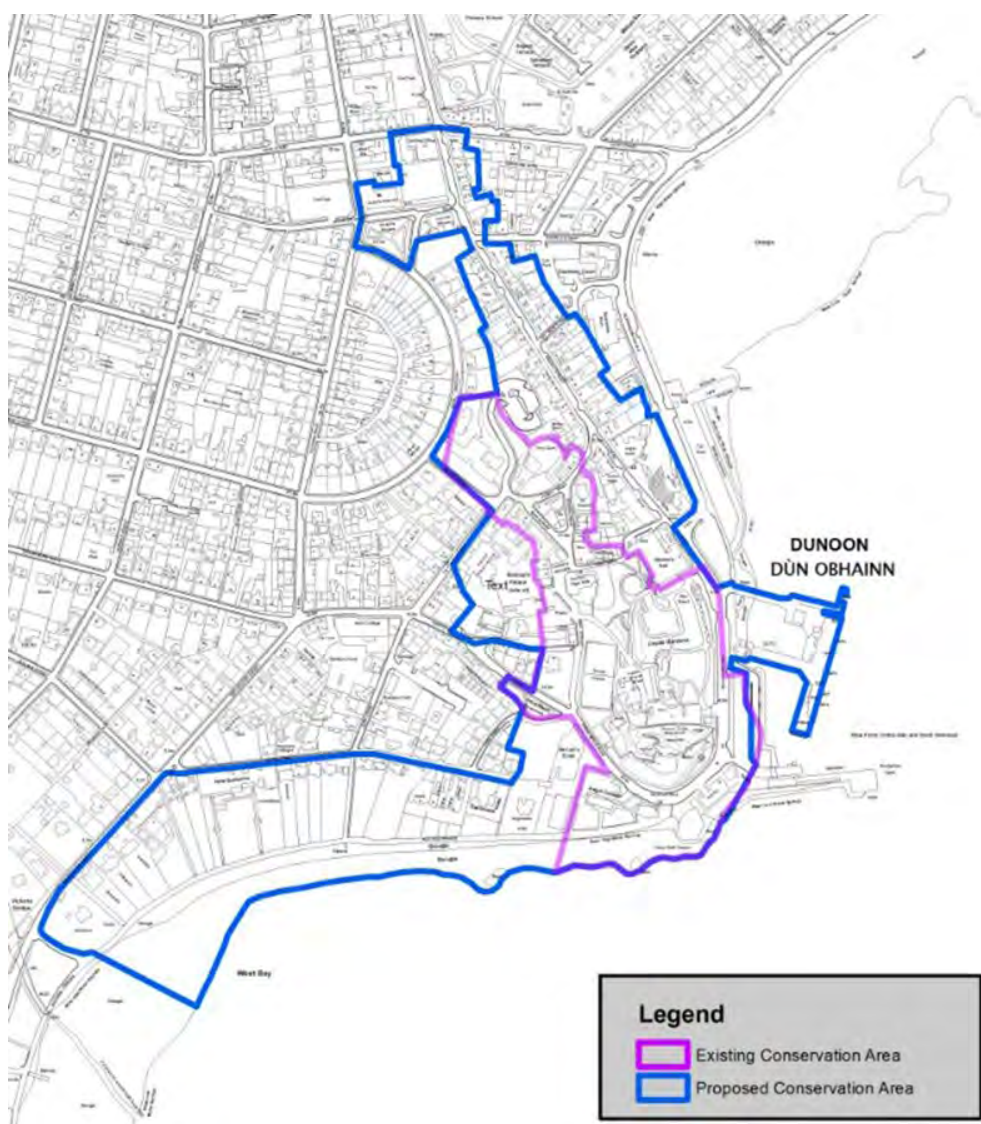
### Dunoon Conservation Area Appraisal, Extension and CARS Bid

Dunoon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, prepared by ZM Architects, was adopted in February 2017. This promotes positive development management and intervention for Argyll and Bute's Historic Environment and meets the Council's Historic Environment Strategy's key objectives.

The Appraisal includes an extension of the Conservation Area boundary as it was established that there are further areas of the town centre that meet the criteria for special architectural and historical significance which should be preserved and enhanced. Further to the statutory consultation process, a brochure was designed and sent out to each household/business within the new part of the Conservation Area to ensure a wide understanding of the positive implications of the extension.

The Appraisal offered a clear vision and opportunity to implement partnership working through the application for funding to restore and enhance these heritage assets. Funding was secured from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in for £1,002,348 to undertake a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) project in Dunoon, which is estimated to run until March 2022. Argyll and Bute Council have committed to provide £500,000 of match-funding. The CARS project will offer the following benefits:

- A repairs programme for priority projects
- Community engagement e.g. through education programmes
- Training opportunities for traditional craftsmen







## Case Study 40: Simplified Planning Zones Project

### Simplified Planning Zones Project

The opportunity was offered by the Scottish Government to assist with the ongoing planning review through taking forward pilot Simplified Planning Zones (SPZ) for housing. This was an exciting opportunity to be engaged in improving the planning process through active participation in the review.

Argyll and Bute Council was successful in its bid to the Scottish Government for funding to develop Simplified Planning Zones, to support development and inform any potential legislative changes related to the planning review.

The aim of the SPZ pilot is to explore how SPZs can be used in a variety of contexts, including to:

- support remote rural communities;
- promote diversification of housing types and supply, and innovative housing delivery, through self and custom build; and,
- support inward investment and economic activity.

The Argyll and Bute proposal encompasses two sites. The Lochgilphead site is on brownfield land in need of remediation in a Main Town and the Mull site is green field on an island with private sector involvement. The mainland and island approach will allow us to test the SPZ concept in different situations and to explore a range of different issues.

Development in remote rural areas brings its own set of varied challenges. SPZs for housing offer the chance to simplify one aspect of the delivery process. The SPZ, coupled with actions to assist delivery, would help to de-risking the site development thereby improving access to finance and encouraging self-build/custom build.

Taking part in this pilot is seen as offering an opportunity for further improvement of the planning service provided in Argyll and Bute in a number of areas as follows:-

- Enhancing staff knowledge of the planning legislative processes.
- Actively involving officers in planning research work that will feed into improving the planning system in Scotland. This will assist with the evolution of the SPZ process. The comparative analysis research trip to Dublin brought new ideas to the process.
- An opportunity to explore innovative methods of community engagement, which may be of use in future consultations in the area.
- Improve delivery of custom/self-build housing in the area by demonstrating an innovative way of assisting the delivery of homes in a flexible and simplified manner for the self-builder.
- The pilot is looking at new ways to provide infrastructure through servicing plots for self/custom build.
- The existing Sustainable Design Guides will be integral to the process. Promoting good design and creating place will be central to this project.
- Help develop good practice in terms of dealing with island related issues.



Lochgilphead: Site of former Primary School



Craignure, Isle of Mull





## Part 2

# Supporting Evidence

Part 1 of this report was completed with full weblinks as supporting evidence. Other key documents include.

Council Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement (2013-2023) - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/community-plan-and-single-outcome-agreement>

Local Development Plan - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp>

Development Plan Scheme LDP2 - [https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/approved\\_dps\\_180117\\_document\\_only.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/approved_dps_180117_document_only.pdf)

The “Lorn Arc” Project - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/lorn-arc>

Regeneration Projects - Argyll and Bute Council has agreed to an ambitious and forward-looking programme to assist regeneration and economic development in five of its waterfront towns - Campbeltown, Helensburgh, Oban, Rothesay and Dunoon. - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/content/chord-town-centre-regeneration-projects>

The Council operates a formalised pre-application system called Planning for Firm Foundations - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/pre-application-guidance>

[Planning and Regulatory Services' Customer Service Charter](#) is part of our annual improvement plan aimed at further improving customer service standards.

Guidance and advice on [making a planning application](#)

Argyll and Bute Council actively encourage online submission of planning applications via the [Scottish Government ePlanning Portal](#).

Our [online planning information system](#) holds records of all planning and building standards applications The Council has also entered into a [Joint Procurement Framework](#) with all Highland and Islands based Councils.

Detailed information regarding the Council’s [Planning Service](#) can be found on our website.

A copy of the [Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire](#) is sent out with every decision notice.





## Part 3: Delivery of Service Improvement Actions

Delivery of our service  
improvement actions in 2016-17

Service Improvement	Status
1. Delivery and adoption of New Signage Strategy for Argyll and Bute	Ongoing - August 2017 Case Study 19
2. The development of a protocol and process for involving Members in providing early key advice for major development.	Ongoing - Sept 2017
3. Improve planning application processing timescales at validation stage-Business Process Review (BPR) work package	Complete—Case Study 31
4. Production of hill tracks guidance.	Ongoing - October 2017
5. Rural Authority benchmarking group to progress Technical Guidance on 'occupancy restrictions' and 'rural exceptional circumstances'.	Ongoing
6. Review Enforcement Charter and provision of Enforcement Service following team re-structure	Ongoing—Sept 2017
7. Production of 5 new conservation area appraisals	Ongoing—2 Complete, Case Study 39. Revised Project Schedule
8. Produce co-ordinated LDP / Economic Development promotional action programmes / plans	Complete—Case Study 36
9. Deliver a user forum workshop in Oban focussing on Planning Conditions	Ongoing
10. Concordat with Local Business Community – Actions that shows Argyll and Bute is Open for Business and working in partnership to realise sustainable economic growth	Ongoing
11. Review quarterly performance reporting – make it more qualitative, balanced and focus on outcomes.	Complete - Case Study 31



## Part 3: Service Improvements 2017-18

Service improvement actions & targets  
for this year

Service Improvement Actions	Timescale
1. Deliver technical note on replacement windows	September 2017
2. Production of Hill Tracks guidance	October 2017
3. Review of Enforcement and Monitoring Charter	September 2017
4. Deliver improved chargeable pre-application service	August 2017
5. Attain Customer Service Excellence	March 2018
6. Prepare 2 Conservation Area Appraisals	March 2018
7. Improve planning application timescales at consideration stage (BPR)	March 2018
8. Develop and implement mobile app platform for use of LDP and for live time capture of site data	Dec 2017
9. Carry out Main Issue Report consultation using Story Board GIS tool	Dec 2017
10. Deliver two pilot Simplified Planning Zones	March 2018

Our Service Measures and Performance Targets which are reported Quarterly for 2016/17 are:-

- All Local Planning Applications Determined:- Average Number of weeks 12 Week Target
- % of All Pre-Application Enquiries processed within 20 working days 75% Target
- % of Planning Applications Approved 95% Target
- % of Valid Applications Registered and Notified within 5 days 90% Target
- % of Population covered by adopted Local Plan 100% Target
- Number of new housing units / houses per annum 300 Units
- Produce 5 Conservation Area Appraisals
- Link 80 core paths to online footpath guides.
- Maintain effective housing land supply at all times.



## Part 4 National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

### Part 4: National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2016-17	2015-16
<b>Development Planning:</b> age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i> Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5 <sup>th</sup> anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year? Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	2 years  YES  NO  YES	1 year  YES  NO  YES
<b>Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs</b>  Established housing land supply 5-year effective housing land supply 5-year housing supply target 5-year effective housing land supply ( <i>to one decimal place</i> ) Housing approvals Housing completions over the last 5 years Marketable employment land supply Employment land take-up during reporting year	5865 units 3908 units 3725 units 5.2 years  866 units 1149 units 88.7 ha 0 ha	8751 4678 3175 7.8  658 1143 88.7 0.51
<b>Development Management</b>  <b>Project Planning</b> Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement  <b>Decision-making</b> Application approval rate Delegation rate  <b>Validation</b> Percentage of applications valid upon receipt	19.6%  0  97.4% 97.5%  10.7%	19.7%  0  97.4% 97.0%  16.2%
<b>Decision-making timescales</b> Average number of weeks to decision: Major developments Local developments (non-householder) Householder developments	22.1 12.4 7.0	17.0 10.3 7.5
<b>Legacy Cases</b> Number cleared during reporting period Number remaining	1 39	4 35
<b>Enforcement</b> time since enforcement charter published / reviewed <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i>	22 Months	10

## Part 5 Official Statistics



### Part 5: Official Statistics

#### A: Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

Category	Average timescale (weeks)		
	2016-2017	2016-2017	2015-2016
<b>Major developments</b>	10	22.1	17.0
<b>Local developments (non-householder)</b>	668	12.4	10.3
• Local: less than 2 months	353 (52.8%)	6.9	6.9
• Local: more than 2 months	315 (47.2%)	18.6	16.7
<b>Householder developments</b>	385	7.5	7.0
• Local: less than 2 months	328 (85.2%)	6.2	5.9
• Local: more than 2 months	57 (14.8%)	15.1	15.6
<b>Housing developments</b>			
<b>Major</b>	3	38.1	67.1
<b>Local housing developments</b>	306	13.4	10.9
• Local: less than 2 months	143 (46.7%)	7.0	7.1
• Local: more than 2 months	163 (53.3%)	19.0	17.4
<b>Business and industry</b>			
<b>Major</b>	2	9.8	18.0
<b>Local business and industry</b>	30	9.2	12.1
• Local: less than 2 months	20 (66.7%)	7.0	6.5
• Local: more than 2 months	10 (33.3%)	13.8	21.1
<b>EIA developments</b>	0	-	24.1
<b>Other consents*</b>	248	8.4	8.0
<b>Planning/legal agreements**</b>	14		
Major: average time	0	-	67.1
Local: average time	14	22.0	22.1
<b>Local reviews</b>	9	12.5	8.3

\*Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 7 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

\*\*Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973



## Part 5 Official Statistics

### Part 5: Official Statistics

#### B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2016-17		2015-2016	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	9	6	66.7	2	100
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	7	4	57.1	5	60.0

#### C: Enforcement activity

	2016-17	2015-16
Complaints lodged	240	191
Cases taken up	240	191
Breaches identified	240	191
Cases resolved	241	309
Notices served*	42	37
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

\*Enforcement notices; breach of condition notices; planning contravention notices; stop notices; temporary stop notices; fixed penalty notices, and Section 33 notices

#### D: Contextual Statement

## Development Management Summary

Development Management has had another strong year in terms of statistical performance. We continue to exceed Council targets for determining applications and are consistently ahead of the Scottish averages for most performance measures.

However, it should be noted that 2016/17 has been a year of transition for the Development Management Team with significant changes to key personnel taking place throughout the year. The secondment of the Development Manager to another role within the Council during late 2016 has resulted in a significant internal reshuffle of staff to cover the responsibilities of this post and the subsequent vacancies resulting from internal promotions. There has also been significant disruption at area team level with a number of new recruits joining the service during the course of 2016/17; most notably the Mid Argyll and the Islands Area Team, which is one of the busiest offices in terms of caseload, has seen the introduction of an entirely new team of planning officers in a period of just over 12 months as a result of internal promotions and retirement. The previous incumbents had over 40 years of cumulative professional experience in dealing with planning applications within that particular locality. In this respect it is perhaps inevitable that the reduction in staff resource during recruitment periods and the loss of significant professional and local knowledge within such a short space of time will have some impact upon performance in the short term as new members of staff familiarise themselves with the area, the LDP, and methods of working.

During 2016/17 the average time period for processing local developments has increased across the board. Local developments (non-householder) has increased from 10.3 weeks to 12.4 weeks, whilst the impact on householder developments has been less severe with an increase from 7.0 to 7.5 weeks. It is however worth noting that despite the overall increase in time taken to determine local applications that evidence of the prioritisation of economically important applications is provided in the reduction in the average timescale for local business and industry applications from 12.1 weeks to 9.2 weeks.

The number of Major applications determined increased significantly from the previous year with numbers up from 3 to 10 in 2016/17. Whilst the average time period for determination of major applications has also increased during this period it is however notable that the average time period for determination of major housing development has been reduced from 67.1 weeks in 2015/16 to 38.1 weeks this year; similarly major business and industry development has reduced to 9.8 weeks from 18.0 weeks in 2015/16.

We continue to closely monitor team and individual officer performance (for both applications and pre-apps) on a weekly basis through reporting and circulation of performance reports – this allows any dips in performance to be quickly identified and remedial actions implemented.

## Continued:

The Development Management service remains committed to the ethos of working in partnership with the development industry to secure positive outcomes through negotiation and adding value to unlock projects wherever possible. Whilst taking this approach may have an impact on the timeliness of the service in some cases, its benefits are evident in our high approval rate of 97%.

We have continued to promote our pre-application service 'Planning for Firm Foundations' and have yet again seen a significant growth in the number of submissions. In 2016/17 we processed 1,260 enquiries, 177 enquiries more than the previous year. The pre-application service is also performance managed with a service commitment to provide a response to applicants within 20 working days from receipt of enquiries – during 2016/17 we managed to respond to 77.4% of enquiries within the target timescale.

The Development Management team continue to support and endorse the use of Processing Agreements, however their take up has been poor and this is evident with no applications being determined during 2016/17 that were subject to a processing agreement. Despite promoting their use at User Forums, on our webpage and during pre-application discussions on major and locally significant proposals customers remain reluctant to sign up. Feedback from our customers suggests that they do not consider that Processing Agreements would add significant value as we are perceived to have a good track record for delivering timely decisions on important projects, particularly given that we 'fast track' economically important applications. It is however noted that 2016/17 has seen a small increase in the number of legacy applications with negotiations and submission of further information on a small number of applications taking longer than expected. It has been identified that Processing Agreements would provide a more structured framework for resolution of outstanding issues and providing a level of certainty which would better inform work planning of officers and clarity to the applicant and any other stakeholders of the key stages/time periods and any requirement for them to deliver revised or additional supporting information within an extended decision making process. The Development Management team are current undertaking a review of application handling processes with improvements to be delivered during 2017/18, this review will give consideration to the role of Processing Agreements in the processing of smaller scale proposals requiring extended timescales to attain a positive outcome.

PR01 Local economy improved by delivery of sustainable development		Links to Outcome SOA 1	A
PR23_02-Determine 'All Planning Applications' quicker than the National Average	Actual	11.1 Wks	G
	Target	12.0 Wks	
	Benchmark		
PR23_03-Pre-application enquiries processed within 20 working days	Actual	77.4 %	G
	Target	75.0 %	
	Benchmark	N/A	
PR23_06-Achieve an above national average level of application approval rates	Actual	97.0 %	G
	Target	95.0 %	
	Benchmark		
PR23_05-Register and neighbour notify applications within 5 days	Actual	88.7 %	R
	Target	90.0 %	
	Benchmark	N/A	

The Planning Enforcement team continue to identify and monitor strategic and locally significant developments to ensure compliance with the approved details and conditions, and to respond to public complaints. 2016/17 has seen a realignment of enforcement resources following a reduction in staffing levels with a pilot undertaken within the Bute & Cowal team to trial a Planning Officer led service with support from dedicated Enforcement Officers to assist with more complex cases. The Enforcement Charter is scheduled for review in Summer 2017 and will require to take into account our experience of delivering on enforcement with reduced resources.

## Planning Policy Summary

Work during 2016/17 has focussed on two main themes: early preparatory work for delivery of LDP2 by March 2020; and delivering key elements of the March 2015 LDP.

We are adopting a much more project managed approach to delivery of LDP2, having appointed a project board with senior members of the Council at Head of Service and Director level. To augment this we have utilised a sharepoint site and civica to map out and monitor a detailed work programme for the entire LDP process and this is reflected in our updated Development Plan Scheme 16/17.

June to December of 2016 saw us run an online call for sites exercise, utilising an entirely online digital approach and allowed members of the public a significantly longer than usual time to submit proposals. The result was a healthy number of submissions which we are now engaged in analysing and consulting key agencies in order to thoroughly interrogate deliverability and suitability.

In tandem with this exercise, forming a baseline study for LDP2 and improving our focus on deliverability, we have carried out an intensive review of the current housing land supply in order to verify its likely timescale of completion. This process has also been mirrored in production of our new housing land audit and is reflected in a more realistic established housing land supply shown within this document's key statistics.

Beginning in the autumn of 2016 we began internal Pre-MIR engagement, holding workshops and presentations for Councillors, Senior Council Management, and Community Planning Partners. During 2017 this has widened to include Key Agencies and; run in tandem with Community Planning a significant Call-for Ideas exercise, utilising the Place Standard Tool. This resulted in a very positive response which will now be fed in to production of the MIR for the end of the year.

Focusing on delivery the team has continued working intensively and in partnership with LINK Housing Association, HIE, Scottish Water and Scottish Government to explore infrastructure delivery requirements at the Dunbeg Strategic expansion. A comprehensive masterplan has been agreed by the Council's planning committee, setting the framework for future planning applications. Funding arrangements have been agreed in principle which should allow early delivery of key infrastructure during 2017/18 and early affordable housing delivery of 300 units by 2021. This will have a significant regenerative effect in the area, consolidate the role of the European Marine Science Park and is a key deliverable of the LDP.



## Continued

In the summer of 2016 the team won Scottish Government funding to develop two Simplified Planning Zones as part of a national pilot project. These are located in Lochgilphead, regenerating a brownfield and derelict town centre site, and on Mull. Both are intended to deliver self-build housing and it is hoped they will play key roles in stimulating local housing construction and employment, and contributing to reversing population decline.

The policy team has been influential in setting up a new formal partnership between the Council, Community Planning Partners and the MoD. The HMNB Clyde Strategic Delivery and Development Framework has been constituted to help facilitate the significant investment involved in making Faslane the UK's single base for submariners; and to assist integration into the surrounding community of the very substantial number of new navy and civilian personnel which will be based there over the coming years. Already new investment is being planned in the local area including a new Helensburgh swimming pool.

Continuing its commitment to regeneration and placemaking, the policy team has created a new post covering Design and Conservation. This is allowing us to continue progressing well with ongoing regeneration work, initiate new projects such as a CARS scheme in Dunoon and a second TH scheme in Rothesay. In addition we are making good progress with reviewing conservation area appraisals.

Our Marine and Coastal Development staff are fully engaged with the recently constituted Clyde Marine Planning Partnership. It has already carried out scoping reports for the forthcoming Clyde Marine Plan and is now doing preliminary work for a Main Issues Report.

Our Biodiversity unit has been training all our development management planners and has created an on-line biodiversity toolkit available to planners and developers in an attempt to front end consideration of such matters in all planning applications.



Hill House, Helensburgh



## Part 6 Workforce Info

The information requested in this section is an integral part of providing the context for the information in parts 1-5. Staffing information is a snapshot of the position on 31 March.

### D:Context

#### Part 6: Workforce Information

	<b>Tier 1</b> <i>Chief Executive</i>	<b>Tier 2</b> <i>Director</i>	<b>Tier 3</b> <i>Head of Service</i>	<b>Tier 4</b> <i>Manager</i>
<b>Head of Planning Service*</b>			X	

		<b>DM</b>	<b>DP</b>	<b>Enforce-ment</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Managers/Team Leaders**</b>	No. Posts	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>
	Vacant	<b>1</b>			
<b>Main grade posts</b>	No. Posts	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
	Vacant	<b>2</b>			<b>1</b>
<b>Technician</b>	No. Posts	<b>7</b>			
	Vacant	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Office Support/ Clerical</b>	No. Posts				
	Vacant				
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>

<b>Staff Age Profile</b>	<b>Number</b>
Under 30	2
30-39	10
40-49	13
50 and over	19

<b>Committee &amp; Site Visits***</b>	<b>Number per year</b>
Full council meetings	8 (no Planning applications determined by Full Council)
Planning committees	21 (including 10 Planning Hearings)
Area committees (where relevant)	n/a
Committee site visits	11
LRB****	12
LRB site visits	5

\*Please note only the tier in which the most senior member of the planning service falls under

\*\*Managers are those staff responsible for the operational management of a team/division, in addition please log staff that are identified as team leaders or line managers under this heading.

\*\*\*References to committees also include National Park Authority Boards. Number of site visits is those cases where visits were carried out by committees/boards.

\*\*\*\*This relates to the number of meetings of the LRB. The number of applications going to LRB are reported elsewhere.





# Performance Markers & Evidence Base



Isle of Mull, Scarba and Craignish Point

	Performance Marker	Source/Evidence
1	Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	NHIs – P55 & 56
2	Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications <u>and</u> availability publicised on planning authority website	NHIs – P55 & 56; Case Study 13
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications</li> <li>- clear and proportionate requests for supporting information</li> </ul>	NHIs – P55; Case Studies 1, 2, 9, 11, 16, 17 & 36
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant	NHIs – P56; Governance P35
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published	Adopted March 2015 NHIs P55; review scheduled P54
6	Continuous improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators</li> <li>- progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report</li> </ul>	NHIs – P55 & 56; All Case Studies

## PROMOTING THE PLAN-LED SYSTEM

	Performance Marker	Source/Evidence
7	LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	Achieved—Adopted March 2015
8	Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on course for adoption within 5-year cycle</li> <li>- project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale</li> </ul>	Achieved
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Case Study 36
10	Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Governance—P36
11	Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications	Case Studies 5, 9, 11, 13, 16, 19, 34 & 35

## SIMPLIFYING AND STREAMLINING

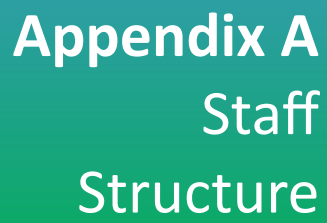
	Performance Marker	Source/Evidence
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	Governance P36; Case Studies 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Governance P36; Culture of Continuous Improvement P43; Case Study 33

## DELIVERING DEVELOPMENT

	Performance Marker	Source/Evidence
14	Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one-year-old	NHIs P55; Governance P35
15	Developer contributions: clear expectations - set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and - in pre-application discussions	Case Studies 9, 13, 16, 17, 28 & 36













Argyll and Bute Council  
Development and Infrastructure Services  
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*Chomhairle Earra-Ghàidheal is Bhòid*