



# PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 9

2019/20

**ARGYLL**  
CHOOSE ARGYLL. LOVE ARGYLL.

#abplace2b

# About Argyll and Bute

Population (2019):

**85,570**

**9%**

Argyll and Bute as a proportion of the total Scottish land area.



**43%**

of Argyll and Bute's Population live in areas classified as "remote rural".

**52**

of Argyll and Bute's 125 data zones are amongst the 20% most geographically access deprived data zones in Scotland.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

**96%**

of Argyll and Bute's population live within 10km of the coast.

Average Pop. Density (2019):

**0.12** persons per ha

**21**

Bute, Coll, Colonsay, Danna, Easdale, Eilean da Mheinn, Erraid, Gigha, Gometra, Iona, Islay, Jura, Kerrera, Lismore, Luing, Mull, Oronsay, Seil, Shuna (Luing), Tiree, Ulva

inhabited islands\*

\* not including LLTNP area

**£536**

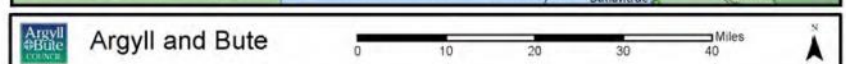
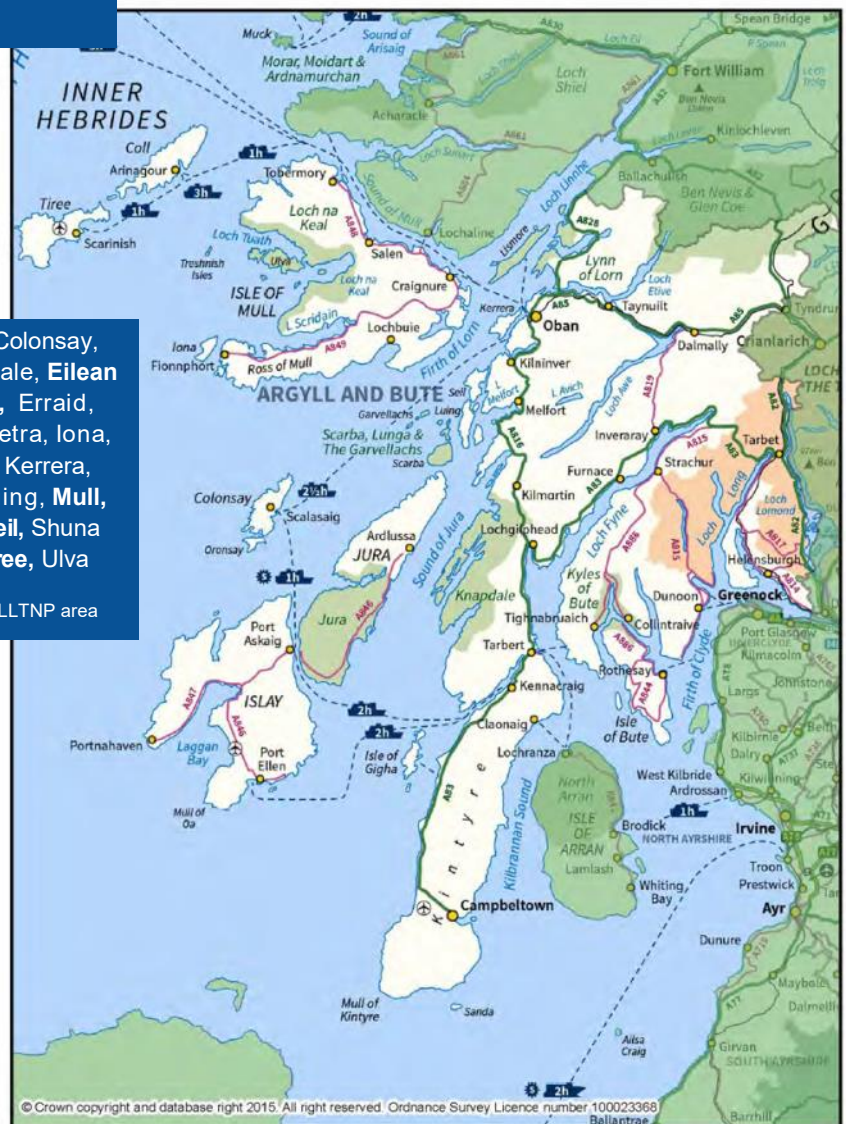
average weekly income

Compared to Scottish Average of £577, and UK Average of £688 (2019)

**33%**

of employment is in "Public Administration, Education and Health"

Compared to 29.8% in Scotland, 26.4% in UK (2018)



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# Foreword:



**Fergus Murray**

**Head of Development &  
Economic Growth**

**Argyll and Bute Council**



With change being the only constant at the moment the delivery of a high quality planning service remains challenging and complex. Planners are used to the process of change however and we can often see how it can be a positive thing for local communities instead of the threat it is sometimes portrayed as.

In July of 2019 I became the Head of Service for Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services as part of a wider council re-organisation that merged a number of service portfolios. Formally the Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transport my new title is Head of Development and Economic Growth. This significant change has brought with it an opportunity to more closely integrate the regulatory functions of Planning and related services with the regeneration and project work of the Council which facilitates and delivers on our corporate aspirations to protect and enhance the most positive attributes of Argyll and Bute - its communities, its built heritage and its natural environment through delivery of improved infrastructure and connectivity to support sustainable economic development.

As we are all well aware, the effects of Coronavirus have already turned expectations for 2020/21 completely on their head through disruption to economies and movement of people on a scale and magnitude which hasn't been seen since wartime generations.

The requirement to live and work with essential restrictions upon free movement and social interaction has not only highlighted the importance of access to green space for mental and physical wellbeing but has also underlined the value of digital infrastructure and connectivity to support alternative ways of working. Planning has a key role to play in supporting economic and social recovery from the extended period of lockdown. The formation of the Development & Economic Growth Service has fortunately created a holistic Planning Service that aligns activity across the functions of plan making with regulation and delivery of development on the ground.

Whilst it is still early days in the evolution of the new Service arrangements it is expected that our collaborative and joined up approach to working and delivery of quality outcomes will allow Planning to play a key role within the Council's corporate efforts supporting 'a green and inclusive economic recovery' for Argyll and Bute.

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

## 1.1 QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

1.1.1 Throughout 2019/20 the Planning Service has continued to work closely with communities, developers and partner organisations to deliver a range of developments across Argyll and Bute.

1.1.2 The [adopted Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015](#) (the LDP) is firmly embedded into decision making with 12 key policies which seek to promote the delivery of sustainable long term economic growth to support the retention and growth of our population; to support the transition to a low carbon economy; to help retain and improve essential services; to protect and enhance our outstanding natural and built environment, and to maintain and improve our quality of life.

1.1.3 Interpretation and implementation of the LDP policy aims is assisted by a suite of Supplementary Guidance and non-statutory Technical Working Notes. These include publications on: [Masterplanning](#), [Advertisement and Signage Policy](#), [Houses in Multiple Occupation](#), and a [Biodiversity Technical Note for Planners and Developers](#).



1.1.4 The Council seeks to promote high quality design through the publication of [Sustainable Design Guidance](#) covering a range of topics including Small Scale Housing Development, Larger Housing Development, Working with Argyll and Bute's Built Heritage, Case Studies on Sustainable Materials and Technologies, and place specific guidance for the unique circumstances of the Islands of Coll and Tiree. Delivery of quality in design and place making is celebrated and championed through the Council's [Sustainable Design Award](#) scheme and identification of [exemplar designs](#) via the Council's website. The most recent iteration of the Sustainable Design Awards was launched in February 2020 but has subsequently been postponed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The [Design Awards 2020](#) will recognise work that was carried out or completed in the period July 2015 to May 2020. The award categories for 2020 have been identified as Sustainable Design, Aesthetic Design, Community Led Regeneration Project, Built Heritage, and Design for Under £100k. The range of categories are intended to highlight good practice across varying scales and types of development, and include for the promotion of low cost-innovative design, and community led developments.

1.1.5 Following the designation of the Helensburgh Town Centre Conservation Area in September 2019 there are now [33 Conservation Area designations](#) across Argyll and Bute providing protection to the historic built environment.

1.1.6 Through considered and targeted investment, the Council is continuing to develop, deliver and distribute funding to regeneration projects, the foundations of which support more attractive and prosperous places. The projects which were developed and delivered by the Projects and Regeneration Team during 2019/20 are as follows:

[Dunoon CARS](#) - partnership Projects with Historic Environment Scotland. (Full scale external restoration of tenement, 2 shopfront restorations in Argyll St and the implementation of a successful youth training programme in collaboration with a local contractor, Dunoon Grammar School, Argyll College UHI and Dunoon Burgh Hall Trust).

[Rothesay TH](#) - partnership project with National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic Environment Scotland, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, LEADER and Sustrans (Full scale external restoration of tenement and 1 shopfront restoration in Victoria and Montage Streets)

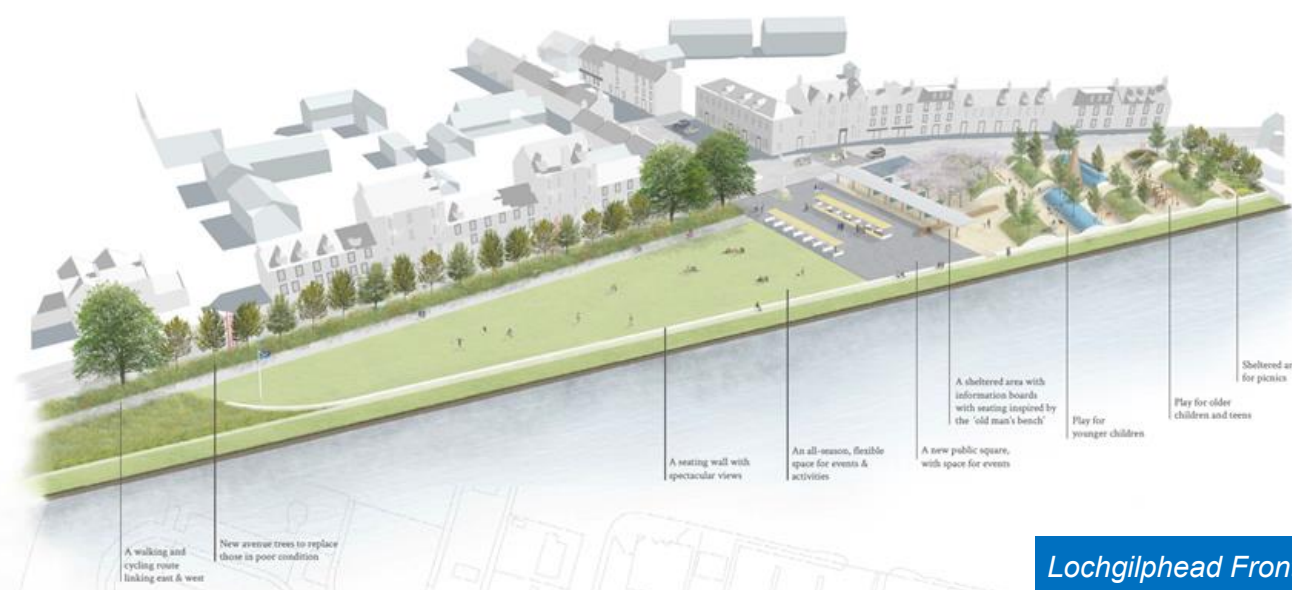
[Campbeltown CARS](#) - conclusion of 13 years of regeneration activity as detailed in Case Study 4.

[Lochgilthead CARS](#) - preparation for the launch of a new scheme that will run from 2020 to 2026 with a grant fund of over £1.3m.

[Lochgilthead Front Green](#) - Conclusion of comprehensive public consultation that resulted in securing detailed planning permission for urban realm improvements to deliver a public space used for community events, outdoor recreation and enjoyment.

#### FUTURE INDICATIVE DESIGN: VISUAL AND PLAN

Proposals subject to design development, stakeholder development & affordability



[Tarbert / Ardrishaig Regeneration](#) - Five projects at various stages that will deliver a range of public realm and pathway enhancements. These include the delivery of a new office block and chandlery, junction improvements at Tarbert Harbour and a new carpark, together with the completed Egg Shed development in Ardrishaig and associated public realm works which is detailed in Case Study 8. The developments in Ardrishaig are outcomes from the [Crinan Canal Corridor Charrette](#) joint working with Scottish Canals which we reported on in [PPF 5](#) and [PPF 6](#). Further consultation on proposals for public realm improvements in [Ardrishaig North](#) was held in Sept. 2019.

Town Centre Fund - Programme management of eleven physical regeneration projects at various stages to be completed by August 2021.

[Hermitage Parks for People](#) - £3.7m project for the heritage-led regeneration of Hermitage Park. The project has been part funded by National Lottery Heritage Funding and is now reaching its final phase of implementation and is programmed for completion in Winter 2021. The project has included construction



of a new passive haus standard [pavilion](#), restoration of historic features including the Category A listed war memorial, a Japanese garden and wishing well, provision of a community garden, and renewal of the children's play area.

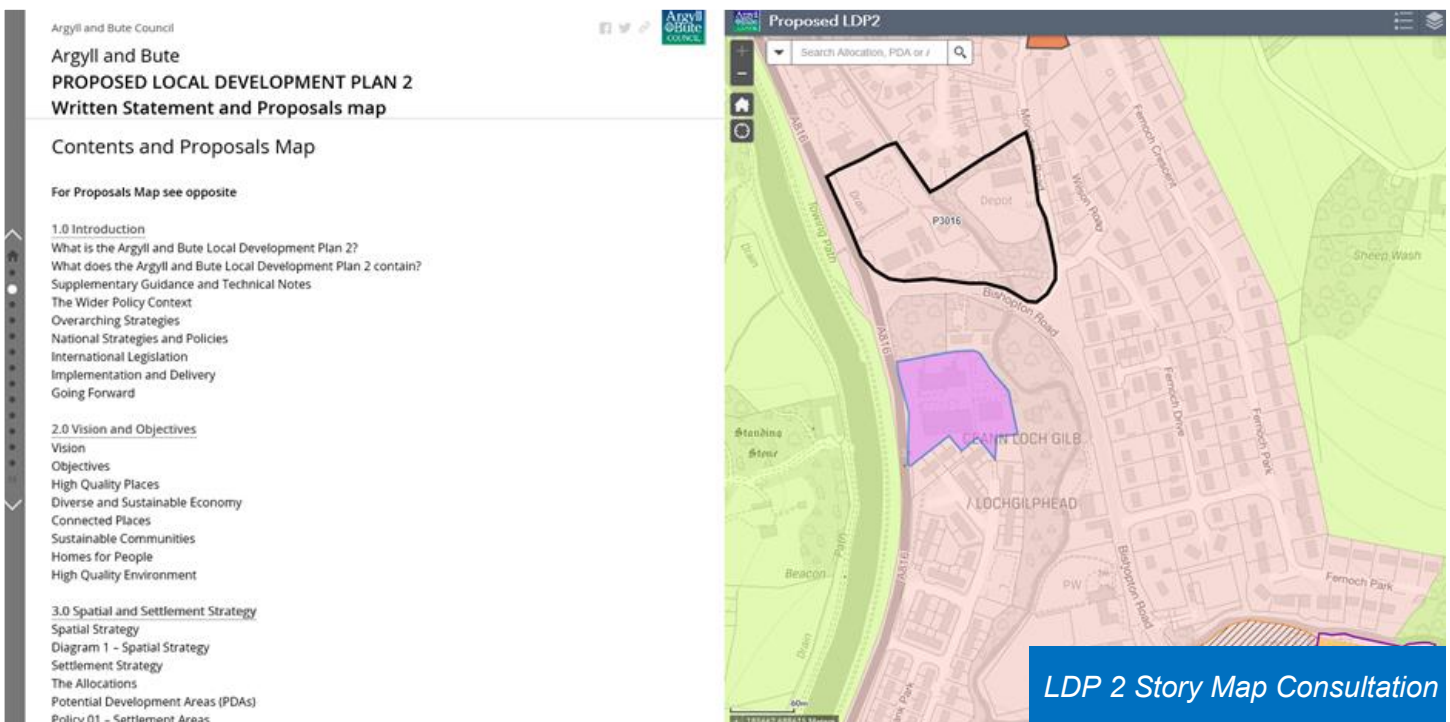
1.1.7 Involvement of the Planning Service has been instrumental in facilitating a number of developments which have/will deliver new housing, schools, employment, renewable energy, and tourism accommodation/facilities. Case Studies 1, 3, 4, 5 and 8 detail some of these quality outcomes.



## 1.2 QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

1.2.1 The LDP and priorities of the Planning Service are closely aligned with the [Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-23](#) (previously known as the Single Outcome Agreement and Community Plan). The Outcome Improvement Plan remains the sovereign document and the LDP aims to translate its objectives into a deliverable spatial strategy. The Council's [Action Programme](#) is utilised to focus action on priority proposals and allocations, and to identify work which is required to enable development. Case Studies 3, 4 and 8 provide an example of these corporate aims being delivered on the ground by LDP policy.

1.2.2 During 2019/20 preparation of LDP2 included further workshops with elected Members prior to the Council approving the proposed LDP2 which was placed on an [extended period of public consultation](#) over the winter months. The consultation included the option to review the [proposed LDP 2 in a 'story map'](#) format as a means of providing a more interactive, user friendly form of consultation engagement. Representations received during that time are now being analysed and Schedule 4 responses prepared for a forthcoming DPEA Examination. An updated project plan for the [Development Plan Scheme](#) was published in March 2020.



1.2.3 The Planning Service is located in various offices across the main settlements of Argyll and Bute providing relatively easy access to a large proportion of the population. Customers on remoter mainland and island locations are also able to access Council services at Customer Service Points. The

Planning Service also provide website, e-mail, and telephone based services to customers, and continues to utilise social media as a means of public engagement. The Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic has seen the temporary closure of public offices and delivery of planning services via home working and digital communication channels.

1.2.4 The Planning Service, working in partnership with Regulatory Services, attained the [Customer Service Excellence Standard](#) in February 2019. An overview of the work undertaken to reach this attainment was set out in [PPF 8](#). The Planning Service is committed to retaining the award however a partial reassessment scheduled for March 2020 has been postponed as a result of Covid-19.

1.2.5 The Planning Service continues to build partnerships both internally and externally. The Development Policy and Development Management teams have close links and seek to co-ordinate activity/resources with Economic Growth, Projects and Regeneration, Building Standards, Environmental Health, Strategic Transport, Housing, Access, GIS and Coastal Development through revised management arrangements for these functions which has seen them brought under a single Head of Service from July 2019. Departmentally the Planning Service is also aligned with Roads and Infrastructure under a single Executive Director. The Council Service structure facilitates partnership working and promotes symbiosis in working practice including the merging of Housing with Development Policy to better realise the synergies between these services in the delivery of an effective affordable housing development and the [Strategic Housing Investment Plan](#).



1.2.6 Customer User Forums are held regularly as a joint exercise between the Development Management, Development Policy and Building Standards Services providing a co-ordinated approach to engagement with regular professional customers. The content of recent User Forums include updates on the LDP2 process, validation standards, updates on changes to legislation, details of any revision to staffing and service delivery arrangements, performance appraisal, and details of recent publications/guidance.

1.2.7 In addition to engaging with individual companies on application specific issues, the Planning Service also seeks to engage directly with the aquaculture industry by arranging an annual liaison meeting with local industry representatives with hosting arrangements alternating between the Council and Industry. The event intended for 2019/20 was due to be organised and hosted by the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation but is currently on hold as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The agenda for the 2018/19 meeting included an update on LDP2, the [Clyde Marine Plan](#), Planning Performance, revised Industry Planning Protocols, discussion about [changes to SEPA's licensing regime](#) and its implications for planning, wild fish interactions, and updated EIA Regulations.

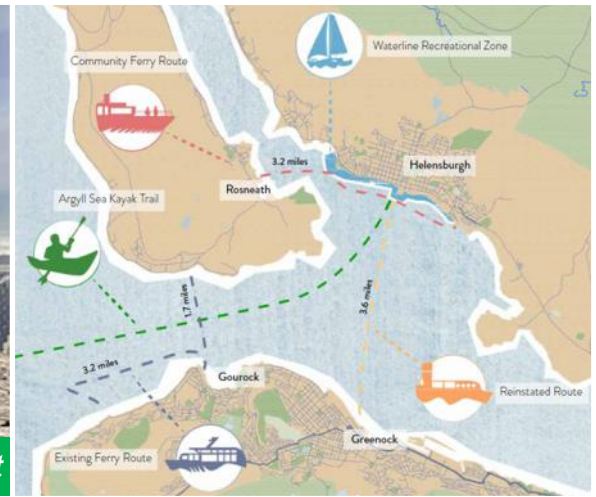
1.2.8 The Development Policy Service have developed a remote based assessment of housing land supply in order to verify that it is fit for purpose and does not act as an impediment to the delivery of new house building. This has allowed us to carry out a survey despite 'lockdown' restrictions. The Council continues to explore innovative ways in which it can contribute to or facilitate the further delivery of a variety of housing types as reported in [PPF 7](#).

1.2.9 The [Helensburgh Making Places 2019](#) project is funded by the [Scottish Government's Making Places Initiative](#). The project looked at opportunities to make Helensburgh a better place to live, work, visit and invest by prioritising themes which were found to be high on the community's agenda. The project utilised a range of consultation techniques including use of the [Place Standard Tool](#), surveys, social media, workshops, and live drawing. The final project outputs are intended to inform policy change, strategic decision making and the forthcoming Local Development Plan and will ensure a strong connection between grassroots and high level decision making. The final report identified that reactivation of Helensburgh's Waterfront to create flexible space for multigenerational use, the sharing of knowledge,





*Helensburgh Water Front Project*



and responsibility to see collaborative endeavours realised were prioritised as the most important to the community and with the greatest scope for opportunity.

1.2.10 The Council recognises that it cannot work in isolation and that collaborative working will deliver the most productive outcomes for communities. Area regeneration efforts require substantial involvement from the community as a whole, and relies on private and third party partnerships and subsequent investment. [The Rockfield Centre](#) is a good example of effective regeneration through partnership working which has occurred with the assistance of [Regeneration Capital Grant Funding](#) and Town Centre Funding. The Council also supports, and works in partnership with the area's [Business Improvement Districts](#).

1.2.11 The roll out of 4G by EE/BT and the [Emergency Service Mobile Communication Programme](#) continued during 2019/20. This has seen 4G coverage from this Mobile Network Operator reach 75% across Argyll and Bute. This year has seen additional sites injected into the programme as network blackspots along road networks have been identified; commercial coverage will also improve as the fibre network increases. The Scottish Government's 4G infill programme has commenced build at two sites which meet the criteria for investment as [4G "Not-Spots"](#) having secured an anchor operator. In addition the upcoming [Shared Rural Network \(SRN\)](#) has identified a number of sites across the Council area for upgrade and development, the finer details of which are still being negotiated between the operators and the UK Government. The Council's Digital Liaison Officer continues to provide assistance and single point contact for numerous consultants and monitors progress of applications as they are developed, submitted and implemented, following internal protocols to engage planning officers with greater expertise in telecoms development when required. Feedback from consultants has been complimentary of the processes which the Council have implemented to assist in the progress of digital connectivity. During 2019/20, EE/BT have commented positively on the streamlined process that the Planning Service have implemented in assisting in network coverage development. It has also been highlighted internally that cross departmental working will be intrinsic to the successful development of improved fibre penetration into rural communities given the challenges and, in some cases, short timeframes for implementation.

1.2.12 The Development Management Service continues to offer a [pre-application and permitted development enquiry service](#). Previously we have reported on the introduction of charging, template responses and online submissions to provide timely, consistent, high quality advice to prospective developers through identification of relevant planning policies, constraints and requirement for supporting information in advance of the formal application process. The [Planning section of the Council website](#) includes useful customer information including advice on 'Permitted Development', relevant publications including the LDP and non-statutory guidance, information on the planning process and details of how interested parties can engage with it. Customer feedback has however identified demand for a pre-app initiation and follow up advice service and further consideration on how to extend the range of services provided will be undertaken during 2020/21 along with the improvement of online content as part of a planned corporate refresh of the Council's website. Case Studies 3, 4, 5, and 8 include examples of

9 where there has been successful early engagement with developers.

1.2.13 Elected members are involved at an early stage of an application for 'major' development and are provided with a briefing on all Proposal of Application Notices (PANs). This [protocol](#) requires all PANs to be reported to the PPSL Committee and allows Members the opportunity to identify matters which they consider would be material to the determination of any subsequent application. Any issues raised by Members are then fed back to the applicant to take into account in the preparation of their formal application. Commencement of s23 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 has also introduced a new requirement to directly notify local, Scottish, and UK elected representatives when an application for Major development is received. The Council has responded to this additional requirement through the introduction in 2019/20 of a new protocol providing notification to the relevant parties by e-mail.



1.2.14 We have reported in previous PPFs on the certainty provided through development of masterplans and LDP allocations. 2018/19 has seen development, including affordable housing, delivered within masterplan/LDP allocations in Bowmore, Campbeltown, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Lochgilphead, Inveraray, Port Ellen, and Tobermory and we reported in [PPF 7](#) and [PPF 8](#) that the Dunbeg masterplan area was the subject of a detailed application for 300 affordable dwelling units that is now on site. Case Study 7 provides an update on activity at Dunbeg over the past 12 months where significant progress has been made toward

delivery of the first three phases of the masterplan, and an Architecture & Design Scotland convened [Workshop event in July 2019](#) to review the project was attended by Kevin Stewart, the Scottish



Local Government and Housing Minister. This new housing development was only made possible through a £900k Housing Infrastructure Fund contribution to upgrade the main access road.

1.2.15 The Development Policy team have undertaken public consultation on the [pilot project to deliver two Simplified Planning Zones](#) in Lochgilphead and Mull during 2019/20. There has been some programme slippage, which is primarily related to SEPA requirements for additional flood risk information in respect of the Lochgilphead site. Handling the flood risk issues is an evolving process with newly emerging requirements at each stage. The progression of work has included photographs, cross-sections across the river section of the watercourse, culvert dimensions, LiDAR information, and a detailed Flood Risk Assessment by qualified professionals. As the flooding issues are still unresolved additional



modelling is currently being commissioned to better delineate the functional floodplain. It is anticipated that the SPZ sites should progress this year.

## 1.3 GOVERNANCE

1.3.1 Development Management and Development Policy items are reported to the centralised Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee which meets monthly (except for July) and convenes for site visits and discretionary Local Hearings as required. The PPSL Committee met on 16 occasions during 2019/20. Local Review Bodies operate flexibly to demand with 12 LRB meetings and 2 site visits convened during 2019/20.

1.3.2 The Council's [Scheme of Delegation](#) to officers was scheduled to be reviewed and updated in March 2020 but has been postponed as a result of disruption to planned activity from Covid-19. However the existing scheme of delegation continues to operate effectively with 99% of decisions being made under delegated powers in 2018/19. During this period 97.8% of applications were approved demonstrating the effectiveness of a plan-led system, flexible/pro-development policies which are aligned to the corporate priority of sustainable economic growth, and a commitment to delivering positive outcomes.

1.3.3 Argyll and Bute Council's Planning Service continues to face significant budget pressures due to the requirement for delivery of savings across all Council services. The last two years have seen a downsizing of staff resource, redesign of service delivery arrangements, and introduction of a chargeable pre-application enquiry service within the Development Management Service that have cumulatively delivered budget savings of £270,000. Further savings of £125,000 are expected to be delivered during 2020/21. The Development Policy team have also downsized their staff resource following retirements of experienced officers during 2019/20 with a requirement to deliver £46,000 savings in 2020/21. Budgets and efficiency measures are considered at management meetings at all levels with updates provided regularly to the Executive Director and elected Policy Lead. Participation in the [Costing the Planning Service in Scotland](#) project, as detailed in [PPF 8](#), has confirmed that the cost efficiency of Argyll and Bute's Planning Service compares favourably with that of other Local Authorities and has provided additional insight to assist with budget planning for future years. The outcomes of this project were [reported to the Council's PPSL Committee](#) in June 2019.

1.3.4 Planning Enforcement is currently delivered by two dedicated Enforcement Officers based in Lochgilphead and Oban covering the West of Argyll and Bute with the undertaking of enforcement duties now being combined with Development Management casework in the East of the Council area. Enforcement is delivered on a priority basis which is set out in [The Enforcement Charter](#) which was reviewed and updated during 2019/20 and subsequently adopted by the Council in March 2020.



*Marina Development - Oban Harbour*



1.3.5 The Planning Service continue to engage in a multi-agency project in the development of the [Oban Strategic Development Framework](#). It is intended to deliver a long term strategic vision for the town and to act as a vehicle to co-ordinate and maximise synergies between a variety of ongoing project streams.

1.3.6 The Council's Housing Service was brought under the umbrella of the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services in November 2017. The revised Service structure has combined management responsibilities for Housing with the Development Policy team. The revised arrangements have already helped to forge better linkage and integration of activity between these complimentary services and has seen Planning and Housing staff being represented at each Service's annual conference. Summer 2019 saw further change to the Council's corporate structure which included the functions provided by Planning and Regulatory Services, and the Economic Development Service brought under a single Head of Service which is now titled Development & Economic Growth. Whilst the corporate restructure was primarily intended to deliver budget savings the new service structure is expected to deliver better alignment and co-ordination of the Council's regulatory functions, including Development Management, with the Council's plan making, business support, and project delivery activities.

1.3.7 The Planning Service continues to engage with other Council Services through Area Property Action Groups (APAGs). This approach and some of its successful, high quality outcomes have been highlighted within previous PPFs, and examples of this innovative, inter-disciplinary approach to problem solving are again noted within Case Study 4.

1.3.8 The Council continues to explore the delivery of shared services with other authorities. An example of this approach is that the Council's Conservation and Design Officer is currently providing built heritage advice to Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority.

1.3.9 The Development Management Service continues to seek to review and refine existing processes to deliver efficiency savings and improve performance and outcomes for customers. During 2018/19 the Development Management Service invested and delivered an upgrade of Public Access improving stability of this customer engagement tool and allowing greater scope to improve the customer experience. The Service has also invested in the purchase of IDOX Enterprise for Uniform during 2018/19 and has undertaken development work during 2019/20 that will deliver improved workflow processes and performance management during 2020/21. As highlighted in Case Study 9, the requirement to adapt to restrictions on travel and social distancing enforced by Covid-19 has expedited the adoption of online working practices, including online validation and e-decision notices, which will be retained in the long term.

1.3.10 All professional staff within Planning Services are provided with laptops to facilitate their ability to travel efficiently and work flexibly across the Council area. The Development Management Service has invested in tablets which will be deployed to allow use of e-documents to replace hard copy planning application documentation used for examination of plans outwith the office environment, and recording site visit activity.

1.3.11 Customer appetite for Processing Agreements remains indifferent. The Development Management Service did not determine any applications with a Processing Agreement during 2019/20 despite engaging with all applicants for Major development. Information on the availability of [Processing Agreements](#) is available on the Council's website, is highlighted in all pre-application reports, and has previously been promoted in User Forums.

1.3.12 Argyll and Bute Council has a [corporate complaints process](#); customer information is provided on the Council website and in customer Charters. All complaints are subject to performance reporting and 'Stage 2' complaints require review by senior management.

1.3.13 Legacy cases are reviewed regularly as part of caseload management. Unfortunately, despite continuing efforts to clear legacy cases during 2019/20 the number of 'live' applications older than 12 months remains the same as the previous reporting period. Monitoring of caseload reviews on

longstanding applications is undertaken regularly at team level and monthly with involvement of a senior manager.

1.3.14 Applications which are to be subject to planning legal agreements are flagged up on lists of undetermined applications to ensure that the progress can be reviewed on a regular basis. The average time period for processing applications with legal agreements decreased from 18.5 weeks to 10.1 weeks during 2019/20.

## 1.4 CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

1.4.1 During 2019/20 the Planning Service delivered and progressed on a range of Improvement Actions identified in PPF 8. An overview of progress is set out in Part 3 of this document.

1.4.2 The Council continues to benchmark its performance on the determination of planning applications against the National average and the performance of other rural local authorities.

1.4.3 Internally, team meetings are held on a regular basis. The Executive Director attends fortnightly Strategic Management Team meetings. The Head of Development & Economic Growth attends the fortnightly Departmental Management Team meeting and monthly meetings of the Strategic Management Team, provides a regular update to Policy Leads, and holds his own Service meetings on a regular basis; a Service level e-Development group is also convened quarterly. Service level management teams also meet regularly/quarterly; within Development Management area teams also meet weekly to assign casework, and review caseload performance.

1.4.4 All Council staff are required to prepare an annual Performance Review and Development plan (PRD). This process allows staff to individually review their performance with their line manager and identify training/development needs. Completion of PRDs for 2020 would ordinarily have been completed by end of March 2020 however this activity has been disrupted by Covid-19. Planning Services staff are expected to complete their PRDs within the extended time period of August 2020.



1.4.5 For the past seven years, the Planning Service has delivered a series of short training events for elected Members which are intended to improve their breadth of knowledge and competence in the undertaking of planning decision. These are normally undertaken in bite size sessions in the hour prior to a meeting of the PPSL Committee but have also included half day workshops and site visits. Training during 2019/20 included Competent Motions, Aquaculture Development, Oban Strategic Development Framework, Landscape Character Assessment, Low Carbon Technology, Food Growing Strategy, and an update on the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Topics identified for Member training in [2020/21](#) include Use of Planning Conditions, SEPA's role as a Statutory Consultee, Placemaking, Archaeology and Planning, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, and Planning Enforcement. Case Study 7 provides detail of a recent elected member workshop and site visit focussing on aquaculture development.

1.4.6 The Annual Planning Conference held in December 2019 sought to promote the work of statutory consultees to the planning process and included presentations from Historic Environment Scotland, SEPA, and SNH providing a general overview of their statutory remits, key contacts, and delivery of CPD training through a focus on the topics of assessing flood risk and new development, and the undertaking an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations. The conference was open to professional staff across the Council who engage in the planning process; the conference is promoted as

a CPD event to staff in addition to an opportunity to recognise and promote collaborative working not only across the Council but also with other key stakeholders. Previous conferences have included presentations from the Council's Housing, Economic Growth, and Roads Services, in addition to the Local Biodiversity Officer, Marine and Coastal Development Officer, and GIS Manager covering a range of topics including delivery of affordable housing, homelessness, SuDS, flooding and coastal erosion, Construction Environmental Management Plans, the Clyde Regional Marine Plan, and availability of new GIS services. The annual conference is a successful platform for exchanging ideas, working practices and knowledge between different Council Services and key stakeholders, and for fostering smarter, more efficient ways of working.

1.4.7 Planning Services representatives regularly attend meetings of [Heads of Planning Scotland](#) (inc. DM and DP subgroups), Scottish Planning Enforcement Forum, the Local Authority Aquaculture Forum, [Clyde Marine Planning Partnership](#), [West of Scotland Archaeology Service](#), and the e-Development/Digital Taskforce.

1.4.8 In addition to benchmarking performance, the Planning Service also seeks to engage directly with other local authorities to share best practice and develop new ways of working. During 2019/20 officers have visited Dumfries and Galloway Council, and Glasgow City Council to learn from their experience in the development and roll out of bespoke IDOX Enterprise workflow systems.

1.4.9 Work remains ongoing in efforts to review and improve the rate of applications which are valid upon receipt. During 2019/20, Officers have engaged with a review of the [Scottish National Validation Standards](#) that is being undertaken by the Heads of Planning Scotland. The Development Management Service also hosted a visit from Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority to compare arrangements, experience, and resources for the validation of planning applications and it is hoped that a reciprocal visit to the National Park offices in Balloch can be arranged during 2020/21.

1.4.10 The Planning Service have engaged with Scottish Government consultations, in particular during 2019/20 to the consultation on Planning Performance and Fees which included [elected member involvement](#). Officers have also participated in a topic specific follow up session on Agricultural 'Permitted Development Rights' (PDR) which forms part of the Scottish Government's programme for reviewing and extending PDR in Scotland. The Council has also responded to consultations on [Housing to 2040](#), and [Scottish Forestry Corporate Plan](#), and participated in a seminar on [Climate Change Allowances for Flood Risk Assessment in Land Use Planning](#).

1.4.11 In March 2020 the Planning, Protective Services and Licencing Committee approved the Lochgilphead Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as non-statutory technical planning guidance. During 2019/20 work has also been undertaken to prepare draft Appraisals and Management Plans for the Tarbert, and Helensburgh Town Centre Conservation Areas. Public engagement on these items was scheduled to be progressed during March 2020 but has been postponed in light of travel and social distancing restrictions arising from Covid-19.

1.4.12 Aquaculture is an area of planning that relatively few authorities have expertise in. Argyll and Bute is one of four Scottish Local Authorities that deal with the majority of fin fish planning applications. The aquaculture industry is currently seeking to expand into new locations across Scotland to meet national growth targets. In [PPF 8](#) we reported that we had provided assistance to colleagues in North Ayrshire Council and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park following receipt of EIA Screening and Scoping requests for aquaculture development within their respective areas. During 2019/20 Development Management and Coastal Management Officers attended the Local Authority Aquaculture-working group which was hosted by Highland Council and have provided input to a co-ordinated working group response to issues raised by the Aquaculture Industry during the early stages of the Covid-19 lockdown period during which operational restrictions meant that sites could not always be operated in full compliance with the terms of their planning permissions.

1.4.13 We reported in [PPF 8](#) of investment in updated software/systems to deliver a more resilient



Public Access service resulting in the availability of the Public Access system rising to 99.9% for the second half of 2018/19. Whilst issues with the day to day resilience of this service have been addressed there is now a focus on delivering improvements to the usability of the Public Access System. It has been identified that delivery of the desired improvements are very much dependent on providing improved compatibility with back office Document Management Systems (DMS) and accordingly work has been progressed with IT, Building Standards and Regulatory Services to build a business case for procurement of an alternative DMS that would not only provide improvements to Public Access but also to the functionality of other existing back office workflow systems across a range of Council services. A business case to take this project forward has been approved by Senior Management and confirmation in June 2020 that funding to deliver the project has now been secured.

1.4.14 Internal processes for handling pre-applications and the management of e-mail correspondence and file attachments have been subject to further review and updating throughout 2019/20 having regard to the implications of [GDPR](#) with updated data retention policies, procedure notes for staff and training sessions delivered. Enforced homeworking arrangements implemented in response to Covid-19 restrictions have resulted in new workflow processes that remove/minimise the requirement for hardcopy process in mail handling, issuing of decision being expedited in their development in order to allow the planning process to continue operating during 'lockdown' - some of these are detailed in Case Study 9

1.4.15 We reported in [PPF 8](#) that the Planning Service has successfully attained [Customer Service Excellence](#) Standard during 2018/19. Retention of CSE accreditation will require continued engagement with customers to develop and inform the ways in which we deliver our services in the future and the standards to which we deliver them. The reaccreditation assessment was scheduled to be undertaken in March 2020 but was postponed in response to concerns about holding a public event during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic having an effect within the UK. It is anticipated that the reassessment will be rescheduled later on in 2020.



1.4.16 The online and mobile capabilities of the Council's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) continue to be developed saving officer time and providing customers with quicker access to information. During 2019/20 the GIS team have [developed the 'story map' for the proposed LDP 2 public consultation](#), and enhanced the photographic data layer in the [online map](#) based footpath guide to include key view points from an increasing number of paths. It is hoped that this service will help to stimulate active lifestyles. The GIS team have also played a valuable role in the Council's response planning to the Covid-19 pandemic and have assisted with a great many of the planning and logistical challenges that have arisen. The team also continue to work on integrating the Strategic Housing Investment Plan with enhanced GIS functionality.

1.4.17 Engagement with Forestry Scotland during 2019/20 has resulted in a review of the effectiveness of consultation with the Council on proposals for new plantations, forest accesses, and long term forest plans. This workstream will continue into 2020/21 and is expected to deliver a streamlined consultation process with improved quality of consultation response that is tailored to meet the requirements of Forestry Scotland officers in their assessment of planning proposals. The publication of technical note on Upland Hill Tracks has been progressed and was intended to be completed for publication concurrently with completion of this workstream but has been placed on hold following announcement by the Scottish Government in Autumn 2019 that related 'permitted development rights' would be subject to an upcoming review.

# Case Study 1 Effective Planning Enforcement

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement			C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement			
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Key Areas of Work	Planning Enforcement, Collaborative Working														
Stakeholders	DM, SNH														
Project Lead	David Love														

In May 2011 Argyll and Bute Council granted planning permission for a new community led hydroelectric scheme above Loch Fyne, the permission has subsequently been subject to amendments to include a second intake, and increased storage capacity. The proposal was aimed at supporting community projects within the locality. The site lies partly within the Glen Etive / Glen Fyne Special Protection Area (SPA). The hydroelectric scheme was officially opened in August 2015 by John Swinney MSP.

During the course of construction works the applicant reached an impasse with an adjacent landowner over the use of existing access tracks. Whilst efforts were made to identify an alternative solution through discussion with the Planning Service and SNH the developer, who by that time was committed to completion of the project chose to utilise the route of the penstock as an alternative, unauthorised access track to complete construction and serve the ongoing operational requirements of the development.

The penstock route had been chosen primarily as this land had already been disturbed during development works and had not yet been subject to planned restoration. Unfortunately the unauthorised track followed a less than ideal route cutting across, and running up steep slopes causing significant visual scarring on the hillside, and was of a form of construction that was very much out of character with its otherwise undeveloped, upland location the effects of which were evident both locally and also within longer distance views into the site. The undesirable consequences of the unauthorised track not only raised concern within the Council's Planning Service but are a matter which has been involved in wider debate, and has been cited by other parties, including [Mountaineering Scotland](#), as an example of an insensitive and poorly designed hill track that has significant adverse effects upon landscape character and visual amenity.

Whilst the Planning Service sought to engage positively with the developer it was considered appropriate that a planning enforcement notice was served at an early stage in proceedings to underline the unacceptability of the breach of planning control. Officers worked in close collaboration with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to prepare a method statement based upon their [best practice guidance](#) to accompany the enforcement notice. Whilst the developer sought to appeal the terms of the notice, engagement with officers and SNH continued in the background to consider alternative access route proposals. The appeal was ultimately withdrawn and an alternative method statement submitted by the applicant setting out a compromise where the access track would be retained in the absence of a suitable alternative route but with significant work proposed to upgrade its construction and restore adjacent disturbed land to bring it into alignment with best practice techniques which would provide appropriate mitigation against the most significant adverse effects of the unauthorised development upon landscape and visual amenity.

The alternative proposal was subsequently approved by the Planning Authority in consultation with SNH and the agreed remediation works completed in August 2019. The site has been subject to extensive monitoring by joint Planning/SNH site visits throughout the duration of the enforcement investigation and implementation of remediation works.

This matter is considered to represent a good example of effective use of planning enforcement powers, the commitment of resources over an extended time period to monitoring and proactive engagement to deliver positive outcomes, and the ability to work collaboratively with partner agencies.

# Case Study 2

## Adapt Northern Heritage Programme - Update

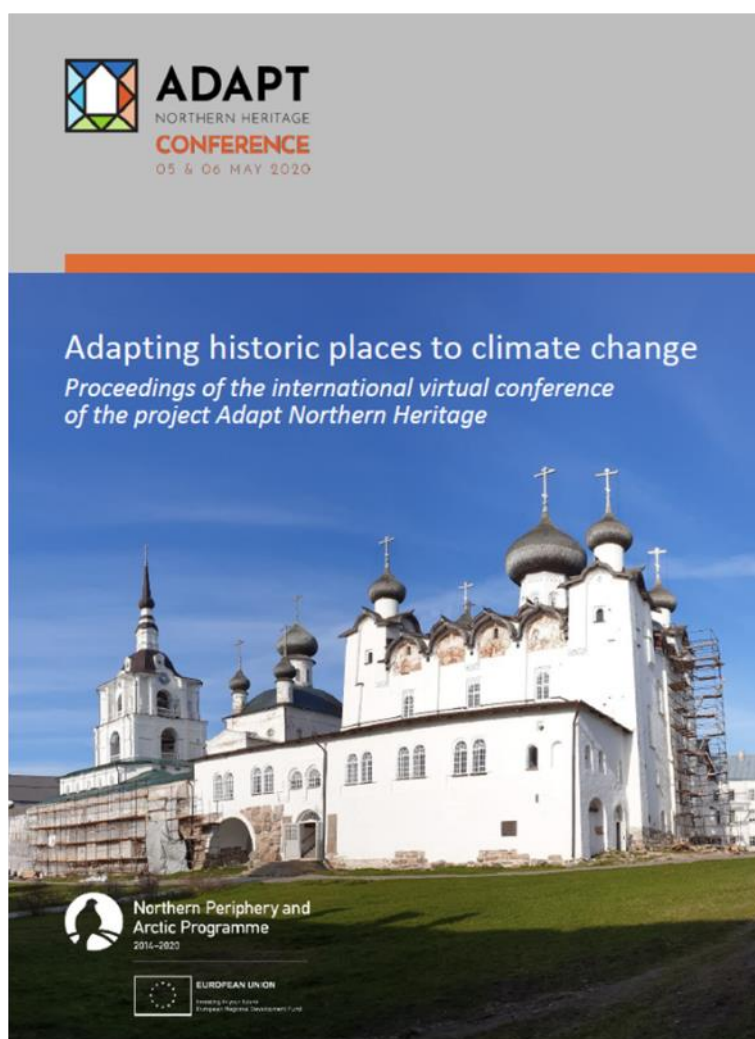
Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement				C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement		
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>Key Areas of Work</b>	Conservation, Environment, Collaborative Working, Skill Sharing														
<b>Stakeholders</b>	ABC, HES, NIKU, Riksantikvaren, Minjastofnun Islands														
<b>Project Lead</b>	Kim de Buiteleir														

Argyll and Bute Council continued to participate in the three year programme [Adapt Northern Heritage](#), which ran between 2017 and 2020, in relation to the sustainable adaption of historic places. [Historic Environment Scotland](#) was one of the eleven project partners, along with [Minjastofnun Islands](#) (THE Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland), the [Norsk Institutt for Kulturminneforskning](#) (Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research) and [Riksantikvaren](#) (Norway's Directorate for Cultural Heritage).

The project included consideration of how climate change will affect the historic town of [Inveraray](#), particularly from coastal flooding, sea level rise and moisture related damage due to increased precipitation. The aim of the programme was to lead to the implementation of better management practices in a manner which will mitigate the potential effects of climate change.

Argyll and Bute Council participated in various stakeholder events throughout the duration of the project. In 2019 a summer workshop was held in Inveraray focusing on testing the practicability of the drafted Adapt Northern Heritage Risk Assessment and Adaptation Planning Guides. There was then an autumn event in Trondheim, Norway which drew together the experiences of the assessment tool and finalised it for publication and use.

The [final event](#) was a conference held online via Zoom on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The Inveraray case study information were completed and incorporated into the presentations by the project partners, which has also been compiled into the final publications. The assessment tool kit will be applied by the Council to other historic environments to assess their robustness to the effects of climate change and incorporated in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan process. Argyll and Bute Council were asked to consider an additional relevant issue and gave a presentation on the impact of climate change on coastal erosion and marram grass availability on Tiree, which is the traditional thatching material of the island.





# Case Study 3 Dunbeg Masterplan - Update 2020

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement				C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement		
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Key Areas of Work	Masterplanning, Affordable Housing, Collaborative Working, Placemaking														
Stakeholders	DM, DP, Housing, Roads, Scottish Government, LINK Housing														
Project Lead	David Moore / Matt Mulderrig														

In [PPF 8](#) we provided an update on implementation of the [Dunbeg Masterplan](#), which focussed on the installation of essential infrastructure upgrades, and provided an overview of collaborative internal and external collaborative working arrangements that had been put in place to bring the project to fruition.

The project is being delivered through a strategic partnership between Argyll and Bute Council and [LINK Housing Association](#). The aim of the project was to provide a sympathetic extension to the existing settlement of Dunbeg and has taken a design-led approach in addressing the challenges presented by its rural location and coastal, moorland landscape to deliver a development with placemaking and connectivity firmly established in its foundation.



The subsequent 12 month period has seen considerable progress toward delivery of 300 affordable houses as part of phase 3 of the Dunbeg Masterplan although this has been unavoidably interrupted by the Covid-19 site construction closure for much of what would have been a busy spring and summer of construction in 2020. Notwithstanding this unexpected interruption, good progress on the delivery of 300 affordable homes and associated infrastructure has been made.

Notably, the Scottish Local Government and Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart, attended an engagement [workshop held by Architecture and Design Scotland \(A&DS\)](#) in July 2019 to examine what lessons could be learned from the Dunbeg Phase 3 development in delivering high quality large scale housing in a rural authority context. The workshop group used the Place Standard tool to discuss the outcome for residents of the emerging housing development.

Work will continue on the site once construction work is allowed to resume, and the Planning Authority continues to work closely with the applicants and their agents to deliver this strategically important housing for the Oban Area.

The upgrading of the Kirk Road to facilitate the new housing is now completed. This new road has been essential in [HIE bringing forward a planning application for phase 2](#) of their research and development facility at the Dunbeg Marine Science Park. This will create additional high quality employment opportunities for the area, and is an additional benefit associated with the Housing Infrastructure Fund investment by The Scottish Government in delivering infrastructure to facilitate the housing development.

# Case Study 4

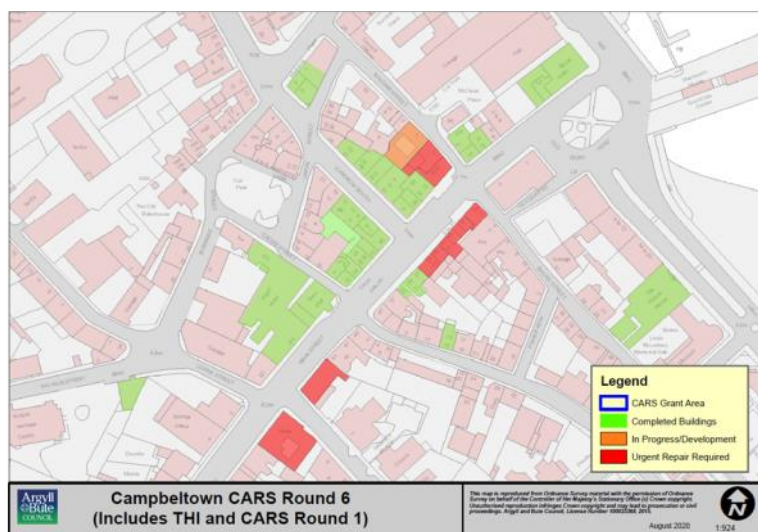
## Heritage Led Regeneration of Campbeltown

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement				C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement			
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Key Areas of Work	Conservation, Regeneration, Town Centres, Interdisciplinary Working, Collaborative Working, Community Engagement, Skill Sharing															
Stakeholders	ABC, HES, Town Centre Businesses, Residents and Property Owners															
Project Lead	James Lafferty															

[Campbeltown Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme \(CARS\)](#) is a heritage-led regeneration project which has run from 2015-2020 that has offered grant funding to property owners to assist with the repair of historic buildings within Campbeltown town centre. The £2.7m project is a continuation of the previous Campbeltown CARS and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) that resulted in over £7m being invested in town centre buildings between 2007 and 2015. The conclusion of the original CARS/THI project and launch of CARS2 was highlighted in our [PPF 6](#) report back in 2017. This case study seeks to provide an update which celebrates the success and impact of heritage-led regeneration in Campbeltown which over a thirteen year period has delivered [significant heritage led investment](#) that has not just improved the fabric and appearance of the historic core of the Campbeltown Conservation Area but also enhanced the vibrancy of the town centre, and safeguarded the future of residential and commercial properties which had either fallen into dilapidation and disuse, or would have done so without intervention.

Throughout its lifetime, the project has contributed toward and facilitated the restoration of a number of key buildings including the [Campbeltown Town Hall](#), the [Old Schoolhouse](#), the [Royal Hotel](#), Shopfront Improvements, and a series of multi-ownership tenement repairs. [Engagement](#) work has also been undertaken to [promote building maintenance](#), to provide training to local contractors in traditional skills, with children in local schools and adults through support for exhibitions, community events, and the [Campbeltown Heritage Trail](#).

The project has required co-ordination of activity with the Council's Development Management team, and engagement with a multi-disciplinary Area Property Action Group (APAG) in seeking to address dangerous buildings and tenement properties in multiple ownership. Co-ordination of grant funding with Housing, Building Standards, Development Management, and Planning Enforcement activity has resulted in a number of properties being retained or restored to residential and commercial use, in addition to their removal from Historic Environment Scotland's [Buildings at Risk Register](#).



The aim of the project has been to provide a sustainable economic future for Campbeltown that recognises its built heritage whilst making it a better place to live, work, visit, and invest. The project also seeks to deliver a legacy with the promotion and fostering of a culture of building maintenance which had previously been lacking, and through imposition of grant conditions that require ongoing building maintenance. The successful outcomes of the project have received recognition both locally and nationally with multiple awards not only for the high quality building refurbishments that have been delivered but also recognising the contribution of individuals who have driven the project forward. Regeneration work will continue within Campbeltown in the short-term through a wider Council led Town Centre Fund [shopfront improvement scheme](#) which is ongoing.





# 157

Grants Awarded

£3.25 million  
Total Grant Offers



# 40

Buildings Grant Aided

# 60

Local  
Contractors  
Involved

# 49

Commercial Units  
Retained/Brought  
Back Into Use



# 2200

sqm  
Vacant Floorspace Brought  
Back Into Use

# 69

Residential Flats Retained/  
Brought Back Into Use



# 42

Shopfronts  
Upgraded /  
Refurbished







# Case Study 5

## Enabling Development - Morar House

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement				C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement		
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>Key Areas of Work</b>	Design, Conservation, LDP Policy/SG, Collaborative Working														
<b>Stakeholders</b>	DM, DP, Building Standards, Historic Environment Scotland, Developer														
<b>Project Lead</b>	Frazer MacLeod														

Policy LDP 3 of the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015 clearly sets out that the Council's position is to support the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment. This baseline is supported by Supplementary Guidance SG LDP ENV 16(a) which not only sets a high bar for the considerations applied to applications affecting listed buildings but also sets out flexible provisions providing support for Enabling Development as an extraordinary measure where necessary to facilitate restoration of valued built heritage. This case study provides an example of these flexible policy provisions being applied to address a conservation deficit, and the delivery of high quality conservation and new design.

Morar House, 17 Upper Colquhoun Street, Helensburgh is a Category A listed, impressive red rosemary tiled house designed by William Leiper. The building sits within the Helensburgh Upper Conservation Area adjacent to Macintosh's Hill House which featured in PPF 8. Like Hill House, the property was carefully positioned on the site to take full advantage of the view over the Clyde Estuary. It's siting creates considerable interest in recognition of contextual value. It is an extremely important building in the career of William Leiper whose "Arts and Crafts" houses in Helensburgh have left a unique stamp on the character of the town. It combines a skilfully handled composition with a mixture of Scottish and English elements with strong references to the work by Richard Norman Shaw.

"Arts and Crafts" was an influential movement of the late 19th century which attempted to re-establish the skills of craftsmanship threatened by mass production and industrialisation. Architecture was also reformed through traditional building crafts, the use of local materials and free of any imposed style.

The house was originally built as "Drumadoon" a family home in 1901 and has had other uses over the years, the last being a nursing home before falling into disuse and a decade of dilapidation with wet and dry rot rampant throughout its interior. Externally the stonework was sound, but the unchecked deterioration of roof and gutters had been the root cause of the problem. As a result it was placed on Historic Environment Scotland's [Buildings at Risk Register](#) in 2010.

Development Management officers have worked with the property owner over the last five years to progress proposals which include for the renovation of 7 apartments within the original building, the creation of a new build extension to the main building housing 5 new apartments, and enabling development to fund these works of three garden villas within its grounds. Planning permission and listed building consent were initially sought in February 2016 and granted in September 2016, with the determination period also including conclusion of a Planning Obligation.

The proposals for the conversion and extension of the main building was considered acceptable, with time taken in ensuring high quality finishing materials were used to retain the Arts and Crafts feel to new parts of the building. This was done in close association with Building Standards who liaised with Development Management during various phases of construction. This collaboration was useful if a technical difficulty arose in which on site decisions were needed relating to things like altering the main Oriel window, the chimney height and replacing the entire roof covering. This successful, flexible approach has strengthened communication in the delivery of separate regulatory functions and is utilised in other significant similar heritage projects.



The three new houses initially proposed to address the conservation deficit were modern, flat roofed, modular buildings unlike anything within the wider area and unsuitable in location, context and boundary finish. They were considered to create a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and could not be justified in terms of Development Plan policies LDP 3, SG LDP ENV 16(a) and SG LDP ENV 17. A flexible approach was taken in regards to the three houses in which permission was given on the basis they were required as enabling the development to proceed financially. The proposal was revised with officer input and the scheme eventually approved represented the optimum compromise between retaining the character of the Conservation Area, the character and setting of the adjoining category A listed buildings (including the Hill House) and addressing the conservation deficit to ensure viability of the project. A Planning Obligation underpinned delivery of essential conservation works. As part of this consideration other issues were taken into account including:

- Whether the case submitted to the Council was based on the needs of the asset, not the owner;
- Whether the repair specification and other cost generators was accurate;
- Taking a realistic view of profit levels, based on professional advice and bearing in mind the degree of risk by the developer.

This year the conversion of Morar House was significantly completed to the satisfaction of the Council meeting the terms of a legal agreement restricting the construction of the three houses until the appropriate time. The developer, during [marketing of these houses](#), considered their modular design too contemporary for many buyers who preferred a more traditional appearance reflecting the character and style of other houses within this area. Subsequently a further application was made, and approved for three traditional villas that visually referenced Morar House.





# Case Study 6 Community Food Growing Strategy

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement				C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement		
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Key Areas of Work	Environment, Greenspace, Community Engagement														
Stakeholders	ABC, Communities														
Project Lead	Marina Curran-Colthart														



The [Argyll and Bute Community Food Growing Strategy](#) is aimed at encouraging and empowering people to grow their own food, this is reflected in ***‘our vision is to encourage and enable people in our community who wish to grow their own food, by providing: information on potential community food growing spaces, advice and guidance’***.

The legislation that underpins the Community Food Growing Strategy (CFGS) is the [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015 - Part 9](#) which places a duty on local authorities to take reasonable steps to protect and provide growing spaces to meet community needs. It requires local authorities to provide a food growing strategy that reflects their area and to identify potential land in our Local Development Plan which may be used for cultivation by community groups.

Argyll and Bute Council embrace community food-growing in all its forms, one of which is growing food in community growing spaces and/or gardens. Grow-Your-Own Food (“GYOF”) can be in a community garden/space, school growing space, allotment or croft. All these areas can give control to our food growing community over how and what they grow; thereby increasing access to affordable, healthy and environmentally sound food; the very essence of being a Good Food Nation. The CFGS also includes a [Community Food Growing Leaflet](#) which sets out a framework for community groups to follow in order to realise their food growing objectives. It includes advice on the benefits, setting up a group, land acquisition, funding, planning permission (if required) and layout suggestions.

## Our Growing Community



The Strategy provides an insight into what allotment and community growing provision already exists within our area. This was informed by a stakeholder engagement survey with over 340 responses the results of which enabled us to capture the current status, management arrangements and interest of the community in growing their own food followed by a 6 week public consultation to capture any community food growing activities missed in the initial survey.

Within the context of the Local Development Plan, the Strategy identifies growing spaces in our communities and has important links with both the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park as the Council area straddles the national park which identifies and safeguards green infrastructure, including allotments and other open space.

In order to inspire community groups, the CFGS has 3 'Be Inspired' Case Studies, and provides advice highlighting where planning permission may be required, and how to engage with the Council's Planning Service, and the National Park's Planning Service to seek detailed advice or progress a planning application.



The Strategy will help create further opportunities for people to grow their own food by:

- Encouraging developers through the planning process to include space for community gardens and food growing within new developments;
- Through review of our open spaces in order to present opportunities to provide community growing spaces for interested groups; and
- Empowering communities to grow their own food as part of open space and public realm improvements.

Our CFGS explains how we support current community growing provision and how we will respond to future demand and support new approaches such as community lead growing space establishment. As part of our duty under the Community Empowerment legislation, Argyll and Bute Council keep a Waiting List and have drafted and consulted on Allotment Rules and Regulations.



# Case Study 7 Aquaculture Member Training Event

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement				C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement		
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Key Areas of Work	Planning Applications, Skills Sharing, Staff Training														
Stakeholders	Elected Members, SEPA, Marine Scotland, DSFB, Aquaculture Industry														
Project Lead	Sandra Davies														

Over the past 7 years a series of training sessions have been organised for Elected Members with the aim of improving knowledge of the planning system on a wide range of issues. The training usually comprises short sessions prior to the start of the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee, however, on occasion longer training events incorporating site visits, workshops and seminars are organised.

On 17th September 2019, the Development Management Service facilitated a full day elected Member training event on the topic of aquaculture. The event included a site visit to a fish farm in the morning to improve Members familiarity with the appearance, scale and operational requirements and impacts of marine fin-fish aquaculture development. Members were afforded the opportunity to inspect and tour operations at an existing development site on Loch Fyne which included both a terrestrial shore base, and a marine based salmon farm.



This was followed by an afternoon session that included a series of presentations in the Council Chambers that were delivered by key stakeholders. Aquaculture has been a high profile, and at times controversial activity in recent times with significant engagement by both industry, environmental/marine conservation groups, and National media, and has also been the subject of much scrutiny including a parliamentary inquiry. Officers were accordingly keen to ensure that all sides of the debate were represented and selected a range of participants to provide balanced coverage of the topic. Presenters included representatives of [SEPA](#), the [Argyll District Salmon Fishery Board](#), [Marine Scotland](#), and the [Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation](#).

As aquaculture has been a high profile activity and has recently been subject of much public scrutiny including a parliamentary inquiry, officers were keen to ensure that all sides of the debate were represented. The aquaculture training was well received by Members who found the day both enjoyable and informative.

*"The benefit of holding a training event such as this is it provides members with sufficient technical knowledge and understanding to allow them to focus on the relevant material planning considerations when dealing with specialised applications of this type in the future."*

**CLlr David Kinniburgh - Chair of Planning, Protective Services, and Licencing Committee**



# Case Study 8

## The Egg Shed - Ardrishaig

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement				C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement		
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Key Areas of Work	Design, Conservation, Regeneration, Collaborative Working, Placemaking														
Stakeholders	ABC, Scottish Canals, Ardrishaig Community Trust, Sustrans, HIE, LEADER, RCGF														
Project Lead	Anna Watkiss														



The [Egg Shed](#) is a brand new heritage and community hub in Ardrishaig which has been delivered by Scottish Canals with grant funding from the Council's Tarbert and Lochgilphead Regeneration Fund. The project has delivered new and refurbished historic buildings, enhanced public realm, and improved walking and cycling facilities as part of the phase 1 redevelopment of a former oil storage and distribution depot. The Egg Shed is intended to be a catalyst for the redevelopment of the wider site and will seek to promote access to and connectivity along the waterfront between the hub of activity at Canal Square (where [recent redevelopment](#) has delivered a [café](#), [The Ardrishaig Bothy](#), and kayak hire alongside existing marine based businesses) and existing commercial activity and public green space in Ardrishaig.

The main focus of the project was the creation of the Egg Shed which houses exhibitions in a visitor centre providing information about the Crinan Canal and its surrounding communities as well as providing new multi-purpose meeting room. The £1.65m project was delivered with the support of £250,000 funding from the Tarbert and Lochgilphead Regeneration Fund as well as £580,000 secured from the [Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund](#) by Argyll Bute Council on behalf of Scottish Canals. The Egg Shed [opened in August 2019](#) and has since been shortlisted by the [Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland \(RIAS\)](#) for their 2020 awards.



# Case Study 9

## Development Management COVID-19 Response

Themes	A: Quality of Outcomes				B: Quality of Services & Engagement			C: Governance				D: Culture of Continuous Improvement			
Performance Markers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>Key Areas of Work</b>	Development Management Processes, Process Improvement, Staff Training, Online Systems														
<b>Stakeholders</b>	ABC Development Management, IT, Legal and Governance														
<b>Project Lead</b>	Peter Bain														

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic during the early 2020 resulted in significant disruption to 'normal' life and the way the business is conducted worldwide. The progression of the virus as it spread from China to Italy and across Europe was followed with growing concern throughout late January and February during which time it became increasingly clear in the UK that it's effects were indiscriminate and would continue to spread unchecked and overwhelm health services without drastic action to limit movement of people and their physical interactions.

The Development Management Service sought to take early steps intended to minimise the impact of an increasingly expected 'lockdown' upon service delivery by identifying staff members who had not previously been set-up with the ability to home work and seeking to procure additional laptops and IT set up. Hard copy application and mail handling processes were also subject to review and steps taken to expedite the implementation of online ways of working, many of which were already under development as part of the continual progression of the Planning Service to a 'paperless' system. That said, a number of these issues remained unresolved when the UK Government announced lockdown on 23rd March 2020 at which point all Council offices were closed with immediate effect and staff instructed to stay at home unless their travel was related to delivery of a limited number of essential services.

In the immediate aftermath of 'lockdown' and closure of Council Offices all professional Development Management staff together with a limited number of admin support had home working capabilities that allowed the assessment stage of 'live' applications to continue uninterrupted. The initial focus of business recovery was to deliver home working capability for all staff, to deliver enhanced systems of team management and daily contact to address operational issues and support for all staff, and to share experiences and learn from other authorities using the HoPS forum on KHub. Priority was also afforded to completing the procurement of additional equipment deemed essential to bring the Central Validation Team online, to put in place arrangements to promote online methods of submission, redirect and manage incoming and outgoing hard copy mail, and to complete the development and implementation of revised processes for online validation and issue of decision notices. These early actions allowed the Council to continue to receive and process new applications electronically and in hardcopy throughout 'lockdown'. Validation and determination of applications resumed on the 9th April. Officers also worked with colleagues in Governance to deliver the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee as online meetings in May and June.

Subsequent business recovery activity has included the development and introduction of new preliminary assessment processes and risk assessments. This allows officers to identify applications capable of being progressed without a physical site visit at the earliest stage in proceedings and also to provide an early means of identifying applications where customers require to be notified of expected delays and the need to extend determination periods as a result of limitations upon site visit activity. Latterly the focus of this workstream has been to liaise with other regulatory services within the Council to develop new safe systems for working to deliver a phased resumption of site visit activity from 29th June, and engagement in wider stakeholder groups that seek to support economic recovery as an immediate priority. The purchase of tablets has also allowed site visits without the need to print plans in offices a key Covid -19 risk. The impact of Covid-19 disruptions on statutory performance reporting measures will be subject to detailed review in PPF 10.

# Part 2: Supporting Evidence & Performance Markers

Wherever possible weblinks have been provided within the body text of the report.

This report was compiled drawing on evidence from a variety of sources including:

- [Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023](#)
- [Argyll and Bute - Economic Development Action Plan 2016 - 2021](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 Development Plan Scheme March 2020](#)
- [Argyll and Bute - Main Issues Report 2017](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Council Website](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Council Enforcement & Monitoring Charter March 2020](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Council PPFs 6,7 and 8](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Council, PPSL Committee Minutes](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Council Scheme of Administration and Delegation](#)
- Argyll and Bute Council, Development & Economic Growth Service Plan 2020-23
- A range of committee reports
- Customer feedback
- Reports from IDOX UNiform

Case Study Topics	Issue covered by Case Study No.	Case Study Topics	Issue covered by Case Study No.	Case Study Topics	Issue covered by Case Study No.
Design	5,8	Economic Development		Performance Monitoring	
Conservation	2,4,5,8	Enforcement	1	Process Improvement	9
Regeneration	4,8	Development Management Processes	9	Project Management	
Environment	2,6	Planning Applications	7	Skills Sharing	2,4,7
Greenspace	6	Interdisciplinary Working	4	Staff Training	7,9
Town Centres	4	Collaborative Working	1,2,3,4,5,8	Online Systems	9
Masterplanning	3	Community Engagement	4,6	Transport	
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	5	Placemaking	3,8	Active Travel	
Housing Supply		Charrettes		Other:	
Affordable Housing	3	Place Standard			



## PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2019/20

	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE / COMMENTS
1.	<b>Decision-making:</b> Authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types.	Part 4—Table B & Part 5—Table A.  Contextual commentary setting out factors affecting performance on decision-making are set out under Part 5 C.
2.	<b>Project management:</b> Offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in all major applications <u>and</u> availability publicised on planning authority website.	Part 1—1.3.11  Processing Agreements for major and 'locally significant' developments are promoted through pre-application discussion, user forums and online.  <a href="#">Argyll and Bute Council - Processing Agreements</a>
3.	<b>Early Collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability and promotion of pre-application discussion for all prospective applications.</li> <li>• Clear and proportionate requests for supporting information.</li> </ul>	Part 1—1.2.12 Case Studies 3, 4, 5 & 8  The Development Management Service provides a <a href="#">pre-application advice service</a> . This is promoted on the Council website, through user forums, and by officers when engaged by prospective applicants.  Pre-application assessment of proposals seeks to identify all relevant issues which will be material to the determination of a subsequent application, and will involve engagement with consultees where appropriate. The report template issued to applicants was revised during 17/18 to include a dedicated section identifying the requirement for supporting information - this list is populated following a review of relevant planning constraints and the advice of consultees (including other Council Services) to ensure that any request for further information is specific and proportionate to the development proposed. Where applicants do not engage at pre-application stage a similar approach is undertaken to identify issues and any requirement for further information at an early stage in the handling of the application.  Applications are validated against the <a href="#">National Validation Standard</a> published by HoPS to ensure that submissions and requirements for supporting information are quality checked on a consistent basis. This document is also promoted and published on the Council website to assist applicants in the preparation of their application.
4.	<b>Legal agreements:</b> Conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant'.	Part 1—1.3.14 & Part 5—Table A  Applications subject to legal agreements were determined with an average time period of less than 6 months during 2019/20 with improved performance on the previous reporting period. Applications requiring a legal agreement are reviewed regularly and are highlighted on officers outstanding items case lists.

	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE / COMMENTS
5.	<b>Enforcement charter:</b> updated / republished.	Part 1—1.3.4 Part 4—Table C, Case Study 1  The Planning Enforcement and Monitoring Charter was been reviewed and updated in March 2020. <a href="#">Argyll and Bute Council Enforcement &amp; Monitoring Charter March 2020</a>
6.	<b>Continuous improvement:</b> <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>	Part 4—Tables A, B, C and Context D  Part 3 details previous and committed Service Improvements. Contextual commentary on delivery/identification of improvements is included within:  Part 1—1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.2.2, 1.2.4, 1.2.15, 1.3.9, 1.3.11, 1.3.13, 1.3.14, 1.4.9, 1.4.11, 1.4.13, 1.4.15, 1.4.17 and Part 5 Table A
7.	<b>Local Development Plan:</b> Less than 5 years from adoption.	The Local Development Plan was adopted in 2015.  <a href="#">Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015</a>
8.	<b>Development plan scheme:</b> 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>	LDP2 is project planned with careful management and reporting of any adjustments, and is currently scheduled for adoption in late 2021.  <a href="#">Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan Scheme 2020</a>
9.	<b>Elected members engaged early (pre- MIR) in development plan preparation:</b>	During 2016 and 2017 all Members were engaged in the pre-MIR process through a series of seminars and workshops including Senior Management, which considered potential strategic options and identified and agreed Main Issues which would be presented in the <a href="#">MIR</a> . Engagement has been ongoing in 2018/19 with Member and Senior Management seminars and business days considering potential allocations and content of draft LDP2.
10.	<b>Cross sector stakeholders, including industry, Agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation.</b>	The Council chose to hold a call for sites exercise over a six month period in an attempt to engage all developers, landowners and other stakeholders pre-MIR. It consulted widely on the results of this exercise including with Key Agencies and Scottish Government. The Council has used the <a href="#">Place Standard Tool with the assistance of Scottish Government and collaboratively with Community Planning Partners</a> as part of the pre-MIR consultation and engagement process and particularly targeting hard to reach groups.

	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE / COMMENTS
11.	<b>Production of regular and proportionate policy, advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications.</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Make a Planning Application</a> section of the Council website provides applicants with information that they need to consider before making an application.</p> <p><a href="#">Argyll and Bute - Planning Application Info</a></p> <p>The Central Validation Team contributed to the development of and have subsequently adopted the National Validation Standard published by HoPS in 2017. Officers have participated in HoPS ongoing review of this document during 2020. Part 1—1.4.9</p> <p><a href="#">HoPS National Validation Standard</a></p> <p>Supplementary non-statutory planning guidance is reviewed and updated regularly. Current publications include <a href="#">Houses in Multiple Occupation</a>, and <a href="#">Advertisements</a>, <a href="#">Masterplanning</a>, and <a href="#">Biodiversity</a>.</p>
12.	<b>Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice.)</b>	Part 1—1.1.5, 1.2.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 1.2.6, 1.2.8, 1.2.9, 1.2.10, 1.2.11, 1.2.12, 1.2.13, 1.2.14, 1.3.1, 1.3.4, 1.3.5, 1.3.6, 1.3.7, 1.3.12, 1.4.3, 1.4.5, 1.4.6, 1.4.12, 1.4.13, 1.4.15, 1.4.16 & Case Studies 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 & 9
13.	<b>Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities.</b>	Part 1—1.2.14, 1.2.15, 1.3.8, 1.4.2, 1.4.6, 1.4.7, 1.4.8, 1.4.9, 1.4.10, 1.4.12, 1.4.17 & Case Studies 1, 2, 6, 7 & 9
14.	<b>Stalled sites / legacy cases: Conclusion / withdrawal of planning applications more than one year old.</b>	<p>Part 1—1.3.13, &amp; Part 4—Table B.</p> <p>During 2019/20 13 legacy cases were cleared. At 31st March 2020 there were 34 'live' legacy applications remaining to be concluded.</p>
15.	<b>Developer contributions: Clear expectations set out in development plan and in pre-application discussions.</b>	<p>The adopted <a href="#">Local Development Plan</a> sets out expectations in respect of Developer Contributions for affordable housing and green / play space and is supported by Supplementary Guidance which sets out that the Council will seek appropriate elements of planning gain proportionate to the scale, nature, impact and planning purposes associated with the development.</p> <p>Where Developer Contributions are required these will be flagged up at pre-application stage where applicable, or where no pre-application engagement is sought then officers will seek to make the developer aware of the requirement and justification for any developer contribution as soon as such a requirement is identified in the assessment process.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to review its approach to Developer Contributions in the production of LDP 2 and where appropriate the Council shall seek appropriate developer contributions in liaison with participating partners and developers which are proportionate to the nature, impact and planning purposes associated with the development, and shall be in accord with the Policy Tests set out in Circular 3/2012.</p>





# Part 3: Service Improvements

## SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS TO BE DELIVERED IN 2020/21

COMMITTED SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS
1. Retain Customer Service Excellence Award ( <i>ongoing, March 2020 annual re-assessment delayed: Covid-19</i> )
2. Deliver 2 pilot Simplified Planning Zones ( <i>ongoing - Lochgilphead and Mull</i> )
3. Prepare 2 Conservation Area Appraisals ( <i>Tarbert and Helensburgh Town Centre Conservation Areas</i> )
4. Delivery of LDP 2 ( <i>ongoing - see Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan Scheme 2020</i> )
5. Run Sustainable Design Awards ( <i>ongoing - launched Feb 2020</i> )
6. Production of Hill Tracks Guidance ( <i>subject to Scottish Government review of 'permitted development rights'</i> )
7. Implement improved workflow and performance management systems within the Development Management Service ( <i>ongoing including work streams to replace existing systems with IDOX Enterprise and DMS</i> )
8. Review of Validation Processes ( <i>ongoing - engagement with regular customers and review/promotion of HoPS National Validation Standards to improve proportion of applications valid upon receipt</i> )
9. Deliver Dunoon CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) project ( <i>ongoing - 60% delivery complete</i> )
10. Deliver Rothesay TH (Townscape Heritage) project ( <i>ongoing - 60% delivery complete</i> )
11. Deliver Tarbert and Lochgilphead Regeneration Fund project ( <i>ongoing - 70% delivery complete</i> )
12. Deliver Lochilphead CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) project ( <i>ongoing - 10% complete</i> )

## DELIVERY ON SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS ACTIONS FOR 2019/20

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT	STATUS
1. Retain Customer Service Excellence Award	Delivered/Progressing - see Part 1—1.2.4, 1.4.15
2. Deliver 2 pilot Simplified Planning Zones	Progressing - see Part 1—1.2.15
3. Prepare 2 Conservation Area Appraisals	Delivered - see Part 1—1.1.5, 1.4.11
4. Engagement with regular customers and promotion of National Validation Standards to improve proportion of applications valid upon receipt.	Progressing - see Part 1.4.9
5. Review and Update Customer Charters	Delivered Planning Enforcement Charter - see Part 1—1.3.4
6. Production of Hill Tracks Non-Statutory Technical Guidance	On Hold - Awaiting outcome of Scottish Government review of 'Permitted Development Rights' - see Part 1—1.4.17
7. Implement improved workflow and performance management systems within the Development Management Service.	Progressing - Part 1—1.3.9, 1.3.10, 1.3.13, 1.3.14, 1.4.2, 1.4.3, 1.4.8, 1.4.9, 1.4.13, 1.4.14
8. Run Sustainable Design Awards	Progressing - Launched Feb. 2020 but currently on hold due to Covid-19 - Part 1—1.1.4
9. Deliver LDP 2	Progressing - Adoption planned late 2021 - see Part 1—1.2.2, Part 2—KPI Table (8), Part 4—Table A



# Part 4:

## National Headline Indicators (NHI's) 2019/20

A: KEY OUTCOMES—DEVELOPMENT PLANNING	2019/20	2018/19
<b>Local and Strategic Development Planning</b>		
Age of local / strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period. <i>Requirement: less than 5 years.</i>	5 years	4 years
Will the local / strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	No	No
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	Yes	Yes
Were development plan scheme engagement / consultation commitments met during the year?	Yes	Yes
<b>Effective Housing Land Supply</b>		
Established housing land supply	5319 units	5387units
5-year effective housing land supply	3738 units	3742 units
5-year effective land supply total capacity	5051 units	5106 units
5-year housing supply target	3725 units	3725 units
5-year effective housing land supply ( <i>to one decimal place</i> )	5.0 years	5.0 years
Housing approvals	500 units	909 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	1052 units	1080 units
Marketable employment land supply	86.4 ha	88.7 ha
Employment land take-up during the reporting period	2.07 ha <sup>1</sup>	0 ha
B: KEY OUTCOMES—DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	2019/20	2018/19
<b>Project Planning</b>		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	4.6% (65) <sup>2</sup>	14.7% (191)
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	-	0.8% (1)
<b>Decision Making</b>		
Application approval rate	97.8%	97.4%
Delegation rate	99.0%	97.7%
Validation	24.7%	23.4%
<b>Decision-making Timescales</b>		
Major Developments	33.9 weeks <sup>3</sup>	28.3 weeks
Local Developments (non-householder)	10.2 weeks	10.8 weeks
Householder Developments	7.2 weeks	7.1 weeks
<b>Legacy Cases</b>		
Number cleared during reporting period	13	16
Number remaining	34	34



C: KEY OUTCOMES—ENFORCEMENT	2019/20	2018/19
Time since <u>enforcement charter</u> published / reviewed	1 month	9 months
Complaints lodged and investigated	351	248
Breaches identified - No further action taken	194 - 157	123
Cases Closed (breaches resolved)	177 (73)	238
Notices served	19	48
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

#### D: NHI KEY OUTCOMES COMMENTARY:

1. It is noted that this NHI is not wholly reflective of the uptake of employment land within Argyll and Bute where the rural nature of the Council area and local economy stimulates demand for development in locations that are not readily addressed through take up of allocated land. The Council's settlement strategy seeks to promote sustainable economic development and focuses allocation of employment land in and around existing key settlements where there is demand of employment, existing housing provision and infrastructure to support new development. The LDP does however recognise that the requirements of traditional rural industries, particularly those which are island based including the whisky industry and aquaculture, will give rise to occasional demand for development in countryside locations - our settlement strategy is sufficiently flexible to accommodate this demand 5 but it also means that take up of land for employment purposes is not wholly captured in the NHIs.
2. It is has been established that this data set is incomplete and does not currently provide an accurate reflection of the number of planning applications that have been subject to pre-application advice. 538 pre-application enquiries were received during the reporting period, this figure is representative of 38.7% of the volume of statutory determinations within the same period.
3. It is noted that the data subset for 'major' applications is small and easily skewed. Contextual commentary on other factors affecting decision-making timescales are set out within Part 5 C of the report.

# Part 5: Official Statistics

A: DECISION-MAKING TIMESCALES (based on ‘all applications’ timescales)					
Timescales	2019-20		2019-20		2018-19
	No of Cases (%)		Weeks		Weeks
Overall					
Major developments	7		33.9		28.3
Local developments (non-householder)	721		10.2		10.8
• Local: less than 2 months	408 (56.6%)		6.8		6.8
• Local: more than 2 months	313 (43.4%)		14.7		16.1
Householder developments	389		7.2		7.1
• Local: less than 2 months	312 (80.2%)		6.0		6.0
• Local: more than 2 months	77 (19.8%)		12.0		11.5
Housing Developments					
Major	1		45.7		18.1
Local housing developments	350		10.7		10.9
• Local: less than 2 months	182 (52.0%)		6.9		6.9
• Local: more than 2 months	168 (48.0%)		14.8		15.4
Business and Industry					
Major	1		13.9		7.3
Local business and industry developments	19		13.9		10.0
• Local: less than 2 months	7 (36.8%)		6.3		6.5
• Local: more than 2 months	12 (63.2%)		18.3		16.0
EIA Developments	-		-		9.3
Other Consents	270		7.3		6.5
Planning / Legal Agreements	3		10.1		18.5
• Major: average time	-		-		-
• Local: average time	3		10.1		18.5
B: DECISION-MAKING: LOCAL REVIEWS AND APPEALS					
Type	Total Number of Decisions	Original Decision Upheld			
		2019-20		2018-19	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	6	4	66.7	6	60.0
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	3	2	66.7	2	40.0

## **C: Context**

### **Development Management Service:**

Argyll and Bute Council's Development Management Service continues to process planning applications with the aspiration to deliver positive outcomes in all cases. This approach is reflected in our high approval rates but is often achieved by providing applicants with additional time beyond prescribed statutory determination periods where this is required to negotiate and address resolvable deficiencies in their submissions. Whilst it is recognised that this approach can have a negative impact upon performance in decision-making time periods it is contended that this is outweighed by the economic benefits of delivering on improved development proposals which might not otherwise have obtained permission had the Council sought to determine within prescribed statutory time periods; additionally resources required to handle amended applications, appeal and LRB work is minimised.

Overall 2019/20 has proven to be a year of mixed performance for the Development Management Service with maintenance and minor improvements to performance on local developments being maintained but some slippage on the average time period taken to determine business and industry, and major applications. The lack of any significant improvement in performance is attributed to higher than anticipated periods of long-term staff absence within the area teams processing local applications, and also to an overall reduction in professional staff available to process applications arising from a Service Redesign driven by continuing budgetary pressures. Whilst planning fee income was maintained at expected levels during 2019/20 the Development Management Service is required to deliver substantial budget savings of £105k through a Service Redesign which has rationalised the area management structure leaving the service with less operational capacity.

### **Development Policy Service:**

Production of LDP2 has been re-scheduled during the first six months of 2019. More time has been allocated to allow for an enhanced detailed engagement with members and senior management in the development of the PLDP. An extended public consultation on PLDP2 was carried out during Winter 2019/20. The PLDP2 adoption is planned for 2021. Re-scheduling of the PLDP2 has been reported through an agreed exception reporting system within the Council and to senior members. The 2020 Development Plan scheme was adjusted accordingly.



# Part 6: Workforce Information (at 31.03.20)

	Tier 1 <i>Chief Executive</i>	Tier 2 <i>Director</i>	Tier 3 <i>Head of Service</i>	Tier 4 <i>Manager</i>
Head of Planning Service			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

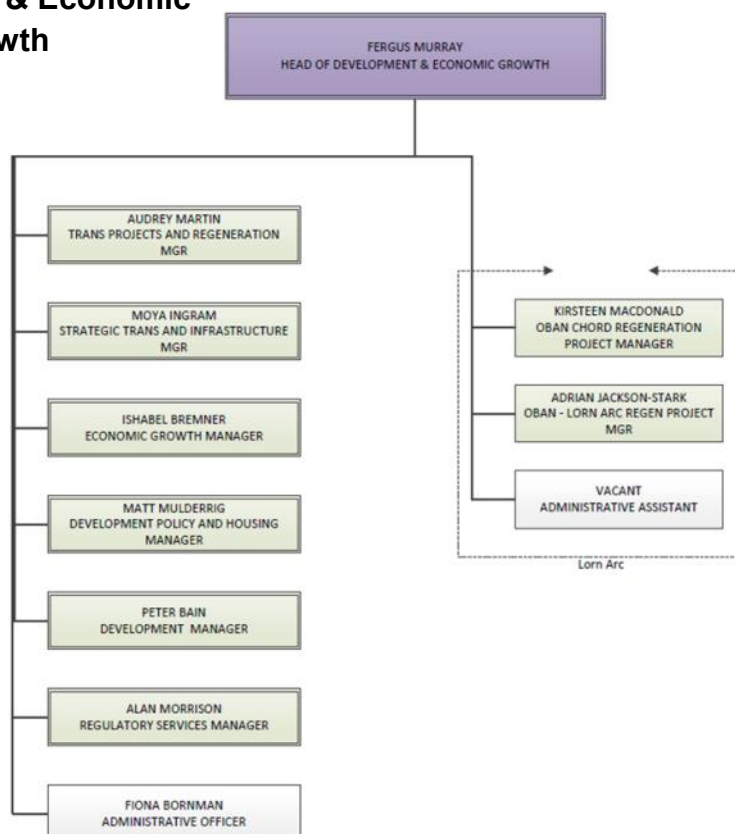
RTPI Qualified Staff	Number
Head of Service	1
Development Management	14
Development Policy	3
Enforcement	2
Projects and Regeneration	3

Staff Age Profile	Number
Under 30	2
30 - 39	10
40 - 49	12
50 and over	22

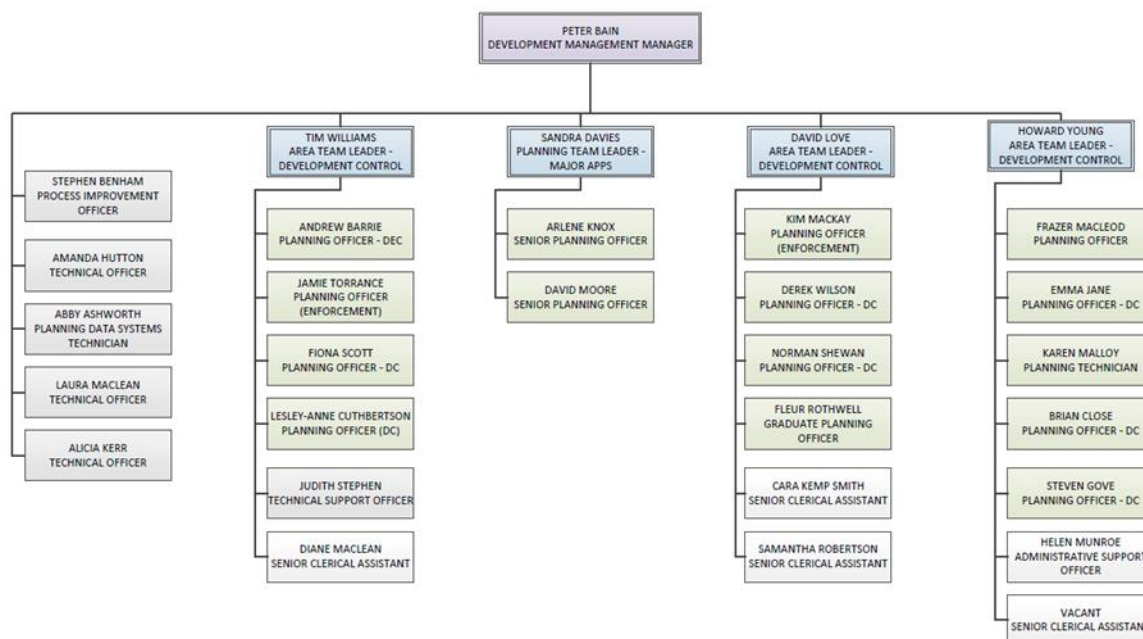
Planning Services includes Development Management, Development Policy & Housing, Projects and Regeneration. Planning Services sit within the Development and Infrastructure Services Department, and within the portfolio of the Head of Development & Economic Growth which also includes responsibility for the complimentary activities of Regulatory Services, Economic Growth, Strategic Transportation & Infrastructure, together with a number of project specific activity relating to Oban Strategic Development Framework including Lorn Arc regeneration activities.

## Staff Structure Diagrams as at 31.03.20

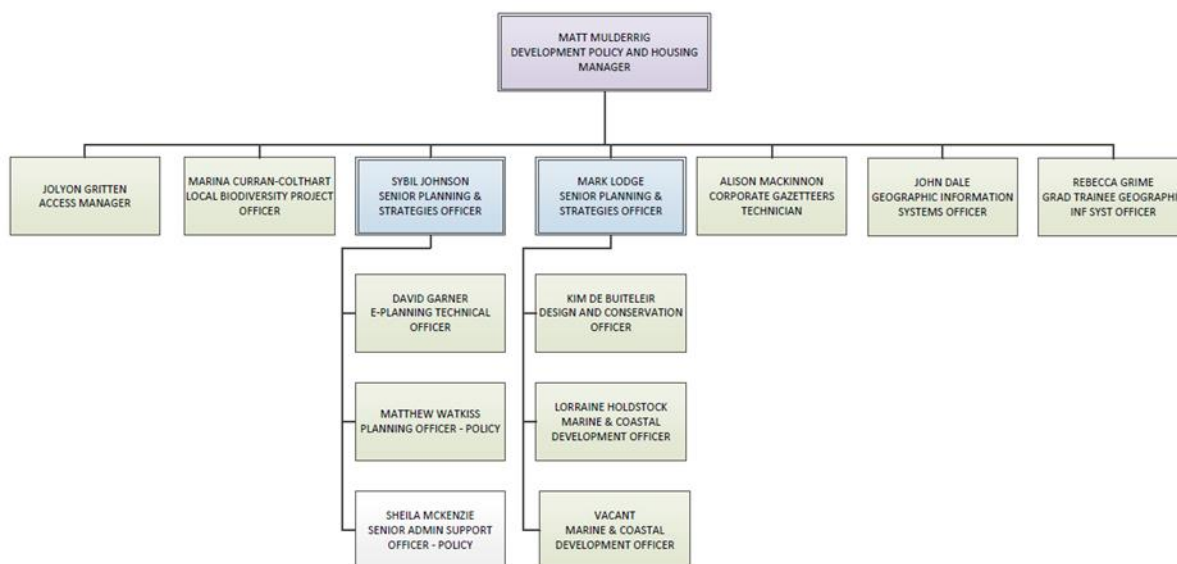
### Development & Economic Growth



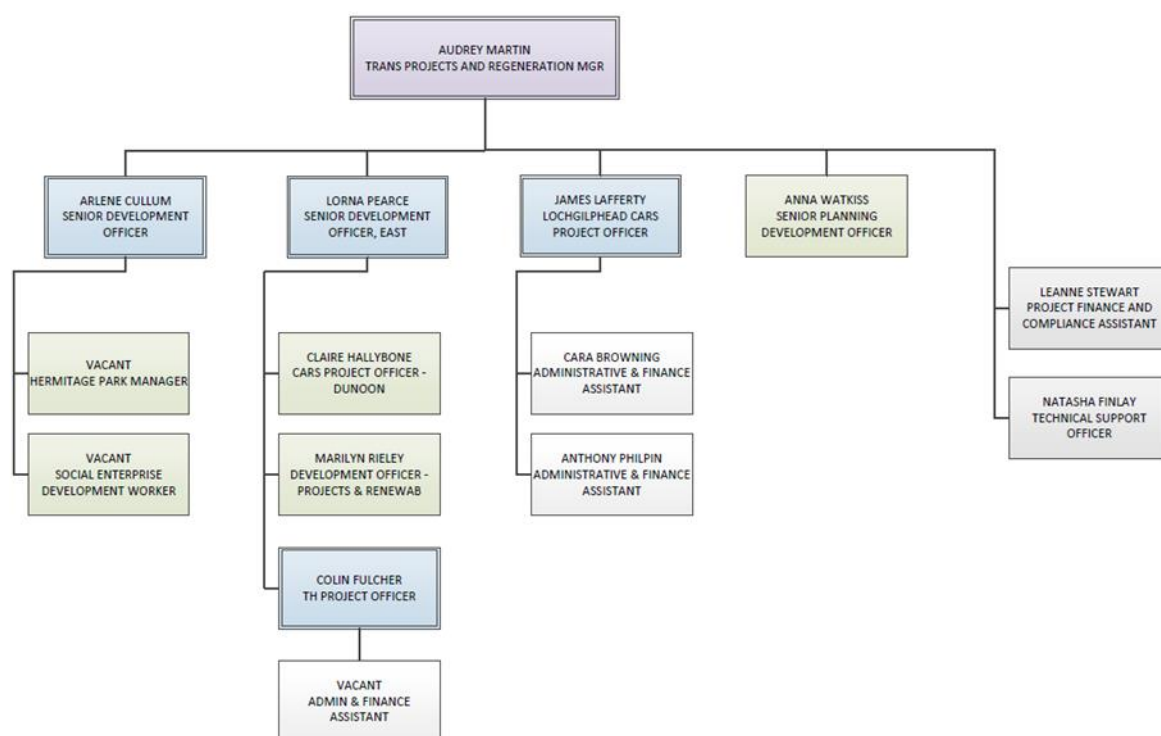
## Development Management



## Development Policy & Housing



## Projects and Regeneration



# Part 7: Planning Committee Information

Committees & Site Visits	Number
Full Council Meetings	7
Planning Committees	16
Area Committees	20
Local Review Body	12
LRB Site Visits	2





Argyll and Bute Council  
Development and Infrastructure Services  
Interim Executive Director: Kirsty Flanagan  
[www.argyll-bute.com](http://www.argyll-bute.com)  
*Chomhairle Earra-Ghàidheal is Bhòid*



[www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)