



BIODIVERSITY REPORT

2011-14

Inverclyde
council

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1.0 Introduction

Biodiversity, short for biological diversity, is the term used to describe the variety of life found on earth and all of the natural processes. It includes all living things and the habitats in which they live. The importance of biodiversity was acknowledged internationally at the Earth Summit 1992, and when the UK Government became a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity, a UK Biodiversity Action Plan was produced. The production of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) was subsequently recommended in order to promote improvements in the environment on a local scale.

Launched on 1 April 2004, the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for Inverclyde, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire is a partnership initiative between the local authorities and a range of conservation organisations. The LBAP, which includes a range of actions for identified habitats and species to increase local biodiversity, was augmented with new action plans in 2008/09. The LBAP is also used to raise awareness of biodiversity in the area and to involve everyone including local communities, landowners, scientists, industries and business in the process.

Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in Your Hands was published by the Scottish Government in 2004, and this document aims to conserve biodiversity for the health, enjoyment and well-being of the people of Scotland, now and in the future. This strategy was updated in 2013 with the publication of the 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity, reflecting certain international commitments. It focuses on the desired outcomes for 2020 to halt the loss of biodiversity in Scotland and to restore the essential services and benefits to society that a healthy natural environment provides.



Bramble

Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, all public bodies in Scotland are required to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their responsibilities. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 further requires public bodies in Scotland to provide a publicly available report, every three years, on the actions which they have taken to meet this biodiversity duty.

While there is no prescribed format for public body reporting, this first Biodiversity Report for Inverclyde has followed the structure recommended by the Scottish Government, under the following headings:

- Governance
- Actions
- Mainstreaming
- Partnership
- Communication

2.0 Governance

Inverclyde Council has taken steps to embrace its biodiversity duties within the whole range of its activities, from a higher strategic level through to individual actions on the ground. Many of its higher-end strategic working groups embrace biodiversity, with pertinent examples given below. These initiatives all lead to specific actions on the ground, many of which are highlighted later in this Report.

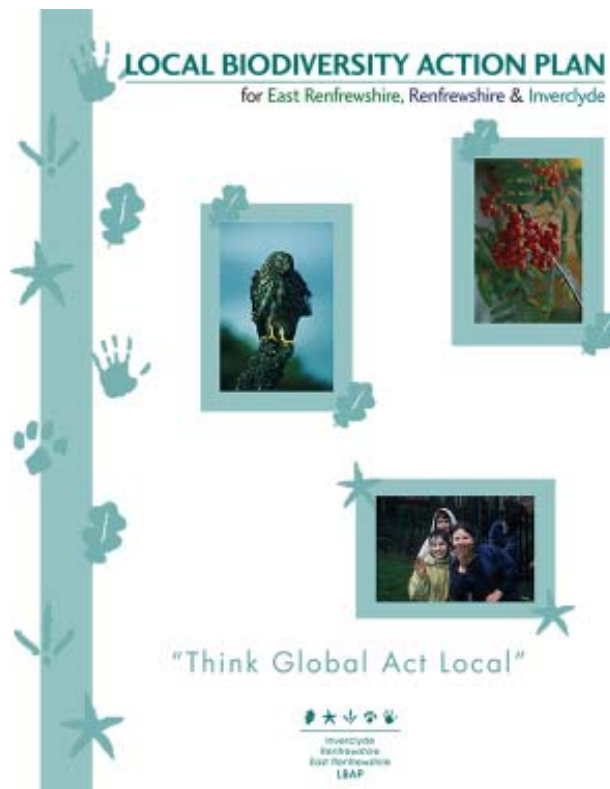
Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)

In partnership with both Renfrewshire Council and East Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council published a Biodiversity Action Plan in 2004. Comprising a series of Species Action Plans and Habitat Action Plans, this document has led to a partnership approach which still provides a strategic guidance role for biodiversity matters in Inverclyde.

Prior to 2011, the three Councils involved in the LBAP partnership jointly funded a biodiversity officer, to deliver biodiversity outcomes across the physical and subject areas affected by the LBAP. Unfortunately that post is no longer in existence and the

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responsibility for biodiversity matters has reverted to the individual councils. In the case of Inverclyde Council, the role of biodiversity advice is currently undertaken by the Lower Clyde Greenspace Manager, based in the Regeneration and Planning Service.

However, regular LBAP meetings still take place between the three Councils and a range of other interested agencies, and in common with the other councils, Inverclyde plays a co-ordinating and management role in this.

Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)

Inverclyde's Single Outcome Agreement is being taken forward by the partnership initiative Inverclyde Alliance, and Inverclyde Council plays a key role in this partnership. The SOA is now agreed with the Scottish Government, and comprises a number of specified aims and objectives.

The SOA process has tried to embrace biodiversity through several outcomes (including through Local Outcome 7 which seeks to ensure Inverclyde's environment is nurtured), before finally settling on developing a Green Network indicator as being the most effective way of doing so. In essence, a green network is a combination of biodiversity, access and community aspirations, and recognises that biodiversity is a key component of local land use.

By agreeing to develop a Green Network outcome, Inverclyde Alliance allows its partners, including Inverclyde Council, to embed biodiversity at a strategic level in their activities. The development of



the specific Green Network Indicator is currently being taken forward jointly by Inverclyde Council and the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership.

Inverclyde Local Access Forum

In common with other Councils, Inverclyde has an adopted Core Paths Plan and a designated Core Path Network. Again similar to other Core Path Networks, it comprises a network which tends to encourage access into areas of high biodiversity value, this of course being a reflection of the fact that historically people have required access to areas they consider attractive, relaxing and of interest. The main mechanism for overseeing the Core Paths Plan and its Network, and advising the Council on its status, is the Inverclyde Local Access Forum.

Therefore, although not specifically concerned with biodiversity, the Local Access Forum plays a direct role in improving opportunities for people to access biodiverse areas. The forum is constituted under the Council's structure and along with a range of local agencies and user groups, the Council is represented on the forum, both at elected member and officer level.

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park was formally designated in 1990, although it had operated as a de facto regional park for some time previous to this. The operation of the regional park is supported politically and financially by Inverclyde Council, Renfrewshire Council and North Ayrshire Council. Strategic park governance is through a joint committee of elected members from each authority which meets 4 times annually. However, day to day management of the regional park is delegated to the park manager and his staff.

The regional park has two operational centres within the Inverclyde Council area, at the Greenock Cut Centre and Lunderston Bay.

The regional park is one of the major vehicles through which Inverclyde Council delivers its biodiversity duty, and through its elected member representation on the joint committee it can give a degree of leadership and guidance to this process.

Lower Clyde Greenspace

Lower Clyde Greenspace is a partnership between Inverclyde and Argyll & Bute Councils, with the aim of making the communities within its area greener, healthier and stronger.

Inverclyde Council have been supporting Lower Clyde Greenspace and its previous incarnations since 1992. Argyll and Bute Council became partners following local government reorganisation in 1996. Currently, one Project Manager is employed by Inverclyde Council and shared with Argyll and Bute Council on a pro-rata basis, reflective of relative funding levels.

3.0 Actions

This section of the report will highlight specific activities undertaken by the Council which directly affect biodiversity. Many of these will have originated from the governance level programmes previously highlighted, will be part of the Council's day to day activities or will be specific stand alone initiatives.

Schools and other educational establishments

All schools now have a Green Charter embedded in School Improvement Plans, which includes a biodiversity theme. Additionally, 65% of Inverclyde schools have achieved at least the bronze award of

the national eco-schools scheme. Most schools deliver lessons in biodiversity/wildlife/natural world as a matter of course and this all combines to offer a solid foundation in environmental responsibility for Inverclyde's youths. As an example, both Notre Dame HS and Port Glasgow Community Campus are actively encouraging an interest in beekeeping, recognising the impact of increasing global decline of honey bee populations. Specifically, Port Glasgow Community Campus is taking forward plans for a roof hive on the school, in partnership with Plan Bee and Lower Clyde Greenspace. This is an excellent example of local action being taken to raise awareness of global issues.

Biodiversity is also addressed in the flagship school estates improvement programme being delivered by Inverclyde Council. As mentioned above, the new Port Glasgow Community Campus has included a sedum rich roof garden, suitable for honey bees and other pollinating insects. Orchards and wildlife gardens have been developed at other new schools.

Local Nature Reserves

There are two designated Local Nature Reserves within Inverclyde at Coves Reservoir (1998) and Wemyss Bay Wood (2010). Although neither benefit from active management at the moment (a short-lived Management Group was set up in 2009 for



Coves Local Nature Reserve

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Wemyss Bay Woods), neither are their different habitats under any sustained threat. Public access is encouraged to both sites and invasive alien species have been removed at both locations (Rhododendron ponticum at Wemyss Bay and Himalayan balsam at Coves).

Green Gyms

Green gyms help people to improve their physical health and mental wellbeing by taking part in practical conservation work. Green gym volunteers meet up regularly to work together on improving local green spaces, while protecting and enhancing biodiversity where possible.

Inverclyde Council has run various Green Gym programmes since 2011, as opportunities arise and resources allow. Staff in local third sector organisations have been trained as Green Gym leaders to offer a degree of sustainability within the programme.

Typical work undertaken can be tree planting, scrub clearance, coppicing and drystone wall building. As well as directly improving the environment, the sessions also offer education relating to biodiversity and the natural environment.

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park

Within Inverclyde Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park is involved in biodiversity activities mainly through education, public events and wildlife monitoring; 2014 numbers and activities are noted below.

- Education

At Greenock Cut Centre and Lunderston Bay environmental aspects of 'the curriculum for

excellence' are delivered. 1770 primary and secondary school pupils have learnt about topics such as the seashores, habitats and food chains.

Rangers have advised on activities, such as juniper and eared willow propagation, as well as working with 240 students to help 6 schools achieve their eco-school awards.



Greater Butterfly Orchid

- Events

Varied events take place over the year ranging from the Greenock Cemetery Bat Walk to Beachwatch which is run in partnership with the Marine Conservation Society, collecting litter from Lunderston Bay. Large amounts of litter are recorded and Beachwatch in 2014 collected 161.2kg of litter with 105 volunteers helping. The materials are itemised to gauge the likely sources. Litter is a known threat to marine and coastal biodiversity and its removal is therefore obviously beneficial.

Guided walks and events of 2014 have had around 700 participants. These events vary from environmental arts and crafts to demonstrations on traditional countryside crafts.

The promotion of biodiversity has been part of the Greenock Cut Centre gaining its silver award in the Green Business Award Scheme.

- Volunteering

331 Volunteers have contributed 165 half days and 168 full days in supporting the Greenock Cut Rangers in various activities such as bracken clearing and creating eco-piles. What started as part of one volunteer's dissertation records are now being kept for monitoring the numbers of lizards in Shielhill Glen and in 2013 there were 150 common lizards sightings recorded. Over thirty bat and bird boxes have been constructed by volunteers and placed out in Shielhill Glen. Volunteers have also contributed to pond clearance.

A 'Branching Out' project aimed at improving mental health through environmental work and in partnership with the Forestry Commission and Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) has seen six programmes completed within the past three years with 72 adults with mental health issues taking part.

QUOTES FROM VOLUNTEERS

"I have thoroughly enjoyed Branching Out. Thank you to SAMH and the Rangers at the Cut. The powerboats were amazing and I enjoyed building the fences and working in teams doing all the different things. I liked watching everyone being so positive and participating and doing so myself. Thanks guys! See you all again soon!!"

"The Saturday volunteer program is varied, that is great as it's all a wide range of skills to be learned from the rangers. One week you could be building a path and the next cleaning the pond or creating dragonfly perches to allow people to photograph them."

*"Smashing, amazing, fantastic, glorious, worthwhile, superb, marvellous, freezing, roasting, **brilliant**, great, spot on and tiring. Keep it up."*

• Monitoring

To encourage ospreys to nest near Loch Thom four platforms have been constructed at the top of trees in the area. Although, ospreys have been sighted regularly none have taken up residence. On a smaller scale nests constructed for swallows have been popular and webcam images may be watched live on the monitor at the visitor centre.

Throughout the year monthly monitoring of wetland birds takes place at the following sites: Loch Thom, Compensation Reservoir and the two Gryfe Reservoirs. The results of these surveys are submitted to the British Trust for Ornithology and are viewable on their website. During the summer, each month, transects for butterflies are completed and records uploaded to the Butterfly Conservation website. Monitoring of the moorland areas for hen harriers is undertaken and, to assess reasons for recent low bird numbers, their prey of field voles have been counted.

Grow Wild

An application was made to the Grow Wild Flagship Programme in 2013, for enhanced native planting on the then emerging Belville Community Garden. An initial start up grant was used to design and specify a planting plan at the site, the plans then being put forward for a national public vote. Belville Community Garden came second in the vote, receiving an

additional grant for native planting as a result. Inverclyde Council were the main applicant for this process, acting on behalf of a range of partners including River Clyde Homes and the Belville Community Association.

Plan Bee

Through its greenspace programme, Inverclyde Council has funded a beekeeping project at its new Port Glasgow Community Campus. Working with Plan Bee, a Commonwealth Games Legacy Project, a roof hive will be installed in the school and a series of specific lessons delivered.



Common Lizard

Home composting scheme

An innovative approach to food waste and home composting has seen local peoples' food waste being composted and made freely available for local people to use in the gardens. As well as encouraging a general recycling ethic, it also highlights the importance of the soil health and encourages involvement in gardening. Although the direct biodiversity benefits are marginal, it provides a valuable education lesson in the role that composting can play in the environment.

Forestry planting on private land

Largely through the Forestry Commissions Woodlands In and Around Town scheme (WIAT), several local landowners have created largely native forestry plantations on the margins of the built up area. Inverclyde Council's role in this has been largely advisory and consultative, and advice given has been within the framework of existing habitats, possible effects on designated sites and improvements to local access networks. It is considered that the planting undertaken by private landowners has enhanced the biodiversity of the Inverclyde urban fringe.

The Forestry and Woodland Strategy, which guides the Forestry Commission Scotland and other bodies in the development of, and investment in, the forestry resource, is integral to the overall spatial strategy of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP).

Wee Green Grants

To encourage communities and schools to become positively involved in their own local environments, Lower Clyde Greenspace ran a community grant scheme called Wee Green Grants. Up to £500 was available to community groups wishing to carry out environmental improvements or to improve awareness of environmental matters. A fast track

approach to assessing bids and subsequent monitoring meant that communities benefitted from a quick turnaround. The Wee Green Grant scheme began in 2007 and ended in 2011, having given grants to 20 community groups and 18 schools.

4.0 Mainstreaming

Many activities undertaken by the Council have a positive effect on biodiversity but are not necessarily independently driven by the LBAP process. These are activities that the Council undertakes as a matter of course and whose beneficial effects are delivered through general good practice and an inherent desire to protect the environment.



Wild Strawberry

Land Management activities

Inverclyde Council's Grounds Services are responsible for large areas of natural habitat, man made parks and general greenspaces. Of all Council services they have the greatest direct physical impact on biodiversity simply by their day to day activities. Many of these are deliberately beneficial towards biodiversity.

- Control of Invasive Alien Species

The more common invasive alien species are well documented elsewhere, as is their ability to smother out populations of native species which are generally far more supportive of other plant, insect and animal species. Invasive species generally host few other plants and animals resulting in a monoculture which is a poor base to a natural food web.

Inverclyde has numerous stands of both Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam. Giant hogweed is thankfully rare. Woodlands have populations of *Rhododendron ponticum* and sycamore. There is a general programme of eradication of these species as resources allow, by either spraying or, in the case of sycamore and rhododendron, by cutting. Management practices have been introduced to stop the spread of Japanese knotweed on vehicles and machinery. The control measures are typically undertaken at more visible areas, simply as a result of pressure on resources, but it is nonetheless a valuable and well appreciated programme which helps protect Inverclyde's biodiversity.

- Land management and tree pathogens

Inverclyde Council is responsible for areas of formal planting and of natural tree growth and where possible, retention of native species is favoured. As an example, in Wemyss Bay Woods Local Nature Reserve, felling of native trees is resisted unless safety concerns are overriding. In areas of more formal planting, such as Greenock cemetery, the

ornamental planting is supplemented by sufficient native planting to support varied wildlife. Hence the cemetery has become a hotspot for bats, various bird species (for example greater-spotted woodpeckers, treecreepers and sparrowhawks), roe deer and foxes.

Management practices generally are biodiversity beneficial where possible, for example avoiding pruning during bird nesting season, encouraging wild corners in parks and cemeteries. Herbicides used are biodegradable and become inert in contact with soil. Additionally, in plans to reinvigorate Birkmyre Park in Port Glasgow, wildflower meadow planting will take place on the site of a former bowling green.

More aggressive felling of certain species, mainly ornamental, has taken place in response to the identification of tree pathogens. In response to the identification of *Phytophthora Lateralis*, which affects the Cyprus Lawson trees, 250 trees have been felled and burned on site to avoid any spread of the disease. The bio-chemical control measures are in place to stop the spread of the disease out-with the cemetery.

Biodiversity and the Planning System in Inverclyde

- The Inverclyde Local Development Plan (LDP), adopted in August 2014, embraces and promotes the concept of a Green Network at both local and strategic levels, as well as offering policy protection to areas of international, national, strategic and local designation. Biodiversity is clearly identified as an asset within the LDP, where the Council seeks to ensure that the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is considered in the determination of all planning applications (Policy ENV7 - Biodiversity). Protection is also given to certain trees and areas of woodland where it is recognised that there are many benefits, including biodiversity and integrated habitat creation. This level of policy protection, contained within the primary land use document of the Council,

is indicative of the value the wider community also places on biodiversity.

The Council's Planning Policy team is also routinely consulted on aspects of land management that affect sites benefitting from a statutory designation. For example, recent concerns raised about bait collecting on the shores of the Inner Clyde SPA initially came to the Planning Policy team as a result of their involvement in the LBAP process, and they in turn have alerted the services in the Council directly involved in the legal and land management aspects of this matter.

- Similarly, within the Development Management team, planning applications which may have an impact upon biodiversity and/or affecting or adjacent to designated sites are routinely passed for consultation to the Council's Greenspace Manager. Comments on bat surveys, ecological statements and habitat management are routinely sought. Thus the interests of biodiversity are further served within the planning system.

5.0 Partnership

Partnership working is a fundamental approach for Inverclyde Council and is practised across a broad spectrum of its activities. There are some notable examples relating directly to biodiversity.

In the Governance section of this Report, we have already highlighted the role the Council plays in several partnerships, such as **Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park**, the **SOA** process, **Lower Clyde Greenspace** and the **Local Biodiversity Action Plan**. In many ways these are the building blocks of the Council's approach to biodiversity and it is appropriate that Inverclyde Council should have a governance role in these.

There are, however, other notable examples of partnership working;

Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGNP) and the Central Scotland Green Network Trust (CSGNT)

Both the GCVGNP and the CSGNT exist to offer a strategic level view on developing green networks, and partnership working with them allows local actions to directly contribute to regional and national objectives. In the period of this report, both organisations have worked with Inverclyde Council to help embed green network concepts within local developments.

GCVGNP part funded two major studies:

1. Area Renewal and the Inverclyde Green Network

This study assessed the role that a local green network could play in area renewal plans. It recognised local limiting factors such as topography, reduced population, social indicators, current green area and areas of anticipated change, and produced a toolkit approach to planning green networks into new developments. Three major strategic green routes were identified.

2. Spango Valley Integrated Green Infrastructure

This study formed an approach to development of this area which embraced the local green infrastructure, recognising existing constraints, notable water management, and suggesting a proactive approach to their management. It also highlighted the links this area could have to existing green networks, notably the core path network.

Both of these studies have been reflected in the adopted Local Development Plan 2014.

CSGNT also funded important local studies:

3. Coves Local Nature Reserve – management options

This study addressed future management options for Coves Local Nature Reserve, recognising that current management tends to be reactive and carried out in a climate of reducing resources. Several models were studied and assessed and, as a direct result, Inverclyde Council are currently in negotiation with the Forestry Commission regarding an enhanced role for the FC in management of the site.

4. Area Renewal and the Inverclyde Green Network – case studies

As an extension to example 1 above, this study took each of the strategic routes described and planned them in more detail with outline costs.

River Clyde Homes (RCH)

RCH are the major local provider of social housing and other 'affordable homes'. In the period covered by this report they have created two community gardens in areas surplus to new housing, in full consultation with local communities. Inverclyde Council has offered specialist help to RCH in these programmes in respect of biodiversity and greenspace development.

Green Gyms

Highlighted previously in the report, the Green Gym programme is run in partnership with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Scotland, and their Green Gym programme is recognised nationally as a model of excellence in this field. Volunteers are fully supervised, activities are tailored to individual needs and there will be warm up and warm down sessions at the start and finish. An often overlooked outcome of Green Gyms is the social benefits involved in meeting peers and other community members, all of which helps to reduce social isolation and improve mental wellbeing.

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6.0 Communication

Inverclyde Council is aware that local responsibility for biodiversity lies not just in its own actions, but also in its ability to inform local communities of the value of biodiversity. A number of schemes already highlighted have been subject to publicity and awareness raising campaigns, notably **Grow Wild**, **Wee Green Grants**, **home composting** and the variety of **initiatives undertaken at schools**.

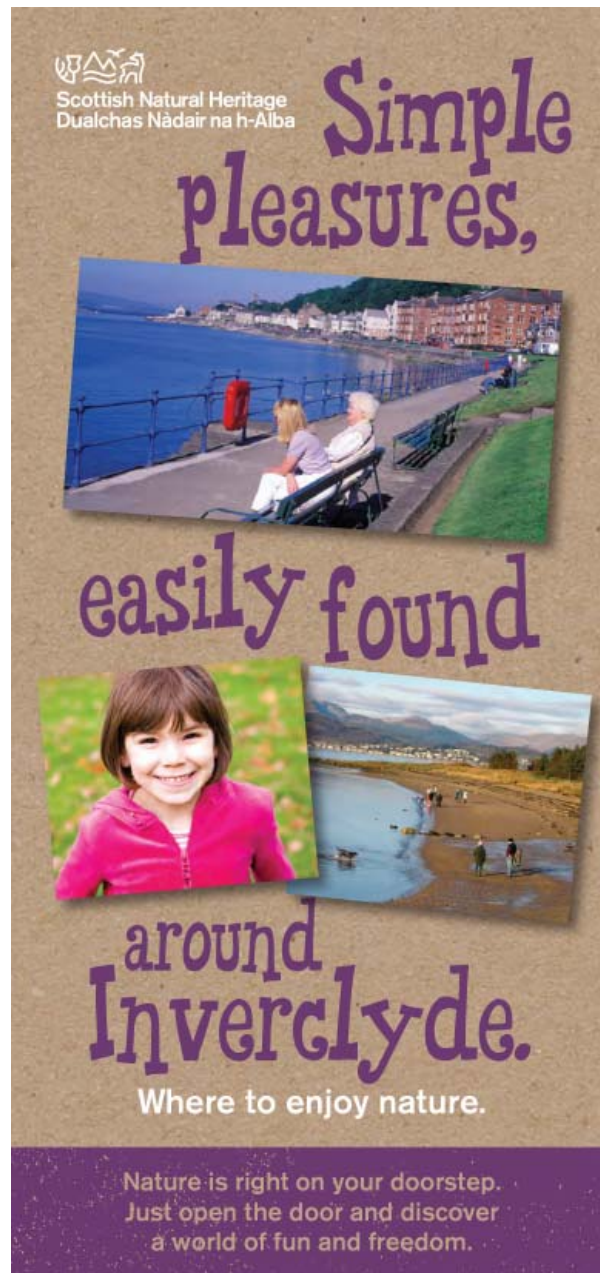
However some schemes have had awareness raising at their very heart.

Simple Pleasures Easily Found Campaign

Working in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage, a local publicity campaign was undertaken to encourage people to find nature on their doorstep. Titled "Simple Pleasures Easily Found", it was an Inverclyde version of a national programme being championed by SNH. Comprising posters, leaflets and media promotion, it identified some local sites where simple enjoyment of the environment, mainly by young families, can be experienced. By using local sites and highlighting that you need not drive or otherwise journey to enjoy nature, the message was very much "enjoy nature wherever you find it".

Heritage Inverclyde Coastal Trail

Interpretation will be installed at 24 key locations along the Inverclyde waterfront, highlighting tales of social, industrial, commercial and natural heritage. The physical interpretation will be supplemented by a website. Opportunities to interpret natural heritage are present at a number of the chosen locations.



7.0 Conclusion

Inverclyde Council has sought to carry out its biodiversity duties both through specific projects and also good practice in its existing activities. Each approach has its own benefits and the combination of the two creates a rounded approach that has served the Council and local communities well. Currently the Council is well placed to continue to deliver benefits for biodiversity, particularly through its governance roles in some initiatives and its mainstreaming of other biodiversity activities.

This report is the first such published by Inverclyde Council. Although there will be no requirement for another report for 3 years, any significant activity occurring in that time frame will be monitored and the report updated as appropriate. Thus in many ways this Report will become its own monitoring tool.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Biodiversity Initiative	Dates	Activity	Key areas of biodiversity duty addressed
Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)	2004 – present, regular meetings and activities are ongoing	Inverclyde Council supports a joint LBAP in partnership with Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire Councils. Regular partnership meetings take place, and the various species and habitat action plans within the LBAP help guide specific actions on the ground. The joint LBAP is one of the guiding strategic documents through which Inverclyde Council meets its biodiversity duties.	Governance
Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park	Ongoing	Conserves and enhances the natural beauty, biodiversity and natural heritage of the Park.	Governance Actions Partnership
Development of a Green Network indicator within the Inverclyde Single Outcome Agreement	2014/15	In partnership with Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership, development of an indicator suitable for inclusion within SOA7. This will provide a baseline from which to measure improvements in the local Green Network, with associated biodiversity benefits. It embeds the Green Network concept, including biodiversity, within the Single Outcome Agreement framework.	Governance
Inverclyde Local Access Forum	Ongoing	Advises on matters relating to access and assists in overseeing the Core Paths Plan.	Governance Partnership
Lower Clyde Greenspace	1996 - present	Partnership with Argyll and Bute Council.	Governance Actions Partnership
Schools and other educational establishments	Ongoing	Works in school grounds, within classrooms, and as part of the improved school estates programme.	Action
Wemyss Bay Local Nature Reserve	Ongoing	This site was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 2010. Management, when necessary, has focussed on the twin outcomes of public use and nature conservation.	Action

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Biodiversity Initiative	Dates	Activity	Key areas of biodiversity duty addressed
Coves Local Nature Reserve	Ongoing	Coves was declared as a Local Nature Reserve in 1998. A lack of dedicated maintenance has led to management being reactive. To offset this, negotiations are currently ongoing with the Forestry Commission regarding future management and how to resource this.	Action
Green Gyms	Ongoing	Various Green Gym programmes have been running since 2011, as opportunities arise and resources allow. Voluntary sector staff at Parklea Branching Out have been trained as Green Gym leaders, offering a degree of sustainability to this programme which encourages local people to become involved in managing their own environment.	Action Partnership
Grow Wild programme	2013 to 2014	Bid to the Grow Wild programme run by Kew Gardens.	Action Partnership Communication
Plan Bee	2014/15	Commonwealth Games Legacy Project addressing decline in honeybee populations.	Action Communication
Home composting scheme	2012 to 2014	Food waste recycled into garden compost.	Action Communication
Forestry on private land	2012 - 2014	Advice given on biodiversity, potential role in relation to local networks and appropriate species selection.	Action
Wee Green Grants programme	Up to 2011	Small grants to communities and schools to improve local greenspaces through community involvement.	Action Communication
Management of trees on council property and control of invasive alien species	Ongoing	Land management activities to control the spread of aggressively invasive plant species such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, Sycamore, Rhododendron ponticum and others. The tendency of these species is to spread vigorously at the expense of native species which are more biodiversity friendly.	Mainstreaming

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Biodiversity Initiative	Dates	Activity	Key areas of biodiversity duty addressed
Inverclyde Local Development Plan 2014	Ongoing	Embraces and promotes a Green Network and offers policy protection to environmental designations. Seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity.	Mainstreaming
Protection of biodiversity through planning applications	Ongoing	Planning applications likely to impact on biodiversity are routinely referred to the Council officer with responsibility for biodiversity matters. This offers the environment a degree of protection through the planning process.	Mainstreaming
Central Scotland Green Network Trust (CSGNT)	Ongoing	Various partnership programmes have been undertaken with, or part funded by, the Central Scotland Green Network Trust.	Partnership
Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGNP)	Ongoing	Various partnership programmes have been undertaken with, or part funded by GCVGNP.	Partnership
Development of Inverclyde Green Network	Ongoing	Local actions arising from studies funded by CSGNT and GCVGNP.	Partnership
Woodhall Community Garden	2012/13	In partnership with the landowner, River Clyde Homes.	Partnership
Belville Community Garden	2013/14	In partnership with the landowner, River Clyde Homes.	Partnership
Simple Pleasures Campaign	2013	In partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage.	Communication Partnership
Heritage Inverclyde Coastal Trail	2014/15	Awareness raising of natural and cultural heritage.	Communication



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