

# Corporate Policy and Strategy

10am, Tuesday, 4 November 2014

## Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-14

Item number	7.7
Report number	Executive
Wards	All

### Executive summary

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The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 requires the publication of a report, every three years, on how public bodies are meeting this duty.

The purpose of this report, is to seek Committee approval of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report, for the period January 2012 to December 2014. The report details the activities across the Council, to support and conserve biodiversity and demonstrates the great variety and range of the work being carried out.

For the next three year reporting period, it is proposed to expand the Biodiversity Duty actions within the Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

This report also recommends that the Council becomes a member of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital. This will help the Council achieve the aims of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

### Links

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Coalition pledges [P48](#)

Council outcomes [CO19](#)

Single Outcome Agreement [SO2](#), [SO4](#)

## Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-14

### Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
1. Approves the Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-14 for submission to Scottish Government and publication on the Council's website;
  2. Notes the contributions and achievements made across the Council to meet Edinburgh's biodiversity duty; and
  3. Agrees that the Council signs up as a member of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital.

### Background

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#### Biodiversity Duty

- 2.1 The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies, including the City of Edinburgh Council, to further the conservation of biodiversity in the course of carrying out their responsibilities.
- 2.2 In complying with this Biodiversity Duty, public bodies must have regard to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. The 2004 document 'Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in Your Hands' and the 2013 supplement '2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity', together comprise the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.
- 2.3 The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 places a further obligation on public bodies to provide a publicly available report, every three years, on the actions taken to comply with the biodiversity duty. The first of these reports has to be made available by 1 January 2015.

#### Scottish Forum on Natural Capital

- 2.4 The Scottish Forum on Natural Capital was launched in Edinburgh in November 2013. Natural capital can be defined as the world's stocks of natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things.

2.5 Membership of the Forum does not require a financial contribution and is open to public, private and voluntary organisations that are able to contribute to the vision of the Forum. The is of:

- a Scotland in which all parts of society, including companies, NGOs, the Government, public bodies and communities, recognise our reliance on natural capital and the impact we have on it;
- a Scotland in which an understanding of our relationship with natural capital leads to action to protect and rebuild it; and
- a Scotland which is exercising leadership to galvanise action both here and beyond Scotland's borders.

2.6 The Scottish Wildlife Trust, one of the founder members of the Forum has formally written to the Chief Executive requesting the Council becomes a member of the Forum. This would make the City of Edinburgh Council the first local authority to become a member of the Forum. The Scottish Forum on Natural Capital will enable businesses and policy makers to make informed decisions about their impact on the environment, to assess the financial and other benefits they obtain from Scotland's natural capital, and to make a concerted effort to protect it.

## Main report

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### Biodiversity Duty

- 3.1 Biodiversity is the variety of all life and includes the wildlife, habitats and other forms of nature.
- 3.2 On a global scale, human activity is causing biodiversity to be lost at a greatly accelerated rate with irreversible losses that can damage the vital ecosystem services on which our lives depend. International targets to halt biodiversity loss are reflected in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.
- 3.3 The Biodiversity Duty aims to do more than safeguard ecosystem services by protecting habitats and species. It is also about connecting people and their environment, contributing to health and wellbeing and inspiring communities.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-14, contains a summary of work carried out by all Council services to comply with the biodiversity duty. This includes details of projects on the ground, the inclusion of biodiversity in policies and plans and examples of partnership working.
- 3.5 The report demonstrates the breadth of activities delivered by the Council which help to increase Edinburgh's biodiversity. Particular strengths in Edinburgh are

the high level of community involvement in greenspace projects, and the extent of partnership working both within and outwith the Council.

3.6 Particular initiatives which are highlights of the last three years are:

- The urban pollinators project;
- Securing funding for landscape scale woodland creation in the Pentland Hills Regional Park;
- Development of the Edinburgh Living Landscapes initiative; and
- Multiple examples of local community greenspace projects.

3.7 In order to aid future reporting on the biodiversity duty, it is proposed to expand the Biodiversity Duty actions within the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan (EBAP). The EBAP is due to be updated for 2016.

### **Scottish Forum on Natural Capital**

3.8 The Scottish Forum on Natural Capital considers the world's stock of natural assets which include geodiversity, soil, air water and all living things. Working with the Forum will help the Council to achieve the aims of the 2020 Challenge on Scotland's Biodiversity of which the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan is a key delivery mechanism. By becoming a member of the Forum, the Council will develop a knowledge base on natural capital to help make better informed decisions about the Council's impact on the environment. It will also assist the Council in finding the right tools to assess financial and other benefits obtained from Scotland's natural capital and in making efforts to ensure these benefits are protected and improved. Finally, the Council will show leadership by becoming the first Council to join. It is recommended that the Council becomes a member of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital.

### **Measures of success**

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4.1 The status of biodiversity and activity on biodiversity conservation in Edinburgh is monitored through:

- The submission of the Biodiversity Duty Report to Scottish Government by 1 January 2015;
- Annual progress report on the delivery of the Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan which includes Biodiversity Duty actions; and
- The Council becoming a member of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital.

### **Financial impact**

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- 5.1 The production of the Biodiversity Duty Report is met with existing budgets. Membership of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital does not require any financial contribution.

## **Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 There is a risk the Council could fail in its statutory duty for biodiversity. The submission of the attached report to Scottish Government, supporting the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan update in 2016 and the expansion of the biodiversity duty actions will help ensure the Council complies with the duty.

## **Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 There are no predicted negative impacts on rights and equality.
- 7.2 The conservation of biodiversity directly enhances the rights to life and health by protecting the essential ecosystem services our natural environment provides. There is also the potential to enhance other associated rights such as education and standard of living through local biodiversity projects.

## **Sustainability impact**

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- 8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and the outcomes summarised below. Relevant Council sustainable development policies have been taken into account and noted at Background reading ( see below).
- 8.2 Compliance with the statutory biodiversity duty will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh by incorporating biodiversity into many of the Council's existing activities and actions, thus helping to create a resilient natural environment, reduce carbon emissions, improve social justice, economic wellbeing and environmental good stewardship.

## **Consultation and engagement**

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- 9.1 The Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-14 has been prepared in consultation with staff across the Council. All Heads of Service were invited to provide information for their service area in preparation of this report.
- 9.2 A meeting was held in August between Scottish Wildlife Trust, the Acting Director of Service for Communities and the Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards to discuss the Council becoming a member of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital.

## **Background reading/external references**

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[Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in Your Hands - A strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland 2004](#)

[2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity - A Strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland 2013](#)

[Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-15](#)

[Scottish Forum on Natural Capital](#)

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## Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	<b>P48</b> – Use green flag and other strategies to preserve our greenspaces.
<b>Council outcomes</b>	<b>CO19</b> – Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm.
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<b>SO2</b> – Edinburgh’s citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health.  <b>SO4</b> – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
<b>Appendices</b>	Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-14

Appendix 1

**Statutory Biodiversity Duty**

**City of Edinburgh Council delivery report for 2012-2014**



*Edinburgh: a city rich in nature*

## Contents

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*Delivering for Edinburgh's biodiversity: improving the natural environment of the city*



*Delivering green networks: benefits for people and wildlife*

*Delivering education: learning why wildflower meadows are important for pollinating insects*



## 1 Introduction

Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, all public bodies in Scotland are required to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their functions. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 further required all public bodies to report every three years on how they comply with this duty. This first report is required by, 1 January 2015, to cover activity for the period 1 January 2012 to 1 January 2015.

This report has been produced to demonstrate how the City of Edinburgh Council has complied with the biodiversity duty for this period.

## 2 International and Scottish policy context

The work undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council to further biodiversity conservation fits into a clear global policy hierarchy, with international targets to halt the global loss of biodiversity. The 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity provides the original overarching target to halt global biodiversity loss. Most recently, in 2010, new global targets for 2020 - the '[Aichi targets](#)' – were agreed. The strategic aims of the Aichi targets are:

- Strategic Goal A: To address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society;
- Strategic Goal B: To reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use;
- Strategic Goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity;
- Strategic Goal D: To enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- Strategic Goal E: To enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building.

In response to the Aichi targets, the European Union launched 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020' in 2011. The Scottish Government then launched '2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity' in June 2013, as a supplementary document to the main 2004 Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, 'Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in your hands'.

## 3 The role of Local Authorities and Local Biodiversity Partnerships

Local Authorities are well placed to deliver biodiversity conservation. As land managers and planning authorities they can have a significant positive impact on biodiversity through protection and expansion of a high quality, biodiverse natural environment. Across a range of functions, there are opportunities for education, community engagement, sustainable resource management, projects and initiatives which can have positive benefits for biodiversity.

In Scotland, most Local Authorities support and lead a Local Biodiversity Partnership for their area. These partnerships were created in response to the original Convention on Biological Diversity. The Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership was one of the first in Scotland and has been in place for 15 years. The role and importance of Local Biodiversity Partnerships is recognised and supported in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. Through the production and delivery of Local Biodiversity Action Plans, these Partnerships are well placed to identify the local priorities for action, and act as vehicles for community engagement and co-ordinated action.

#### 4 Main report on how City of Edinburgh Council delivers biodiversity conservation

The main report below sets out how the Council has delivered biodiversity conservation across a range of functions for 2012-2014. As explained above, this report is required by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011. The format used is based on a suggested reporting template produced by the Scottish Government.

4.1	<p><b>Governance, Leadership and Management</b></p> <p>The City of Edinburgh Council is made up of 58 elected Councillors representing 17 wards. The Labour Group and SNP Group lead the Council in the form of the Capital Coalition. The Council operates through a system of committees and sub-committees with officers reporting to committees on relevant matters. The Capital Coalition is committed to certain pledges and outcomes. Those which biodiversity duty activities will support are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coalition Pledge: 48 Use green flag and other strategies to preserve our greenspaces; and</li><li>• Coalition Outcome: 19 Attractive Places are Well Maintained - Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm.</li></ul> <p>All committee reports include a section on Sustainable Impacts. This requires all officers to consider the environmental impact of the contents of their report through the use of a sustainability worksheet. Biodiversity is a consideration under the climate change adaptation and environmental good stewardship sections of the worksheet.</p> <p>The Council is the lead body for the Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership. The Council employs a Biodiversity Officer to facilitate the Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP). Councillors oversee the production and delivery of the Edinburgh LBAP through the committee reporting process.</p> <p>The Council is a signatory to the Central Scotland Green Network Declaration, the Climate Change Declaration, the Scotland Geodiversity Charter and Scotland's Landscape Charter.</p> <p>Biodiversity conservation is included within a suite of work delivered under the umbrella of the Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership. An ecosystem approach to the management of the Council's open space estate is advocated under the Edinburgh Living Landscape initiative, which is currently under development. Both these initiatives are chaired by Councillors.</p>
4.2	<p><b>Mainstreaming</b></p> <p>The conservation of biodiversity is embedded in the delivery of Council services such as Planning and Building Standards and Parks and Greenspace. This ensures that land use planning and the management of Council owned land deliver protection and enhancements for biodiversity. The role of the natural environment and biodiversity is reflected in the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Framework.</p> <p>The Planning and Building Standards policy framework supports the protection and enhancement of protected nature conservation sites, protected species, and biodiversity in the wider landscape. The Strategic Development Plan, Local Development Plan and local planning guidelines reflect the overarching aims of the Central Scotland Green Network of delivering connected green corridors, and protecting and enhancing the natural environment.</p> <p>The Edinburgh Living Landscapes initiative seeks to create resilient green networks on the Council Parks and Greenspace estate, delivering a healthy environment and increased</p>

	<p>accessibility for people. The inclusion of biodiversity in assessments such as Parks Quality Standards and Green Flag Award for parks and greenspace is also integral to the management of Council land.</p> <p>The Council's best sites for nature are identified as Natural Heritage Parks and managed by a dedicated Natural Heritage Service team. Six of these sites are designated as Local Nature Reserves. Programmes such as Eco-schools and the outdoor play project help deliver biodiversity gains within schools and education.</p> <p>A list of plans, policies and strategies which reflect biodiversity objectives are given below:</p> <p><a href="#">Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Plan</a>  <a href="#">Natural Heritage Strategy</a>  <a href="#">Open Space Strategy</a> (under review)  <a href="#">Allotments Strategy</a>  <a href="#">Local Development Plans</a>  <a href="#">Edinburgh Design Guidance</a>  <a href="#">Edinburgh and Lothians Forestry and Woodland Strategy</a>  <a href="#">Trees in the City: Trees and Woodland Action Plan</a>  <a href="#">Sustainable Edinburgh 2020</a>  <a href="#">Sustainable Timber Policy</a>  <a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Policy</a>  <a href="#">Sustainable City Food Plan</a>  <a href="#">Union Canal Strategy</a></p>
4.3	<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <p>The status of biodiversity, and activity on biodiversity conservation, in Edinburgh is monitored through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual progress report on delivery of the Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan;</li> <li>• State of the Environment report produced periodically by City of Edinburgh Council;</li> <li>• The Environmental Quality Indicators report, including Edinburgh's submission to the international Cities Biodiversity Index (the 'Singapore' index);</li> <li>• Annual report on Nature Conservation produced by the Parks and Greenspace Natural Heritage Service; and</li> <li>• A programme of species monitoring and survey work is carried out by both Council staff, volunteers and partners to provide the baseline data for indicators.</li> </ul>
4.4	<p><b>Partnership working</b></p> <p>The Council is lead partner for the Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership. The Partnership comprises approximately 30 organisations and bodies, including government agencies, conservation bodies, environmental trusts and local volunteer conservation groups. The group is responsible for the production and delivery of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>The Council provides third party funding to the Water of Leith Conservation Trust and Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust. Both organisations deliver a programme of work with outcomes for community engagement and biodiversity. The Council is also a member of the Forth Estuary Forum. The Council has a Service Level Agreement with The Wildlife Information Centre to access wildlife data to support decision making.</p> <p>Council officers also work in partnership within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership</li> <li>• Lothian and Fife Green Network Partnership</li> <li>• SEPA's Area Action Group for River Basin Management Planning</li> <li>• Lothian and Borders GeoConservation Group</li> </ul>

	<p>There are many examples of community engagement across a range of services. A key programme which delivers biodiversity enhancements through community projects is the 'Friends of Parks' scheme, supported by the Council. There are over 40 Friends groups associated with Council owned parks and open spaces.</p>
4.5	<p><b>Action for Biodiversity (by Service)</b></p> <p>City of Edinburgh Council has five main services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services for Communities</li> <li>• Children and Families</li> <li>• Corporate Governance</li> <li>• Economic Development</li> <li>• Health and Social Care</li> </ul> <p>Activities within each Service are detailed below, although in many cases Services will work in collaboration with other areas.</p> <p><b><u>Services for Communities</u></b></p> <p><b>Planning and Building Standards service</b></p> <p>This is a key service in the delivery of biodiversity conservation through land management policies, protection and designation of local sites and co-ordination of the Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p><u>Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan</u></p> <p>The Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan delivery includes a range of positive actions for biodiversity across the City. The Biodiversity Officer has a lead role in the co-ordination of delivery and monitoring of the actions.</p> <p><u>Local Development Plan</u></p> <p>The Local Development Plan (LDP) includes a range of planning policies to deliver biodiversity protection and enhancements. Locally important sites are protected through the Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS) system within the LDP, together with Local Nature Reserves (LNR). LDP policies also recognise the value and potential of biodiversity outside designated sites. The Plan aims to enhance, safeguard and avoid fragmentation of the City's green network.</p> <p><u>Edinburgh Design Guidance</u></p> <p>In conjunction with the LDP, the Edinburgh Design Guidance was published in April 2013 which sets out the Council's expectation for the design of new development in Edinburgh. This outlines expectations for landscape proposals and how biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through development.</p> <p><u>Inhouse Training</u></p> <p>Training and advice are provided by Planning and Building Standards to Council departments on a range of biodiversity topics. For example, training sessions on protected species were held for Planning, Forestry, Parks and Estates staff. In addition an updated advice note relating to swifts in new developments was produced for distribution to developers.</p> <p><u>External Partnerships</u></p> <p>Planning and Building Standards officers represent the Council on external partnerships and groups which have a biodiversity remit, such as the Lothian and Fife Green Network Partnership, Central Scotland Green Network and Forth Estuary Forum.</p>

## **Environment service**

This is a key service in the delivery of biodiversity conservation through greenspace management and habitat creation projects.

### Living Landscapes

The developing Edinburgh Living Landscapes initiative is led by Parks and Greenspace in partnership with Scottish Wildlife Trust and Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust. It advocates the development of an ecosystem approach to the management of the Council's open space estate in order to realise the benefits to both biodiversity and public amenity. It aims to create resilient green networks to deliver a healthy, accessible and attractive environment.

### Natural Heritage Service – site management and community involvement

The Parks and Greenspace Natural Heritage Service manages the Council's natural heritage parks, including six Local Nature Reserves and the Pentland Hills Regional Park. These sites represent the most important natural areas owned by the Council, which lie at the core of Edinburgh's green network. The service runs volunteer activities including practical conservation tasks and wildlife surveys. There is a key programme of events and monitoring which is significant in terms of community engagement in biodiversity conservation. In one year in the Pentland Hills Regional Park alone, 49 volunteers helped with 26 days of biodiversity surveys.

### Pentland Hills Woodland Expansion

The Natural Heritage Service has helped to secure funding for a landscape scale habitat creation project in the Pentland Hills Regional Park. Three sites, including Bonaly Country Park, will be planted with a total of 62 hectares of new woodland, funded by the Forestry Commission Scotland. This new woodland connects and expands existing areas of woodland and helps to deliver the vision of the Central Scotland Green Network and meet woodland expansion targets in the Scottish Forestry Strategy.

### Trees in the City and i-Trees

The Forestry Service produced a Trees in the City Action Plan in 2014. An earlier I-Tree report was published valuing the ecosystem services provided by Edinburgh's trees in partnership with the Forestry Service. The I-Tree Eco model valued just two of the ecosystem services provided by Edinburgh's trees and woodlands, carbon sequestration and air pollution absorption, at over £17m in 2011.

### Friends of Parks

Edinburgh has a network of over 40 Friends of Parks groups, supported by Parks and Greenspace staff. These groups are made up of volunteers who work closely with the Council and play a key role in enhancing and protecting local parks, woodlands and green spaces.

### Allotments

Implementation of the Allotments Strategy by Parks and Greenspace staff has resulted in the creation of nine new allotment sites on Council land across the city. Some of these were supported by funding through the Neighbourhood Environment Programme detailed below. Gardens and allotments offer a valuable habitat, particularly in urban areas.

### Urban Pollinators

The Council has been part of the UK Urban Pollinators initiative. Wildflower meadows were created in Edinburgh parks and school grounds as part of this scientific collaboration between universities, city councils and wildlife trusts, researching insect pollinators in urban habitats in the UK. The meadows created as part of this project continue to be managed for biodiversity now that the project is complete. Other meadow areas have also been created on Council land.

#### Wildflower Nursery

The Council's Inch Nursery has supported the Edinburgh Rare Plants Project by growing on rare native plants from seed, and also by selling native wildflowers for community and school projects across the city.

#### Invasive Non-Native Species on Council land

Invasive non-native species (INNS), which are a threat to natural habitats and species, are controlled on Council land. These include giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), and himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).

#### **Transport service**

This service can play a key role in the delivery of biodiversity conservation through its work in flood prevention and river restoration, in the management and design of transport routes and the links these provide for people to access greenspace across the City.

#### Edinburgh Street Design Guidance

An Edinburgh Street Design Guidance has been produced for public consultation. The guidance sets standards for street design which will lead to multiple benefits. The use of landscaping and street trees will provide direct biodiversity benefits, as well as other environmental benefits such as pollution control and climate change mitigation. Management of water run off through Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes will lead to indirect benefits by improving the water environment, through pollution management.

#### Off road path management

Parts of the off-road path network are designated as Local Biodiversity Sites, such as the North Edinburgh path network. Improvements to the path network includes habitat corridor management and enhancement where opportunities arise. For example, a wildflower verge has been created during path improvements at Rodney Street.

#### Flood Prevention and river restoration

The Bridges and Flood Prevention team has lead work to deliver river restoration and flood prevention schemes on the Water of Leith, Braid burn and Niddrie burn. These schemes have been designed and implemented to protect and restore habitats for wildlife.

#### **Housing and Regeneration service and Neighbourhood Areas**

The neighbourhood areas are a key delivery mechanism for biodiversity conservation through the management of community parks and local greenspace projects. The neighbourhoods are also of great importance for the close communication networks they have with local communities.

#### Neighbourhood Environment Programme

In the past three years the Neighbourhood Environment Programme (NEP) has contributed funding to allotment projects across the city (Elliott Street, Hamilton Wynd, Prestonfield, Lochend, Hawkhill & Nisbet Court, Inchkeith Court and MacKenzie Place). NEP funding has contributed to tree planting in several areas in South West Neighbourhood.

#### Regeneration

The Regeneration Team support the development of community food growing projects across the city. In 2013/14, Forth Neighbourhood Partnership contributed to the West Pilton Community Garden and to food growing initiatives in the area. Numerous planters, feature gardens and soft landscaping schemes have been funded throughout the city, as well as some wildflower schemes.

#### Calders estate

In partnership with the South West Neighbourhood, the Regeneration Team delivered environmental and public realm improvements at the Calders estate. One of the aims of the improvements is to increase biodiversity in the estate. The works were informed by national and local policy guidance including the Scottish Government's Green Infrastructure Design and Placemaking, Greenspace Scotland's Community Growing in Scotland Guidance and the City of Edinburgh Council's Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Native species of trees, hedge plants, meadow plants and bulbs were planted in various parts of the estate.

#### Community parks and greenspace projects

Other examples of neighbourhood community green space projects include:

- Major replanting of Abercorn Park to extend flowering season and include insect-friendly plants;
- Creation of approximately 3000m<sup>2</sup> of wildflower meadows in parks in East Neighbourhood;
- Hedgerow planting in Harrison and Bloomiehall Parks;
- Community growing in Harrison Park;
- Community orchards in Greenbank community wood, Hailes Avenue & Balerno;
- Bee nest boxes installed at Spylaw, Muirwood and Fairmilhead Park;
- Woodland interpretation and education in Muirwood park;
- Annual wildflower meadows created in Harrison, Muirwood, White Parks and Hailes Avenue;
- Restoration work at Gardner's Crescent;
- Orchard creation in St Katherine's Park;
- Fruit tree planting in Ferniehill Community Park;
- Development of the city centre Geddes Garden.

#### **Community Safety and Libraries service**

This service contributes to the biodiversity duty tackling non-native species and providing a biodiversity information source.

#### Invasive Non-Native Species on private land

The Environmental Health team support the control of harmful invasive non native plant species giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), on private land, under public health legislation, where appropriate.

#### Information sources

Libraries provide information and resources about nature conservation in Edinburgh, in particular MacDonald Road library has a dedicated nature conservation information area.

#### **Corporate Property service**

#### Inhouse Training

Staff in Estates Services received training on protected species issues in relation to Council owned buildings and land. This training mainly related to the legislation relating to bats and bat roosts.

#### **Children and Families**

This service contributes to the biodiversity duty through formal environmental education in schools and other learning establishments.

#### Eco-schools and Outdoor Play

Environmental education in schools is delivered by this Department, helping to support the Curriculum for Excellence. Additional biodiversity related activities include the development of outdoor play projects within school grounds and delivery of the Eco-schools programme.

The Eco-schools programme is supported by the Parks and Greenspace service. 84% of all nurseries, primary and secondary schools in Edinburgh have been accredited with an Eco-schools award. 93% of all schools are registered for the programme.

## **Corporate Governance**

### **Organisational Development service**

The Corporate Strategy and Policy team lead on carbon, climate change and sustainability work within the Council. The team co-ordinate various policies, action plans and projects which have clear links to biodiversity conservation.

#### *Sustainable Edinburgh*

Sustainable Edinburgh 2020 is the Council's Framework for the sustainable development of the city until 2020. The Climate Change Adaptation Framework mentioned above, and an e-tool under development, help the Council comply with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act. The e-tool specifically addresses biodiversity in the context of adapting to a changing climate. The Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership is co-ordinated from this service. The team also lead on related initiatives such as Edible Edinburgh. Edible Edinburgh is a cross sector partnership advocating the transformation of our food systems to promote sustainable development. One of six key aims of the Edible Edinburgh Sustainable Food City Strategy focuses on land use: '*to grow, produce and distribute food more locally while conserving and protecting our natural resources and environment*'.

### **Legal risk and compliance service**

Legal service staff provide an advisory service on a variety of biodiversity related issues such as protected species, nature conservation site designations and Habitat Regulations Appraisal.

### **Finance service**

The Procurement team has produced a Sustainable Timber Policy which benefits global biodiversity by specifying the purchase of timber-derived products from sustainably managed sources.

### **Culture and Sport service**

This service contributes to the biodiversity duty through engaging members of the public in workshops and events, many of which have a nature conservation theme.

#### *Community garden growing vegetables and fruit at the Museum of Edinburgh*

The garden at the back of Acheson House has been regenerated with the help of Bridgend Growing Communities, the Patrick Geddes Gardening Club and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust. The design includes herbs, vegetables and fruit trees, bordered with low hedging to create formal shapes. Gardening classes are offered as part of the project, to encourage new members of the club and to help others to enhance their own corner of the Old Town.

#### *Edinburgh Museums and Galleries features biodiversity in its public programme of workshops and events*

The Museums and Galleries service has worked with local school children to create a sensory courtyard garden at Lauriston Castle for the particular benefit of people with dementia and vision impairments.

A resource pack for school groups was produced for the grounds of Lauriston Castle and part-funded by Scottish Natural Heritage. The pack allows self-guided visits by class teachers and the programme can be adapted to suit P1 to P7 classes.

There is an annual programme of workshops for families and adults on topics such as tree identification, animal tracking; growing plants that attract bees and butterflies; painting using natural dyes made from berries; craft courses using materials from Lauriston Castle gardens (such as making bird feeders in winter and bird-houses in summer to attract wild birds); gardening; wildlife photography; and willow weaving.

## **Economic Development**

This service is key to the delivery of a sustainable economy in Edinburgh which has many positive impacts on the City's biodiversity.

### Union Canal Strategy

The Economic Development Service leads on the delivery of the aims of the Edinburgh Union Canal Strategy which was developed in partnership between the City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Canals (formerly British Waterways Scotland). The strategy identifies opportunities across four key areas including 'Development and Environment'. The Edinburgh Canal Strategy further proposes to: support the protection, conservation and enhancement of the Union Canal and the character, feature and quality of its biodiversity including its waterway habitats and protected species, flora and fauna; consider the collection of Integrated habitat network information to inform habitat connectivity enhancements to contribute to the wider Central Scotland Green Network; and, develop the riparian corridor of the union canal through the rural west.

### Temporary greening projects

The Economic Development Service is working with the EDI Group, Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspaces Trust and the Fountainbridge Canalside Initiative on a Temporary Uses Strategy for the longstanding gap site on the site of the former Scottish and Newcastle Fountainbridge Brewery. The strategy has included the introduction of temporary greening measures such as tree planting and wildflower meadow seeding. The Grove 2 community garden has also been developed on the site seeing the creation of up to 100 temporary allotments.

### Education and environmental projects

Additionally, the Economic Development service has supported biodiversity related projects through partnership working across the council and with strategic partners. Some specific examples include: Coastal interpretation panels; the production of podcasts about wildlife conservation and highlighting environmental responsibility, in partnership with local schools.

## **Health and Social Care**

This service contributes to the biodiversity duty through the positive engagement with its service users in outdoor activities and projects that have an added biodiversity value.

### **Social Work Service: Criminal Justice**

#### Community payback orders: unpaid work teams deliver environmental projects

Unpaid work is part of community payback orders that are imposed on offenders by court so that they can make reparation to the community. The supervision of community payback is the responsibility of the criminal justice social work service within Health and Social Care.

The Vat Run project has been a joint enterprise between Edinburgh Leisure, a local community group and the unpaid work team to construct a BMX track in South Queensferry. In addition to constructing the track through a woodland area, the project has improved the surrounding area through landscaping and environmental work. A large part of the project is concerned with woodland management. The unpaid work team has assisted in the creation of a wild flower area, a marshland section and several "bug hotels" throughout the site. It is

	<p>hoped that the work performed here will attract a variety of animals and insects to the area.</p> <p>In Pilton Community Garden, the unpaid work team helped with the maintenance of the garden, the supply of materials and advice. As the garden is just over two years old, a lot of ground work has been required which the community gardeners would have found too difficult to carry out by themselves. The garden and orchard have matured and the raised beds that the team helped to build have had strawberries, onions, carrots, and lots of variety and colours of potatoes. The harvest was used to make soups and stews, and the gardeners invited people to a tasting day. The garden is an asset which the local community can enjoy and spend time in.</p> <p><b>Older people and Disability Services</b></p> <p><u><i>Gardening projects for supported adults</i></u></p> <p>In North Edinburgh the Council's Drylaw Community Project supports ten adults with learning disabilities. Each service user is participating in the "learn and grow" certificate in horticulture. This certificate is facilitated by the Royal Caledonian Horticultural society (RCHS). The group have taken over a garden plot at the North Edinburgh Arts Centre as part of a North Edinburgh Grows project. With funding from Lottery, Santander, HSBC and donated materials from Audi, the garden plot is now a productive food growing space. The group is using organic methods to minimise the impact on wildlife, and has created a garden which benefits insects and pollinators.</p> <p>Other examples of supported adults being involved in community gardening projects can be found across the city at Saughton Gardens, Bonnington Centre and Firhill day service.</p> <p><u><i>Food for life at Clovenstone Care Home</i></u></p> <p>Clovenstone is the first local authority care home to participate actively in the Edinburgh Food For Life pilot project, part of the Sustainable Edinburgh 2020 framework. The aim of the project is to support the development of Edinburgh as a sustainable food city. This embraces the ethos of transforming food culture, with an emphasis on the use of fresh, seasonal, local and organic food that is healthy, sustainable and accessible to all, enhancing environmental, social and economic well being of the residents. Working closely with the Soil Association which is promoting the Food For Life project, Clovenstone gained a bronze award for its work. The impact of this has not only benefited residents, in terms of more fresh and nutritious meals being served, some using home grown produce, but has also raised residents' activity levels, self confidence and sense of satisfaction, as they are engaged in the gardening project.</p>
4.6	<p><b>Communication and engagement</b></p> <p>Awareness raising, communication and engagement are a key element of biodiversity work within Edinburgh. The Council has undertaken a range of work to promote biodiversity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordination and promotion of an annual Edinburgh Biodiversity Week including two weekend events promoting Edinburgh's biodiversity;</li> <li>• Publication of web-based information and use of social media;</li> <li>• Use of e-newsletters to promote projects and events;</li> <li>• Production of information posters for parks during Year of Natural Scotland;</li> <li>• Co-ordination of 'Friends of Parks' programme and support for community projects within parks;</li> <li>• A programme run by the Natural Heritage Service of annual events, conservation tasks and wildlife surveys; and</li> <li>• Production of guidance information related to rare and protected species, for internal and external use by staff, developers and architects.</li> </ul>

4.7	<p><b>Future work</b></p> <p>The key work areas for the next three years will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and launch of a replacement Local Biodiversity Action Plan;</li> <li>• Continue to develop the Edinburgh Living Landscapes initiative and aim to secure resources for delivery;</li> <li>• Sign up to the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital;</li> <li>• Link with other emerging related initiatives e.g on ecosystem services;and</li> <li>• Continue to identify opportunities to work with new partners and further raise awareness of biodiversity opportunities across Edinburgh.</li> </ul>
4.8	<p><b>Biodiversity highlights</b></p> <p>The report above demonstrates the breadth of activities delivered by the Council which help to increase Edinburgh's biodiversity. Particular strengths in Edinburgh are the high level of community involvement in greenspace projects, and the extent of partnership working both within and outwith the Council. Specific initiatives which are highlights of biodiversity delivery from the last three years are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The urban pollinators project;</li> <li>• Securing funding for landscape scale woodland creation in Pentland Hills Regional Park;</li> <li>• Development of Edinburgh Living Landscapes initiative; and</li> <li>• Multiple examples of local community greenspace projects.</li> </ul>