

## **NHS FIFE BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT 2015-17**

The Scottish Government sets out areas that it considers are important for public bodies to include in their Biodiversity Duty Reports, which are:

- 1. Introductory information**
- 2. Mainstreaming**
- 3. Actions taken to improve biodiversity conservation**
- 4. Partnership Working and biodiversity communication**
- 5. Biodiversity highlights and challenges**
- 6. Monitoring**
- 7. Contribution to targets**

### **Section 1: Introductory information**

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 requires public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 – also commonly referred to as the WANE Act – reinforces this by requiring all public bodies to report every three years on the actions undertaken to satisfy these biodiversity duty requirements.

NHS Fife operates over 70 healthcare sites across Fife, many of which are located in sites that cover a sizeable land area and encompass a wide variety of habitats. Besides the direct benefits to the flora and fauna in and around these sites, active management – where possible – to promote biodiversity, there are also associated benefits for the health and well-being of staff, patients and visitors alike to our sites. Several of the larger sites have developed walking routes, which allow users ready access to wildlife and enjoy the seasonable aspect of nature on our doorstep.

Other work that takes place is geared towards mitigating the effects of construction or building refurbishment work on the surrounding ecology, due to having to meet the changing demands for the services that we provide, both to the populace of Fife and from users that come from further afield due to being a regional centre of excellence for particular services.

In the period 2011-2015 a lot of work was undertaken in this regard, with site surveys undertaken at eight, larger NHS Fife sites and various measures and suggestions identified: unfortunately since 2015 two staff who were major drivers to this project moved to other NHS Fife Boards and – coupled with other major reorganizational changes in Estates, Facilities and Capital Services – have meant that the work has stalled until a Sustainability Officer post was created and filled in Spring 2017.

NHS Fife is now in the process of picking up where it left off and re-establishing links with Fife Council's Biodiversity Coordinator (Johanna Willi), their Greenspace Officer (Kevin O'Kane) and Fife Coast and Countryside Trust's Countryside Ranger Service (Bob Weston).

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<b>Section 2: Mainstreaming</b>			
<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2.1	Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018 FOURTH EDITION	Lowlands and Farmland Ecosystem	Enhance the grounds of eight NHS Fife sites for biodiversity as well as patient and visitor wellbeing.



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<b>Section 3: Actions taken to improve biodiversity conservation</b>			
<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
3.1	Lynebank Hospital Audit	Lynebank Hospital Action Plan	Fencing removed in one area, grass-cutting along woodland belt reduced, meadow area created. A green gym was created for a 3-week period of work, which saw wall garden restructured and replanted. Walking route established. Bird boxes 7 feeders put in walled garden. Trees moved from meadow replanted in Stratheden & St Andrews sites. A large section to the west & south of the site has been sold for residential development which should include green corridors linking with adjacent sides also under development.
3.2	Stratheden Hospital Audit	Stratheden Hospital Action Plan	Areas of overgrown rhododendrons reduced with support from Elmwood College. Courtyards rejuvenated. Dedicated walk through natural woodland onsite created with help from Elmwood College.
3.3	Glenrothes Hospital Audit	Glenrothes Hospital Action Plan	Walking route map produced. Provision of bird feeders under discussion with Fife Countryside and Coastal Trust. Investigating path to connect grounds with community.
3.4	Queen Margaret Hospital Audit	Queen Margaret Hospital Action Plan	Enclosed quadrangle gardens being cleared and reset as part of hospital redevelopment project. Meadow land being developed south of car parks 3 and 4. Walking maps produced. Review and re-plant all internal courtyards with longer term benefit in mind (ie. no short term bedding plant type solutions). Facilitate access where appropriate. Meadow planting proposed for 3 slopes: 1. between the main Phase1 car park and the main Phase 1 building; 2. to the side of the Phase 1 main entrance; 3. to the rear of the site between the internal road and Robertson Road.

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3.5	Victoria Hospital Audit	Victoria Hospital Action Plan	Walking route map produced. A meeting had been planned to discuss potential site improvements in and around the GH&MS project work and subsequent site re-development, however it looks like this was put on hold due to organisation changes and staff movements mention in the introduction.
3.6	Whytemans Brae Hospital Audit	Whytemans Brae Hospital Action Plan	Walled garden fenced and improved.
3.7	Cameron Hospital Audit	Cameron Hospital Action Plan	Walking route produced. Courtyard gardens rejuvenated and replanting ongoing. Jogging group using walk routes.
3.8	St Andrews Community Hospital	As this site is relatively new an Audit has not been carried out, rather the 'off-plan' site features have been considered.	This site features an enclosed, therapeutic garden and has a mixture of hedgerow and grassland planting around the site, with farmland adjacent to the south east, south and south west of the site.



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<b>Section 4: Partnership working and biodiversity communications</b>			
<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
4.1	Fife Environmental Partnership	Partnership working opportunities to share in sustainability opportunities.	Raise awareness and increase participation in biodiversity conservation and enhancement.
4.2	Scottish Natural Heritage	Improving community links in and around Glenrothes Hospital, giving a direct link to Riverside Park	Discussions had begun with SNH & NHS Fife to create a path to link with community route network – this work will be followed up and further developed.
4.3	Fife Council	Improve biodiversity by encouraging more insect pollinators through appropriate wildflower planting.	Wildflower planting areas are planned with help from Fife Council

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<b>Section 5: Biodiversity highlights and challenges</b>			
<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
5.1	Site audits of major sites carried out	The action plans that arose from the site audits provide a clear way to enhance and promote biodiversity at all of the sites covered.	Whilst there is still a lot of work to do, nevertheless NHS Fife has begun to take steps and the work at already carried out (walking routes created and advertised), courtyard renewal/rejuvenation, bird feeder installation is being noticed by staff and patients.
5.2	Biodiversity Mainstreaming	Staff movement and departmental reorganisation.	The movement of key staff directly involved with driving biodiversity in NHS Fife to other Scottish NHS Boards, coupled with departmental reorganisation has meant that the momentum that had developed within the organisation has stalled for that period until posts have been filled and the work may resume once more. In the intervening period, the pressure on budgets has continued to increase, meaning what may have looked like a suitable option a few years ago may not now be possible.

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<b>Section 6: Monitoring</b>			
<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
6.1	Review of existing action plans	Benchmarking the current plans will re-establish how far work at each site has progressed.	Work undertaken from now onwards can then be monitored by a further re-evaluation by end of 2020.

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### Section 7: Contribution to targets

Targets/key steps from Chapter 1 (Healthy ecosystems) of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity"	Contribution to key step?	Justification
(1.1) Encourage and support ecosystem restoration and management, especially in catchments that have experienced the greatest degradation	[tick if yes]	[include project title or reference for relevant activity]
(1.2) Use assessments of ecosystem health at a catchment level to determine what needs to be done	✓	Site Audits. 3.1 - 3.8 above.
(1.3) Government and public bodies, including SNH, SEPA and FCS, will work together towards a shared agenda for action to restore ecosystem health at a catchment-scale across Scotland	✓	Partnership Working. 4.1 - 4.3 above.
(1.4) Establish plans and decisions about land use based on an understanding of ecosystems. Take full account of land use impacts on the ecosystems services that underpin social, economic and environmental health	✓	Action Plans. 3.1 - 3.8 above.
Targets/key steps from Chapter 3 (Biodiversity, health and quality of life) of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity"	Contribution to key step?	Justification
(3.1) Provide opportunities for everyone to experience and enjoy nature regularly, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups	✓	Improved access. 3.4 above.
(3.2) Support local authorities and communities to improve local environments and enhance biodiversity using green space and green networks, allowing nature to flourish and so enhancing the quality of life for people who live there	✓	Building new links where needed. 4.2 above.
(3.3) Build on good practice being developed by the National Health Service (NHS) and others to help encourage greenspace, green exercise and social prescribing initiatives that will improve health and wellbeing through connecting	✓	Walking routes across sites. 3.1 - 3.8 above

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people with nature		
(3.4) Increase access to nature within and close to schools, and support teachers in developing the role of outdoor learning across the Curriculum for Excellence	N/A	
(3.5) Encourage public organisations and businesses to review their responsibilities and action for biodiversity, and recognise that increasing their positive contribution to nature and landscapes can help meet their corporate priorities and performance	✓	Partnership Working. 4.1 above.
<b>Targets/key steps from Chapter 4 (Wildlife, habitats and protected places) of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity"</b>	<b>Contribution to key step?</b>	<b>Justification</b>
(4.1) Ensure that the management of protected places for nature also provides wider public benefits		
(4.3) Integrate protected areas policy with action for wider habitats to combat fragmentation and restore key habitats		
(4.5) Involve many more people than at present in this work and improve understanding of the poorly known elements of nature		
<b>Targets/key steps from Chapter 5 (Land and freshwater management) of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity"</b>	<b>Contribution to key step?</b>	<b>Justification</b>
(5.1) Promote an ecosystem approach to land management that fosters sustainable use of natural resources and puts biodiversity at the heart of land-use planning and decision-making	✓	The site audits and action plans list sustainable measures. 3.1 – 3.8 above.
(5.2) Ensure that measures taken forward under the Common Agricultural Policy encourage land managers to develop and retain the diversity of wildlife habitats	N/A	

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and landscape features		
(5.3) Support 'High Nature Value' farming and forestry	N/A	
(5.4) Put in place the management necessary to bring Scotland's protected areas into favourable condition and improve the ecological status of water bodies	✓	Work closely with Water Companies/SEPA to keep within discharge consents.
(5.5) Ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem objectives are fully integrated into flood risk management plans, and restore wetland habitats and woodlands to provide sustainable flood management	✓	Sustainability and Resilience Planning are interlinked.
(5.6) Restore and extend natural habitats as a means of building reserves of carbon and to help mitigate climate change	N/A	NHS Fife has limited land area and funding for non-patient care is tightly contrained.
(5.7) Provide clear advice to land and water managers on best practice	✓	Ongoing and as requested by staff.
<b>Targets/key steps from Chapter 6 (Marine and coastal) of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity"</b>	<b>Contribution to key step?</b>	<b>Justification</b>
(6.4) Achieve good environmental status for Scottish seas	N/A	