

**Highland Community Planning Board
Board Meeting of Wednesday 15th March 2017
Highlight Report in relation to delivery of SOA Environmental Outcomes
Delivery Plan for the period from Highlight Reporting for the period from
December 2016 to February 2017**

Progress has been made across the range of identified environmental outcomes although on-going funding constraints to the public sector bodies continues to have an impact on delivery of a number of actions.

Whilst not part of the SOA, the CPP may be interested to note that SEPA has begun work on many areas of the River Basin Management Plan delivery for the second cycle including diffuse pollution (Bathing Water) related site visits in the Nairn catchment. The [plan](#) is available on SEPA's website and there is also a [map based tool](#) available to allow individual measures in catchments of interest to be searched. SEPA are still early in the 2015-2021 second basin plan period so there are not many completed measures to report. As SEPA progress through the period to 2021 they will provide further updates to the CPP.

The reported progress on the specific environmental outcomes in the SOA is as follows:

The environment will be managed sustainably in order to optimise economic, health, natural heritage and learning benefits

- In February 2017 the percentage of designated features in favourable condition was 80.7% (down from 81.1% in November 2016). Although worth noting, this is not considered to be a significant change.
- HPAW met on 8th March 2017 to review the first year of business. A sub group has been set up to look at raptor persecution in Moy Forest and North Monadhliath and there have been meetings with SLE, SGA, RSPB and RSG to discuss information sharing and a way forward regarding constructive dialogue. Police Scotland has completed an educational tour of ten schools in the Inverness east area, raising awareness of wildlife crime. Area Commanders are in receipt of the annual Wildlife Policing plans for their areas.

The effects of climate change in the Highlands will be minimised and managed

- In 2015, Scottish Government introduced an Order requiring all 150 Public Bodies who appear on the Major Player list to report annually to Scottish Ministers on their compliance with the climate change duties. The first mandatory reports were submitted on 30th November 2016.
- The Highland Council consultation for the landscape sensitivity appraisals of the Black Isle, surrounding hills and Moray Firth Coast study area and of the Caithness study area closed on 31st January 2017. The responses will now be analysed and a report is due to be taken to Committee in June 2017.

- The Highland Council has launched an update to its interactive map of wind energy developments across Highland, available at www.highland.gov.uk/windmap. The map now contains data to January 2017 and has additional functionality added to facilitate its use.
- The fourth tidal turbine has been deployed at Atlantis's MeyGen scheme in the Inner Sound.

People will have greater outdoor access and volunteering opportunities across Highland

- Trees for Life created 704 volunteer opportunities between December 2016 to February 2017. The number of opportunities taken by people from deprived areas has not been quantified, but includes a number of participants from disadvantaged areas of Inverness.
- The Scottish Waterways Trust (tSWT) were successful with their bid to run canal college 2 (cc2) having been awarded a grant of up to £1.125m from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Remaining funding is now being finalised and project delivery posts recruited. Cc2 is essentially a major skills and employability programme centred on three of the nation's historic canals in North Glasgow, Falkirk and Inverness.
- In the Highland programme a great deal of benefit will be gained through delivering practical projects in the unique environment of the Caledonian Canal and its neighbouring green space. It is hoped that tSWT can offer a place to over 100 people in Inverness area over three years, from the ages of 16 to 30, as well as engage others within the community to act as volunteer mentors. Participants will learn about the built, cultural and natural heritage of the canals whilst improving their own confidence and employability prospects. Three 12 week courses will be run annually with around 10 students in each and aims to start during May 2017. Barnardos Works are key partners in the Highland project and together they look forward to making a real difference in the lives of young people who need the support of such a programme to develop.
- The Nature Walks for Wellbeing programme continues to be well received and subscribed, helping to make a tangible difference to many people's lives. This is understood through research carried out and now ready to be disseminated widely. Surveys have shown a marked increase in social, physical and mental wellbeing through attendance that far exceeds the weekly 90 minute programme. This is currently one of the most subscribed activities at New Craigs hospital and attracts participants from halfway houses such as Aonach Mhor, through HUG Action for Mental Health and with people living in the wider community. The programme is based on a mindful approach whilst connecting with nature, reducing isolation and providing a nature based therapeutic aid to recovery and wellbeing (mental wellness and gentle physical exercise). Average attendance now sits at 16 participants in the reporting period.
- 'Walk a Mile' now takes place each month around the Muirtown Basin. This project encourages discussion about personal and community considerations surrounding mental health. Through this activity the aim is to normalise 'mental health' and help to reduce stigma and discrimination. January's walk

attracted 25 participants and there were 16 participants in February 2017. A new topic is facilitated each month through tSWT and conversations 'seeded'; loneliness was the topic in February. This type of community and 3rd sector approach to community health can also help to reduce pressures on National Health Service resources.

For further information or to discuss any issues raised in this highlight report please contact:

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