

Police Scotland and SPA

Biodiversity Duty Report 2021/2023



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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 responsibilities. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 introduced a further requirement for all public bodies to provide a publicly available report every three years on the actions they have taken to fulfil this biodiversity duty. This report is the second prepared by Police Scotland since the requirement was established, and covers the period from January 2021 until December 2023.

The production of this report is timely and follows an important development in Scotland's strategic framework, with the release of Scottish Government's final draft Biodiversity Strategy in September 2023. This is a key pillar in Scotland's biodiversity framework and sets out a vision of a nature positive Scotland by 2030, and to have regenerated and restored biodiversity by 2045. This vision includes an aim to protect at least 30% of land and seas for nature by 2030 and to create nature networks that transcend across Scotland, building healthy resilient ecosystems.

The work of public bodies to achieve these ambitious targets will be crucial. Police Scotland has an important role to play in enhancing and protecting biodiversity, with our focus on keeping people safe in the prevention and detection of crime.

Wildlife crime, environmental and rural crime, in particular, are crimes that pose threats and harm to biodiversity, as well as our communities. Scotland is made up of distinctive biodiversity and rich and varied landscapes, therefore making it an attractive place for crime.

We also understand the important role our land and estate management will play in assessing, restoring and creating habitats for the benefit of wildlife and the communities we serve. Police Scotland maintains the most geographically diverse estate of any unified public sector body in Scotland, and therefore our opportunity for establishing a nature-positive estate is substantial, as well as our contributions in building resilient ecosystems across Scotland.

Conserving our natural environment is a priority and one that requires all of us to look carefully at how we carry out many of our activities. This report therefore provides details of the range of works Police Scotland is involved with, primarily through our operational functions, and a selection of outcomes achieved for the benefit of the nation's ecological resource. It acknowledges the important national and global context regarding the decline of biodiversity, and its inextricable connection to climate change.



Background



Part 1 of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and Part 5 of the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 require public bodies to provide a report every three years on the action they have taken to further the conservation of biodiversity in Scotland. In doing so, they should provide evidence by way of strategy, documentation and programmes of projects that meet the biodiversity aims of Scotland.

Both Police Scotland and its governing body the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) are required to report on their respective organisations' performance in relation to the public body biodiversity duty.

For this reporting cycle, Police Scotland reports publicly on both its own and the SPA's behalf.

About the Scottish Police Authority

The Scottish Police Authority has a statutory responsibility to maintain and support the continuous improvement of policing in Scotland, and to ensure that Police Scotland is equipped to meet changing needs, expectations and demands both in the present, and in the future. The Authority is also responsible for the delivery of Forensic Services to both policing and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and for ensuring that its governance and corporate responsibilities are exercised in the standards expected of a major public body.

The Authority is responsible for the estate and assets of policing and is the employer of all officers and staff. The SPA aims to increase public trust and confidence in the policing of Scotland in the way it carries out its functions and through the quality of its governance arrangements.

About Police Scotland

Context

Police Scotland is responsible for policing across the whole of Scotland, some 28,168 square miles, covering a third of the United Kingdom's landmass with a unique range of urban, rural, island and remote communities. It is the second largest police service in the UK with a FTE head count of 22,094 (as at 31st March 2023), comprising of police officers, special constables and staff.

Police Scotland's main objective has always been to improve and sustain the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities within Scotland. Our organisation's community-focused role within society ensures that our commitment to reducing our impacts on the environment, and the biodiversity within it, revolves around providing a safer and fairer society for current and future generations.

We believe that embedding sustainable development within our practices can ensure that future generations have access to the same, or more, resources than are currently available. Additionally, the disparity between those who experience the impacts of environmental degradation, and those causing it, is against our organisations core values and something we are passionate to address, to provide a more just and fair society.

Governance and Structure

Our purpose is to improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland, focusing on keeping people safe in line with our values of integrity, fairness, and respect, and with human rights at the heart of everything we do.

The service is led by Chief Constable Jo Farrell, supported by a command team of three Deputy Chief Constables, Deputy Chief Officer, Assistant Chief Constables and Directors.

Police Scotland has 13 Local Policing Divisions, each headed by a Chief Superintendent who ensures that local policing in each area is responsive, accountable and tailored to meet local needs. Each division encompasses response officers, community officers, local crime investigation, public protection and local intelligence.

Local Policing Divisions are supported by national specialist divisions. The Specialist Crime Division (SCD) provides investigative and intelligence functions such as Major Crime Investigation, Public Protection, Organised Crime, Counter Terrorism, Intelligence and Safer Communities.

The Operational Support Division (OSD) provides specialist support functions such as Road Policing, Firearms, Public Order, Air Support, Marine Policing, Dogs and Mounted Branch, as well as Emergency and Events Planning. These national divisions ensure every community in Scotland has access to specialist policing services.

Calls from the public are handled by our Contact, Command and Control Division with Area Control Rooms at four locations across the country which deploy resources.

Our people are supported by corporate functions including People and Development, Finance, Estates and Corporate Communications, housed under Corporate Services.

Land and Estate Management

Police Scotland has a geographically diverse estate serving urban, rural and remote-rural communities. Our Local Policing Divisions are present in each of Scotland's 32 local authorities, many of which have their own Local Biodiversity Action Plans tailored to their unique biodiversity.

All areas we serve comprise one or more Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation, or other nature reserves, Ramsar sites and sites of special scientific interest (SSSI). We are one of the few public sector organisations with a nationwide coverage and so our responsibility to conserve and protect biodiversity ranges across the total variety of different environments Scotland has.

Police Scotland currently has responsibility for in excess of 500 properties for the SPA comprising a total internal area of circa 451,452 square metres all of which consume energy and water with many generating significant volumes of waste.

The estate is complex comprising of a diverse range and function of properties including operational police stations, corporate and administrative buildings, housing, HMO's, radio sites, custody suites, firing ranges, training venues, student accommodation, vehicle workshops and a farm ranging in size from 11,000 square metre city centre offices to 25 square metre remote radio site hill-top locations.

Many grass areas in our estate perform a variety of functions such as park and open space at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan. Other grassland areas include road verges, training greens and recreation spaces. Whilst Police Scotland's control over site management is varied between sites, we are committed to making an impact in every site, wherever practically attainable. Our estate is managed by internal estates and facilities management teams, with soft and hard FM delivered by external contractors.

Delivery of the Biodiversity Duty

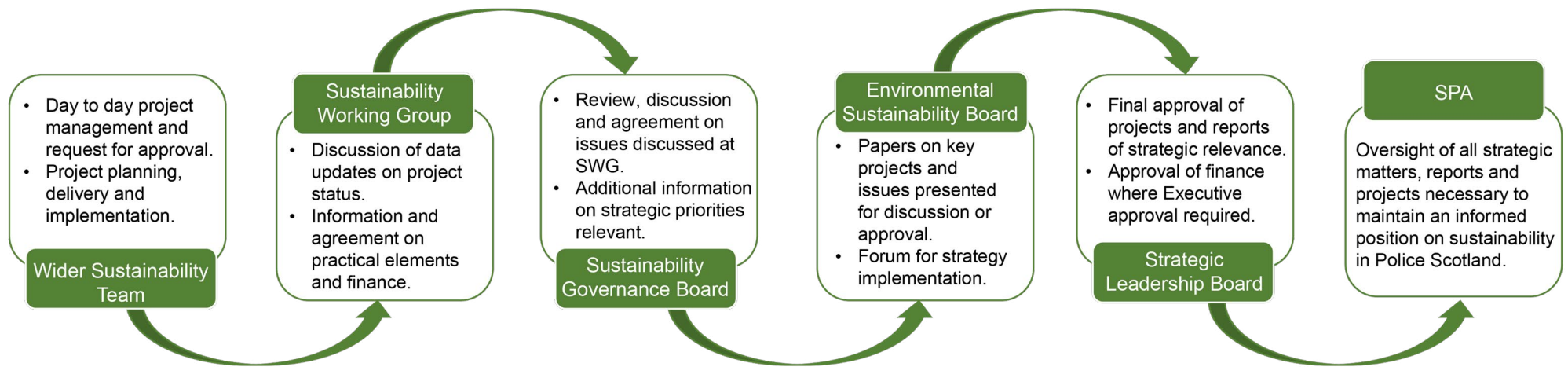
Police Scotland delivers its key organisational biodiversity responsibilities and project implementation through its Corporate Services function. Our Corporate function provides support across the following areas:

- Estates
- Fleet
- People and Development
- Finance
- Sustainability
- Procurement

Sustainability

Sustainability is the lead team delivering the organisation’s biodiversity duty via strategy, policy, programmes and projects, however cross-departmental teams all have a significant role

to play. Police Scotland has a dedicated Sustainability team comprising a National Sustainability Lead and three Sustainability Project Officers.



Scottish Police Authority Board

The SPA has ultimate authority and sign off on all Strategies and Government reporting requirements relating to environmental sustainability.

Police Scotland Strategic Leadership Board

The Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) is chaired by the Chief Constable of Police Scotland. The Board comprises the Executive Team, Scottish Government and SPA members, and has ultimate responsibility for climate change and environmental sustainability issues.

The Board provides approval of strategic documents relating to environmental sustainability, reviews and approves Government reports, and will pass relevant documents onto the SPA Board for approval. SLB receives support from boards and teams concerned with the approval and implementation of Police Scotland’s Environmental Strategy.

Environmental Sustainability Board

The Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) is cochaired by the Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) and DCC Professionalism, Strategy and Engagement. The Board is comprised of members from the Executive Team, Heads of Service and other relevant staff members. In addition, Scottish Government are invited as attendees. The purpose of the Board is to oversee the implementation of the Environmental Strategy, with Sustainability and other departments reporting on their sustainability-related projects, implementation, and strategy to the Board. The ESB will provide preliminary approval of Strategies and Government reports to ensure that they are correct and ready for submission to SLB and SPA for final approvals.

The Board is also attended by an officer and staff representative from the Green Leaders Network, ensuring that the views of voluntary Green Leaders in Police Scotland are incorporated at strategic decision-making level.

CFO Sustainability Governance Board

Chaired by the Chief Financial Officer, the Sustainability Governance Board is comprised of relevant Heads of Service and key project delivery staff. The Board identifies, discusses, and approves projects related to environmental sustainability and strategic aims. The Board will also receive updates on monitoring and reporting of performance and discuss resource requirements as well as approve finance for projects. Decisions that do not require further governance insight will also be approved in this forum.

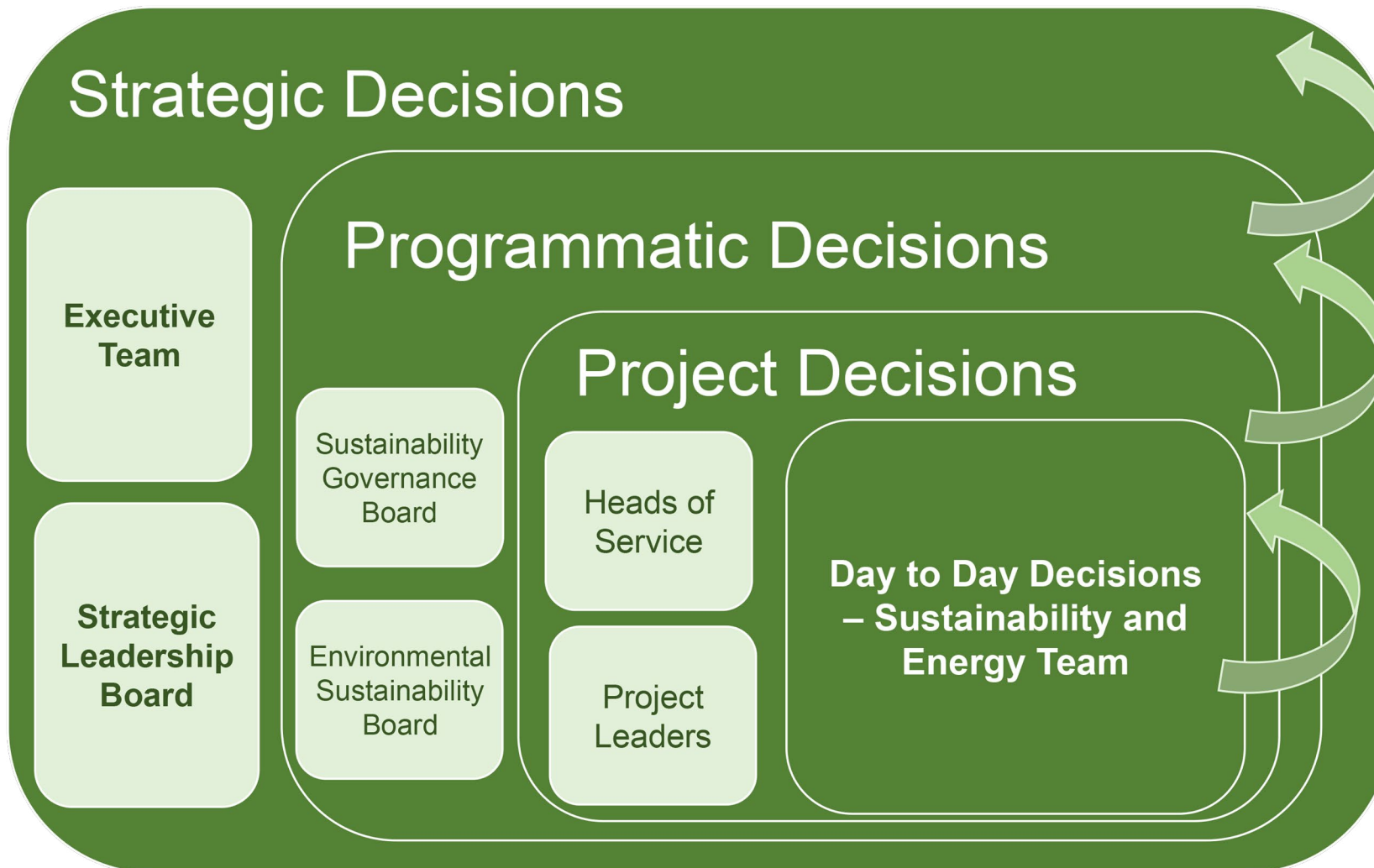
CFO Sustainability Working Group

The CFO Sustainability Working Group (SWG) is chaired by the National Sustainability Lead and is comprised of project and strategic lead staff. The remit of the SWG is to discuss day to day management and coordination of key projects across relevant departments. Approaches to group actions will be discussed and agreed, as well as Government reports and strategy creation.

The Working Group will oversee updates and review of ongoing projects, and agree actions to be put in place for submission of formal papers into the ESB as required for governance.

Wider Sustainability Project Officer Team

Staff from the Sustainability and Energy/Estates Teams will input into discussion and activity taken for review to all subsequent boards. They will provide staff resource to implement projects and feed back to project owners and line management staff as to progress of implementation.



Operational Responsibilities

Police Scotland has a responsibility to prevent and detect crime and recognises the harm crime poses to biodiversity and Scotland's precious natural assets and heritage. Moreover, Scotland's natural and environmental assets make it an extremely attractive country for residents and visitors alike, providing a wide range of social and economic benefits. The service is responsive and proactive across three operational areas relevant to biodiversity conservation: wildlife, environmental and rural crime.

Wildlife Crime

Wildlife crime is a major environmental crime, encompassing any breach of national, regional or international legislation protecting wildlife species. It includes wildlife trade, but also illegal killing, poisoning or poaching of wildlife, as well as the unauthorised alteration or destruction of habitats. Wildlife crime poses significant harm to the targeted species, as well as local communities. The impacts of some crimes are far-reaching, and in Scotland crimes recorded include fish poaching, cruelty to wild animals and damage to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Wildlife Crime Priorities

Wildlife crime priorities are set at UK level by the Wildlife Crime Tasking and Co-ordinating Group. Police Scotland is a member of this group, along with partners, the Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW), National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU), and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).

There are currently six specific Wildlife crime priorities in Scotland (and in the UK):

1. Birds of prey (raptor) persecution
2. Badger persecution
3. Bat persecution
4. Freshwater Pearl Mussels exploitation
5. CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) (Illegal Trade)
6. Poaching and coursing

Crime and Reporting

Whilst we maintain our wildlife priorities, Police Scotland also regularly combat a wider spectrum of wildlife crimes such as damage to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), disturbance of cetaceans, the illegal use of traps and snares, illegal taxidermy and illegal shellfish collection.

Between 2021-2023, Police Scotland has engaged in numerous national and UK wide operations. Scottish inshore waters are internationally important for many cetaceans with at least 23 species of whales, dolphins and porpoise occurring in this area.

In 2021, it was recognised that an increasing number of disturbances were being reported, primarily caused by Marine wildlife spotting day trip boats, photographers and holiday makers. To combat this growing problem, Police Scotland carried out operations utilising our Marine Unit and Air Support Unit in support of UK wide Operation Seabird, which originated from Humberside Police in 2020. Police Scotland now regularly engages in Operation Seabird meetings to discuss ongoing trends and issues with all UK forces.

Wildlife crime is recorded by Police Scotland and reported to Scottish Government. Thereafter record and incidents of wildlife crime are made publicly available in the annual Wildlife Crime Scotland Report produced by Scottish Government. In the 2020-21 period, fish poaching was the most commonly recorded type of crime.

Governance and Work

Police Scotland continues to work with a range of partner agencies to prevent and detect wildlife crime. Police Scotland's National Portfolio Lead for Wildlife Crime is managed at Detective Chief Superintendent level from Specialist Crime Division. This individual is supported by a dedicated (full time) Detective Sergeant (who performs the role of Scottish Wildlife Crime Coordinator) and a Detective Constable (funded directly by the Scottish Government).

Each Local Policing Division has its own Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer (WCLO).

WCLOs work closely with the core Specialist Crime team. They have responsibility for coordinating local operational activity and act as a single point of contact for partners. WCLOs receive training in key legislation and are relied upon to provide colleagues with specialist advice and assistance.

Police Scotland's continuing commitment to tackling Wildlife Crime can be further evidenced by the long-term secondment of officers to the National Wildlife Crime Unit and the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park.

Training and Development

To develop our wildlife crime capability, Police Scotland delivers a Wildlife Crime Investigators Course twice annually, which is designed to equip 36 officers with the requisite skills and knowledge to effectively conduct these types of types of enquiries, which are often complex and multifaceted.

In addition to the Wildlife Crime Investigators Course, the Wildlife Crime Guide for First Responders was launched on Police Scotland's online training platform, which is primarily aimed at first responders to Wildlife Crimes to facilitate prompt and effective responses. It is relevant to all police officers in providing a basic knowledge and general understanding of the different facets of Wildlife Crime that may be reported to Police Scotland.

For officers wishing to become a recognised Wildlife Crime Officer (WCO), the Wildlife Crime Introduction Course was designed and is being delivered over two days and is aimed at new WCO's or existing WCO's who have a knowledge gap providing a sound basic understanding of wildlife crime, how to deal with it and protocol.

Rural Crime

Rural crime is defined as “any crime that occurs in a rural location or affects any person living, working or visiting a rural location”. In Scotland, 98% of our land mass is classified as rural with currently 17% of the country’s population residing there, according to Scottish Government’s Rural Scotland Key Facts 2021 publication.

Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC)



Police Scotland currently chair the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC), a multi-agency partnership involving 16 key and diverse organisations such as Scottish Government, Scottish Land & Estates, National Farmers Union (Scotland), Forestry Commission and Historic Environment Scotland. SPARC collectively work together to tackle rural crime, with particular interest to the ever-increasing threat posed by serious organised criminal gangs throughout Scotland. SPARC co-ordinates a strategically focused and sustained approach to empowering communities regardless of demographics and geographical location to ensure Scotland’s rural communities and environments are safe places to live, work and visit. This includes activities such as providing crime prevention advice to those living, working and enjoying Scotland’s rural communities and environments and the drive and necessary support for intelligence gathering and enforcement activity.

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The focus of the SPARC’s 2022-25 strategy will be replicated throughout the 13 policing divisions, who, working in conjunction with Local Authorities, will seek to develop local Partnership Against Rural Crime groups. Given Scotland’s unique historic assets, SPARC has formed a subgroup named the Scottish Heritage Crime Group who have specific responsibility for reducing crime in and around the 6 UNESCO World Heritage sites and over 8,000 listed castles, monuments and stones.

SPARC operational priorities for 2022–25:

- Agricultural and forestry machinery, plant and quad bike/ATV theft
- Equestrian incidents
- Fuel and timber theft
- Livestock offences
- Flytipping
- Heritage crime
- Hare coursing

Environmental Crime

Police Scotland works with a range of agencies in investigating incidents of environmental crime. This extends beyond fly-tipping to deliberate or accidental releases of toxic substances into the environment by individuals or organisations. Environmental crime has a series and detrimental impact on our environment, ecosystems and the health and wellbeing of our communities. Through working with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, we will identify and advocate for the prosecution of anyone or any organisations that commits these crimes.

Impacts of Wildlife Crime on Biodiversity

Police Scotland’s priority areas target high value species such as: badgers, bats, freshwater pearl mussels, deer, brown hare and key raptors. Most of these species are protected in law, and some are classified as priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, and the Scottish Biodiversity List. The latter lists details animals, plants and habitats that are of principal importance for biodiversity in Scotland, and highlights for which species conservation action is required. Such species indicated here often play an extensive role in maintaining ecological frameworks, and when they are exploited, this in turn affects many other organisms. To that end, wildlife crime is often considered a threat to the population trends and factors affecting the health of species and ecosystems, and therefore, their conservation status.

By detecting crime against species and habitats indicated as high priority for biodiversity conservation, Police Scotland is applying and delivering its biodiversity duty in its operational responsibilities.



Actions to Protect Biodiversity and Connect People with Nature



This section includes actions that are undertaken alone or as part of a partnership to benefit biodiversity directly, to tackle the main drivers of biodiversity loss, and to achieve wider outcomes for nature and people.

Creation, Enhancement and Protection of Wildlife and Natural Habitat

Nature Positive Grasslands

Police Scotland manages a range of grass areas including parks and public open spaces, grass areas around police stations in urban areas, and road verges and foot paths. Grass areas in our estate fulfil a growing range of functions to deliver multiple environmental and societal benefits: training, sports and recreation, biodiversity etc.

Sustainability has proposed an alternative, sustainable grassland management method. It will look to deliver a more integrated approach to management of our greenspaces. We intend to relax the intensive grass cutting regime of amenity grass areas covering 24,000m² in the next 3 years as a pilot, before wider extension. This has cross-cutting interventions by delivering cost efficiencies to our facilities management but also a net biodiversity gain by allowing flowering plants and grasses to establish on these sites thus improving habitat for pollinators and providing shelter.

Our efforts in this will assist in building nature networks in our communities, as well as reduce the carbon emissions attached to grass maintenance.

Biodiversity and Agricultural Surveys in Ayrshire

Police Scotland understands the need to baseline biodiversity across our estate in order to assess, restore and create habitats that support wildlife and communities. In 2023, SAC Consulting were instructed to carry out baseline biodiversity surveys at two sites in Ayrshire.

Irvine Police Station

Irvine Police Station is an operational station in Ayrshire Division. The site is situated within the River Irvine Catchment in a ground water protection area, and is within 500m of a SSSI, Bogside Flats, designated for Mudflat and Saltmarsh.

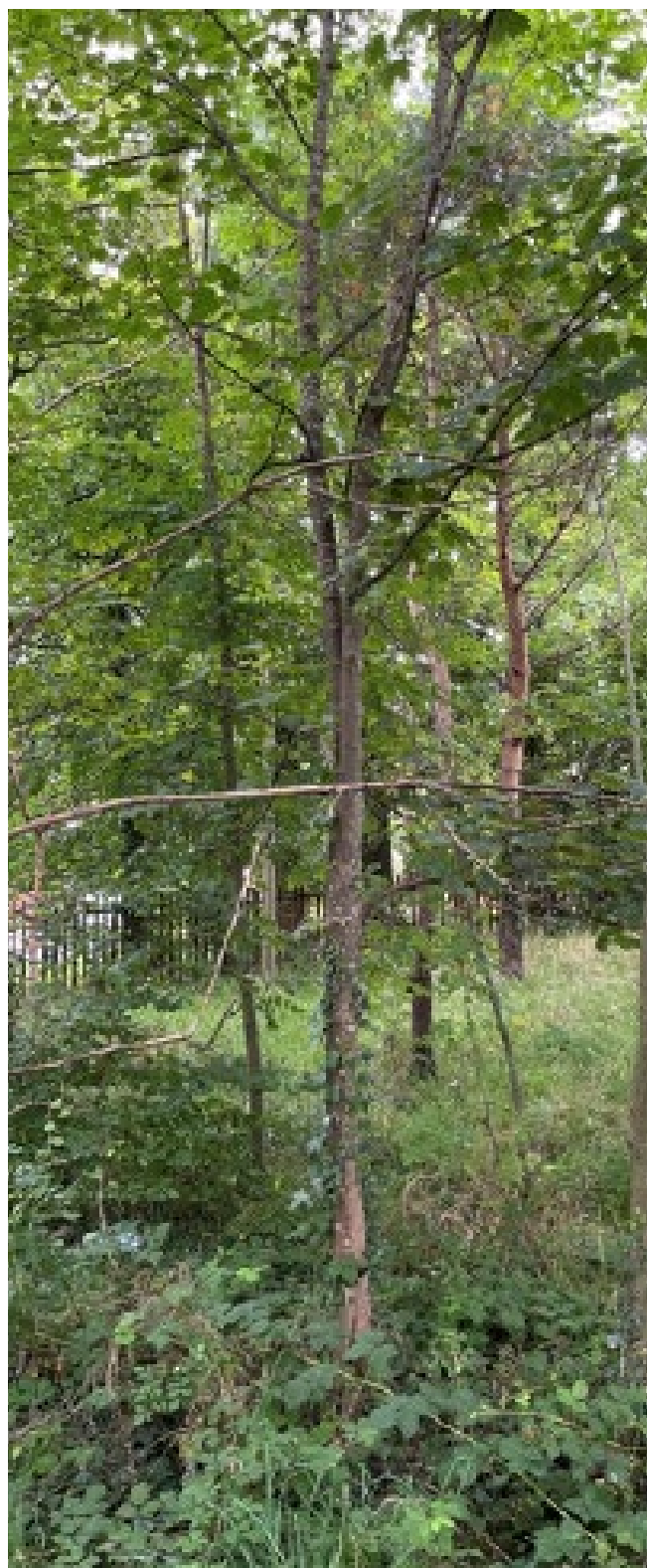
The grounds of Irvine Police Station also sit within five key habitats that the Central Scotland Green Network's Integrated Habitat Network have mapped out: specifically, broadleaved woodland, neutral grassland and acid grassland.



Mixed woodland and neutral grassland are present on the site indicating the value of these habitats in creating nature network.

The station also falls within the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Irvine to Girvan Nectar Network, who Police Scotland have partnered with. The Nectar Network is a groundbreaking landscape scale initiative that aims to create a network of nectar and pollen-rich sites along the Ayrshire coast. Station grounds are classified to be of medium to high suitability for bees based on the potential for surrounding habitats to provide forage and nesting sites, highlighting the site's value to the nectar network.

The site encompasses eight habitat types, with a distinct open mosaic habitat on previously developed land. This is a habitat of conservation status on the Scottish Biodiversity List, and therefore has high biodiversity value.



Blairfield Farm

Blairfield Farm is the operational base of our Mounted Branch, with sprawling grassland and fields for haylage. There are a total of 14 habitat types identified from the site, most significant of which was the wetland area identified as purple moor grass and rush pasture with rushes dominating.

Several birds of conservation concern are in the local area, including curlew, lapwing, starlings, yellowhammer, greenfish and linnets. The wetland habitat and unimproved grassland provide suitable foraging habitat for curlew and lapwing and modified grassland fields provide foraging habitat for starlings.

Hedgerows also help support mammals on the Scottish biodiversity list that are active in the area including hedgehogs and common and soprano pipistrelle which use hedgerows to navigate and hunt. The wetland has the potential to support the common toad and small and large heath butterflies all included in the Scottish Biodiversity List.

Hedgerows

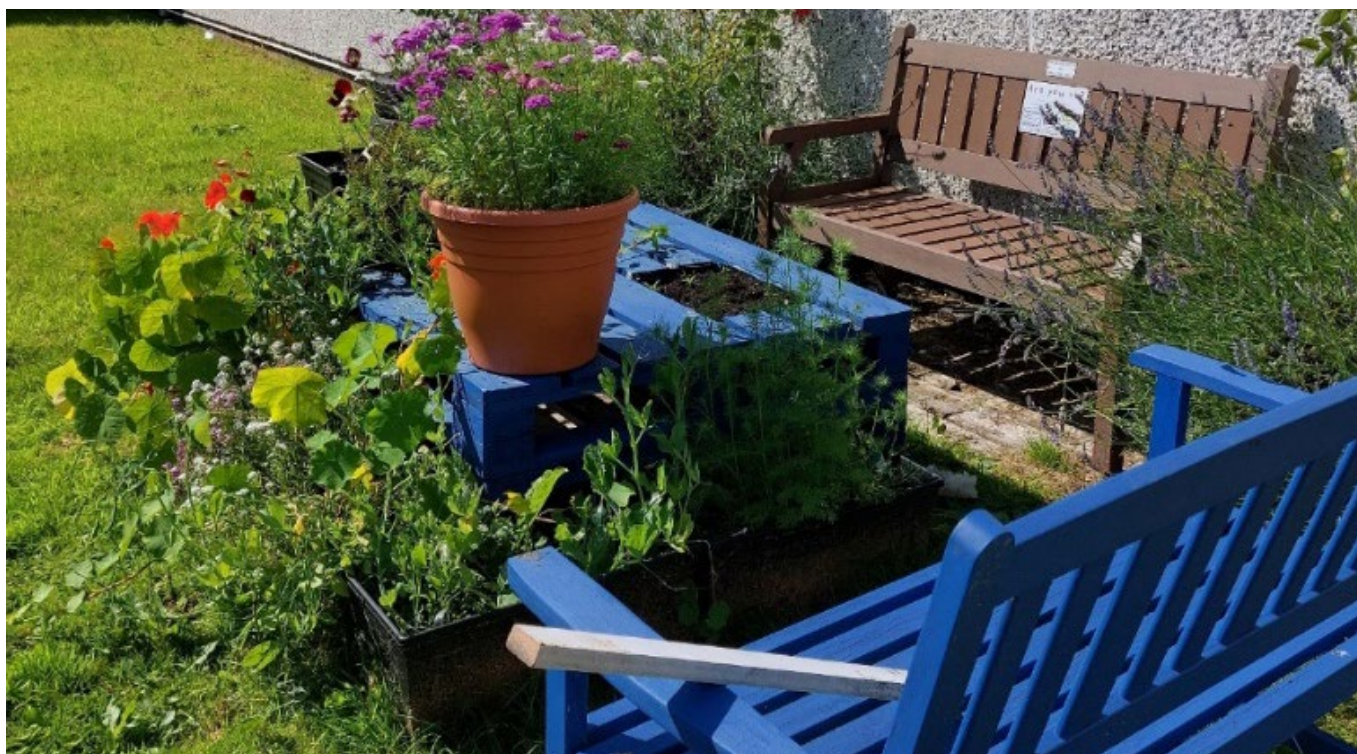
The majority of hedgerows onsite are unmanaged and are made up of a variety of woody species providing an ideal habitat for nesting birds and other wildlife. The hedgerows also provide shelter and nesting opportunities for both woodland and farmland birds and act as an important wildlife corridor, helping animal travel safely through neighbouring farmland.

Pond

Within a set aside area of unmanaged land, we have a pond that is made up of shallow margins, which provides a vital habitat for various plant and animal species. Its distance from the main building ensures wildlife can thrive and the pond provides the perfect habitat for amphibians, as well as a variety of aquatic plants.

Enhancing Green Spaces

Adequate access to quality greenspace is a key component of ensuring the health and wellbeing of our people. Police Scotland is committed to exploring options to improve the physical and external quality of buildings in our estate, particularly through creating accessible, multifunctional green spaces that benefit people and wildlife.



Honeybee Hives

In April 2023, Police Scotland partnered with a beekeeper from the Scottish Native Honeybee Society to install two beehives in one of our stations. The honeybees are cared for onsite by the beekeeper who tends them regularly. A 'Meet the Bees' session was held in September, where officers and staff had the opportunity to learn more about the bees and beekeeping.



We will continue to explore options to support beehives at a range of sites across our estate, and engage in partnership working to ensure the success of these initiatives.

Red Squirrel Conservation

Tulliallan, the Scottish Police College, is designated natural parkland and consists of six separate identifiable woodlands. The Police College is rich in natural and cultural heritage, and home to variety of wildlife, including: badgers, weasels, sparrowhawks and red squirrels.

Red squirrels are protected in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and identified as a priority species in the Scottish Biodiversity List, with conservation action required.

The college woodland consists of six separate identifiable woodland plots of varying sizes which border our boundaries. Throughout the woodlands are trees which have been planted for the benefit of red squirrels:

- Salix fragilis
- Crataegus monogyna
- Pinus sylvestris
- Picea abies
- Fagus sylvatica
- Quercus robur

Encouraging nature in urbanised areas

We are actively looking for opportunities to further enhance the biodiversity at our sites. We will do this by:

- **Insect hotels** – providing habitat for insects, particularly in more sterile and urban environments. This can assist in re-establishing insect colonies, providing a food source for birds, small mammals and larger insects.
- **Houses for hedgehogs** – we will take steps to provide safer habitats for hedgehogs and other wildlife by establishing homes for nature and making changes to our grounds maintenance.
- **Hedgerows** – establishing and maintaining hedgerows to provide cover, foraging and travel corridors for animals.



Mainstreaming Biodiversity



This section outlines the framework of Policies, Plans and Strategies which seek to mainstream biodiversity measures so they are considered at the strategic and operational levels. This section will outline the organisation's delivery of our biodiversity duty through our Joint Strategy for Policing (2023), and subsequent enabling strategies including the Environmental Strategy, Adaptation Strategy and Estate Strategy.

Policy, Plans and Strategy

Police Scotland maintains a range of policies, plans and strategies relevant to biodiversity conservation. The below strategies have a proposed and scheduled list of work outlined in an implementation programme and are reviewed and progressed through the relevant governance processes outlined in section 1.

Joint Strategy for Policing 2023-26

Our Joint Strategy for Policing 2023-26 sets out a high-level strategic direction for the organisation, and priorities for policing, planning and performance. Strategic Outcome 5 builds on previous outcomes in the 2020 Strategy, and sets out: "Policing is sustainable, adaptable and prepared for future challenges". Through Outcome 5, we are committed to making a positive impact through outstanding environmental sustainability, and will do so by enhancing biodiversity initiatives and reducing carbon emissions across our estate.

Annual Police Plan 2023-24

Our Annual Police Plan aligns to Police Scotland's Strategic Outcomes and sets out a policing approach and strategic-level activities for policing during the year. Strategic Outcome 5 and its objective is reaffirmed in this Plan, delivery of which is overseen by Police Scotland's Senior Leadership Team. Each Local Policing Division also maintains Local Police Plans which are aligned with the Strategic Police Plan and tailor outcomes to local needs and priorities.

Environmental Strategy 2021

Police Scotland launched its first Environmental Strategy in 2021 which serves as a high-level routemap for Police Scotland's transformation to a sustainable police service. It is aligned with and assists in the delivery and implementation of Strategic Outcome 5 listed above. The key objective is to achieve a 35% carbon emissions reduction target by 2025/26 compared to 2019/20 baseline, doing so by prioritising our organisation, our people, and our communities.



Focusing on communities and partners to achieve biodiversity conservation, the strategy lays out the following activities to expand upon or introduce new biodiversity initiatives, and to understand and improve the biodiversity across our Estate:

- Understanding and improving local habitats
- Conducting biodiversity assessments
- Development of a biodiversity plan
- Expansion and route mapping programmes of work for biodiversity establishments and changes to our land and estate management
- Working together to improve biodiversity

Adaptation Strategy 2024

In 2024, Police Scotland will release its first Adaptation Strategy in fulfilment of our statutory requirement under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to lay an adaptation programme. The resilience of our organisation and ability to sustain efficient and effective service delivery in the face of emerging climate hazards rests in our capacity to implement adaptation measures across operational policing, fleet and transport, estate and infrastructure, and emergency and resilience planning. These scopes for intervention are non-exhaustive, and an implementation programme of works for streamlining adaptation is underway.

Police Scotland also understands the inextricable links between the twin climate and ecological crises, and that both crises exacerbate the other. Utilising biodiverse habitats to maximise their carbon sink capability are key interventions to enabling a more resilient estate.

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment is therefore a strategic intervention in the strategy, setting out:

- Enhancing biodiversity by development of multipurpose green spaces in our estate
- Creation of insect / pollinator homes and spaces
- Amendments to grass maintenance regimes to allow development of native wildflower and plant species
- Widening our network of beehives in our estate

Estate Strategy 2019

The Estate Strategy acknowledges the evolution of unique policing services in response to changing demands, focusing where it is practical do so on the disposal of older buildings and the relocation to modern, energy efficient buildings where police can co-locate with other emergency services, public and third sector partners.

Biodiversity is a key indicator in the vision of our future estate:

- In the future, we will have an estate that supports our duty to biodiversity driving reduced environmental impact across all sites and incorporating biodiversity initiatives covering strategic and operational processes.

Fleet Strategy 2019

Since 2018, Scottish Government has reaffirmed its intentions to tackle climate change, improve air quality and set Scotland on a just transitional path towards net zero. Contributing to this ambition is Police Scotland's Fleet Strategy which provides a clear context, rationale and timeline for the electrification of the entire fleet by 2030.

Achieving our Fleet Strategy aims will make our service the UK's first ultra-low emission blue light fleet, and will significantly reduce carbon emissions, while also reducing maintenance and servicing costs.

This marks one of the organisation's many strides in achieving a sustainable, flexible service which meets the needs of our fellow citizens while also providing a modern, fit-for-purpose fleet for our people to use in the course of their work. Delivery of our ultra-low emissions fleet will achieve cross-cutting biodiversity interventions, including increased air quality in local communities and reduction in noise pollution.

Procurement Strategy 2021

Police Scotland recognises the role that public spending and procurement has to play in achieving delivery of the Environmental Strategy and associated biodiversity outcomes.

Procurement will contribute to delivery of the Environmental Strategy by:

Incorporation of sustainability as a weighting in tender exercises.

- Provision of training to improve awareness.
- Utilising tools and guidance such as Scottish Government's sustainability toolkit to stay focused on developments.
- Engaging with the wider market to consider sustainable options and to encourage innovation, collaboration and partnership working to achieve shared goals as a net zero economy.
- Utilising a whole life costing approach to evaluation where appropriate.
- Promoting and supporting a circular economy by considering potential for re use, repair and recycling of goods and materials in scoping requirements on a routine basis to prevent waste.
- Review of procurement category questions to ensure that sustainability is embedded within the process and given due consideration in relation to question weightings.



Nature Based Solutions, Climate Change and Biodiversity



Climate Change Mitigation

The twin climate change and biodiversity crises present an overarching threat to Police Scotland, and so the work done by the organisation makes an essential contribution to meeting our biodiversity duty.

Police Scotland is a responsible body, reporting on climate change annually to Scottish Government on our decarbonisation and adaptation efforts.

For Financial Year 2022-23, our total reportable emissions across Scopes 1-3 was 39,368 tCO₂e. This represents a 21.14% reduction on emissions in comparison with 2019/20, the baseline identified in our Environmental Strategy.

Activities to achieve this have ranged from energy efficiency improvements in offices and stations, including lighting and heating projects, as well as fabric improvements such as insulation, window replacement, and draught-proofing. Co-location and disposal of buildings has also contributed, as well as our ongoing ULEV fleet transformation.

Climate Change Adaptation

The need for robust adaptation to climate change has become increasingly prudent, given the likelihood of ever more frequent and extreme weather events.

As a major environmental player, Police Scotland has a key role to play in preparing Scotland for the likely impacts arising from climate change and to minimise impacts on service delivery and keeping people safe. Police Scotland will release its first Adaptation Strategy in 2024, of which nature-based solutions are key interventions.

Fleet and Green Travel

ULEV Fleet

Police Scotland has committed to operating a fully ULEV fleet by 2030. Achieving our Fleet Strategy aims will significantly reduce carbon emissions, while also reducing maintenance and servicing costs. This is one of many strides the organisation is taking to achieve a sustainable, flexible service which meets the needs of our fellow citizens while also providing a modern, fit-for-purpose fleet for our people to use in the course of their work. As of 2023, we have 981 ULEVs in our fleet.

Over the last 3 years, Police Scotland has reduced diesel consumption from 5.7 million litres in 2020/21, to 3.8 million litres in 2022/23. This equates to a projected gross reduction in carbon emissions of over 4,000 tCO_{2e}.

Operating a ULEV fleet delivers substantial benefits in reducing noise and air pollution. Noise pollution is a type of environmental pollution that refers to unwanted or excessive sound and disturbs our ecosystems.

Noise emitted from cars and other vehicles are the most common source of noise pollution. By comparison to petrol and diesel cars, EVs make limited noise primarily from their tyres or the wind at high speeds. EVs emit a minimum frequency of 56 decibels which is as loud as an electric toothbrush, leading to reduced noise in our communities.

Air pollution is an environmental pressure that can affect biodiversity, ecosystem services, harm human health and contribute to climate change. Vehicles mark a large source of air pollution, and our transformation to a ULEV fleet represents a commitment to reducing the harm of our operations to the environment.

Green and Active Travel

Police Scotland supports green and active travel through the Cycle to Work scheme which officers and staff can access. Many of our sites provide bike storage areas and equipment to pump up and clean bikes, facilitating officers and staff to take their bicycle to work.



Public Engagement and Workforce Development



This section will detail public engagement and activities that have been undertaken to inform or engage directly or indirectly with communities, young people and the public. These include actions to raise enjoyment and understanding of, and connection with, biodiversity and nature. All activities in this section seek to address the disconnect of people with the natural environment, a recognised driver of biodiversity loss.

Our People

Green Leaders Network



The Green Leaders Network, established in 2022, has 140 voluntary police officers and staff from all 13 Local Policing Divisions. Green Leaders are of all seniority levels in Police Scotland.

The aims of the Network are:

- To create a culture where our people are enabled and supported to make environmentally sustainable choices.
- To contribute effectively to national climate change policy and carbon reduction targets.

They work to promote resource efficiency in Police Scotland and to support the Sustainability team to ensure that sustainability is embedded in all operations and policies.



The Network is involved in:

- Promoting and encouraging sustainable practices and issues such as waste minimisation, recycling, sustainable travel and biodiversity
- Assisting in implementation of sustainability team initiatives and projects
- Acting as local key contact for environment-related issues within Divisions, providing first-line support to colleagues
- Small-scale monitoring and reporting on changes and initiatives undertaken

Green Leader initiatives include driving forward communication on good recycling and waste practices, identifying gaps in sustainability communication, and highlighting opportunities for nature-positive practices at our sites.

Ensuring effective representation, two Green Leaders also attend the Environmental Sustainability Board. This provides a crucial link between strategic decision-making and ensures transparency and accountability of environmental decision-making in Police Scotland. This provides the Network standing and a vital say in shaping the environmental activities and progress of Police Scotland.

The Green Leaders Network will assist in providing opportunity for quality interactions with nature, which is essential for engaging people with their environment. These interactions will include physical aspects where possible, such as creation of flowers and homes for wildlife in buildings with Green Leaders.

SPA Forensic Services Green Team

The Scottish Police Authority has a dedicated Green Team of 18 Volunteers across most SPA sites. The SPA Forensic Services Green Team take forward site specific projects and actions related to properties under their management, and have been involved in driving forward coffee ground recycling initiatives and seed exchange boxes.

Volunteering in the Community

Police Scotland Youth Volunteers

The Police Scotland Youth Volunteers (PSYV) are groups of up to 24 young people based across Scotland. PSYV are represented in each of the 13 Local Policing Divisions, and currently there are 35 active groups with over 900 Youth Volunteers and over 200 Adult Volunteers nationally. PSYV is supported by our Volunteer Coordination Unit, and Local Divisions / Divisional Commanders.

The PSYV programme aims to strengthen the relationship with the police and young people, breaking down barriers and promoting positive role models.

Across Scotland, many PSYV groups have been engaged in biodiversity and sustainability initiatives in their community. The following activities are non-exhaustive of the work all PSYV groups across Scotland have been involved in.

Fife PSYV regularly engage in litter picks, such as the Festive Community Clean Up where they assisted residents and volunteer groups to help prepare green spaces and streets for footfall in the festive season.

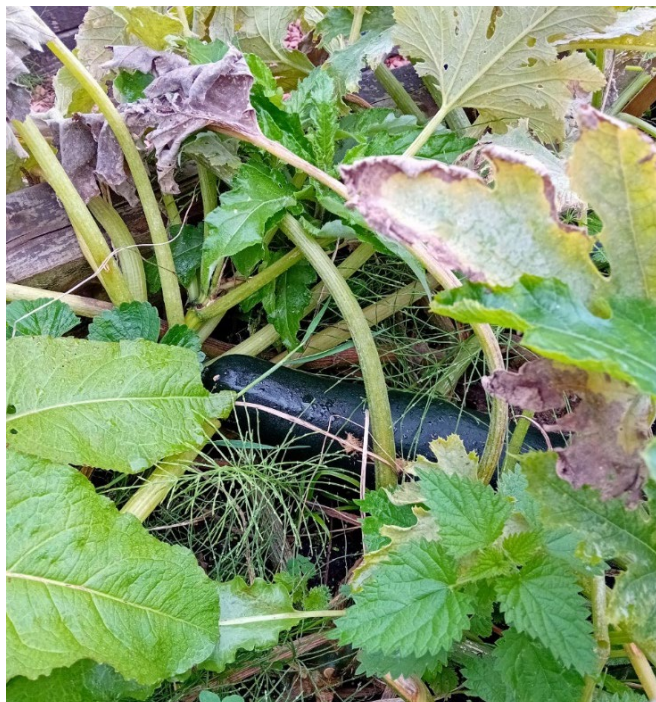
The Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire PSYV groups support their local community in tree planting, litter picking and community garden planting. Some other activities they engaged in include:

- Tree planting at James Ramsey Park, Fraserburgh
- Litter picks at Fraserburgh Beach
- Aberdeen Beach Clean Up
- Community garden planting at Peterhead
- Litter pick and bulb planting at Fraserburgh Community Centre and surrounding
- Aden Fairy Woods Clean Up at Mintlaw





Greater Glasgow PSYV have also undertaken a growing project at an Allotments. Volunteers are growing their own vegetables to be donated to charity, and learning the value and skills of gardening.



PSYV Greater Glasgow were also involved in the Scottish Badgers – Earn your Stripes Programme. PSYV participated in a series of online sessions ranging from tracker school, wildlife conservation and threats (including Wildlife Crime) and culminating in a certificate ceremony where 4 Youth Volunteers (YVs) were awarded their stripes. YVs also participated in practical sessions which included tracking, putting up trail cameras, crime scene scenarios and practical conservation like pond dipping and tree planting.



Perth PSYV have built up a good relationship supporting Perth and Kinross Rangers and All Trails. These groups maintain local greenspace areas, and PSYV Perth have supported with assisting with weed control at MacRosty Park in Crieff and maintaining the enduro trails in Dunkeld.

Argyll and Dunbartonshire PSYV groups have engaged in foreshore and the friends of the levingrove litter picks in and around Dumbarton rock area.

Lothian and Borders PSYV groups supported with the cockenzie community gardens, litter picks and assisted Friends of the River Syne with a spring clean-up.

Dumfries and Galloway PSYV engaged in an eco clean up event as well as a beach clean at cockleshore in Stranraer.

Ayrshire PSYV regularly support litter picks in the local community.

Learning, Training and Development

Police Scotland’s sustainability team carry out much of their training and development ‘on the job’. The sustainability team and other core teams also attend seminars and workshops such as:

- Nature-positive grasslands workshops
- Sustainable procurement seminars
- CIPFA events
- Adaptation Scotland events
- Sustainable Scotland Network seminars and conferences

Climate Solutions Accelerator Training

In 2023, Police Scotland procured a number of Climate Solutions Accelerator licences from the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. This training is being rolled out to officers and staff across Police Scotland, and will provide our people the tools and skills to find and implement climate change solutions.

Green Leaders Network Training

Green Leaders joining the Network are provided introductory training on sustainability at Police Scotland, giving them a solid foundation of our duties and sustainability priorities and areas for action.

Partnerships

Police Scotland has many local division partnerships in place supporting sustainability through Local Policing, and Partnerships, Preventions and Community Wellbeing Teams.

Irvine to Girvan Nectar Network

In Ayrshire, Police Scotland have partnered with Irvine to Girvan Nectar Network to identify sites that are suitable for wildflower transformation, share best practice, and support.

About the Network: "The Nectar Network is led by the Scottish Wildlife Trust and consists of a variety of partners including local authorities, golf courses, businesses, local groups and individuals."

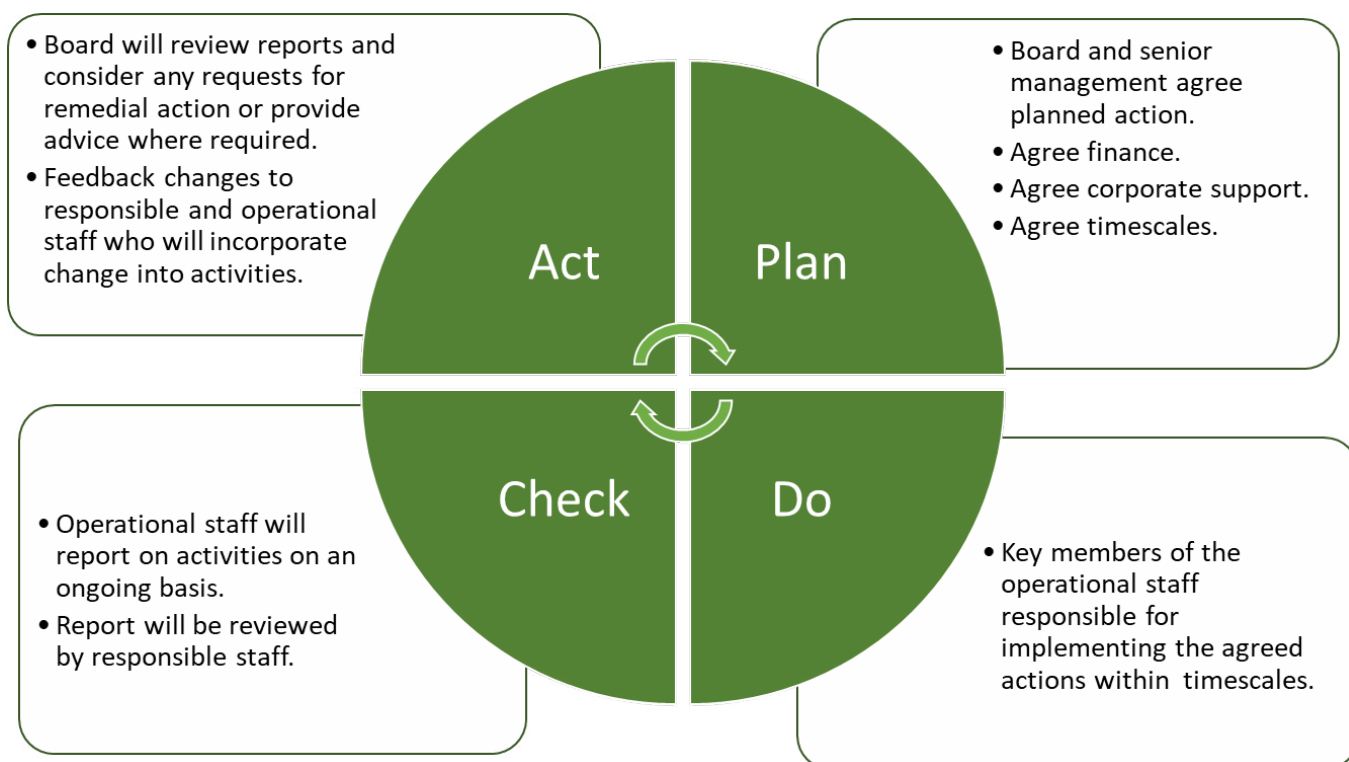




Research and Monitoring



Although Police Scotland does not undertake any systematic monitoring of biodiversity, this aspect is included in our overall monitoring and reporting system for our Environmental Strategy. This process is based on the ISO 14001 Standard for monitoring and reporting of Plan – Do – Check – Act.





Biodiversity Highlights and Challenges



This section details a range of highlights of work ongoing to date, and projected challenges in the next 3 years.

Highlights

Biodiversity highlights focussing on plans, policies and strategies include:

- Establishment of Adaptation Strategy 2023.
- On track to deliver our Environmental Strategy’s objective of 35% carbon emissions reduction by 2025/26.

Biodiversity highlights focussing on projects:

- First biodiversity surveys carried out at two sites, giving us key biodiversity indicators and baseline data.

Biodiversity highlights focussing on public engagement and workforce development:

- Creation of the Green Leaders Network.
- Delivery of climate solutions accelerator training.
- PSYV engagement in biodiversity initiatives nationally, including allotments, gardening, and community litter picks. PSYV continue to provide ongoing support to community led environmental activity groups.

Challenges

The main challenges Police Scotland may face over the next three years in delivering biodiversity focused action include:

- Funding and investment for projects.
- People resource and capacity to deliver projects.
- Availability of Scottish Government and other funding streams.
- Legislative changes, including the effect of the new Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill, which will likely impose varied or enhanced duties on public bodies.



Future Biodiversity Action

The key work areas for the next three years (2024-2026) will be:

Governance, leadership and management

- Training and capacity building to embed biodiversity conservation fully across organisational functions.
- Increase awareness and understanding of nature-based solutions that can deliver action for climate change and sustainable communities as well as biodiversity.

Mainstreaming biodiversity

- Support and drive the Green Leaders Network to encourage wider communication and joint action between staff.
- Ensure key staff within key departments are aware of the biodiversity duty, how they can deliver it and links to other work programmes such as estate transformation, climate mitigation, adaptation and fleet.
- Maintain and resource the development of a Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Promote close joint working between teams working on core environmental issues (including climate, biodiversity, flooding, land and estate management) with aim of building capacity in core teams.

Action

- Implement the wildflower pilot project to trial alternative grassland management regimes, with a view to wider rollout if successful.
- Deliver habitat creation in greenspaces and installation of greenroofs and walls on buildings.
- Identify and designate green networks in our estate, incorporating these into local community partnerships.

