



Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City
Policy Committee

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Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability

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Item 2

19th September 2023

GREEN CONNECTORS AND WILDFLOWER ACTION PLAN

Purpose of Report:

To update committee on progress achieved to date and the planned next steps

Recommendations:

It is recommended that committee note both the progress achieved to date and the planned next steps

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No ✓

consulted: Yes No ✓

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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1. Background

1.1. A Green Connectors Pilot project commenced in September 2021 in Greater Pollok (Ward 3) and Cardonald (Ward 4) with £115,000 funding from NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage). It saw the enhancement of urban grasslands to be more species rich through planting and management. This included the planting of 165 standard trees, 6,000 tree and shrub saplings along with 2km of hedgerow habitat. This was a collaborative project as Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS) worked with the RSPB to oversee education and community outreach. As a project it, and the lessons learned from it, became the template for the Green Connectors city wide.

1.2. As part of its budget set in February 2022, Glasgow City Council committed £1.5 million towards introducing this initiative citywide.

2. Green Connectors and Wildflower Action Plan Update

2.1. In addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency, NRS will deliver a citywide Green Connectors programme creating habitat on a citywide scale in order to manage a much greater proportion of the land we own for nature:

- Broadleaved and Mixed Woodland
- Hedgerows
- Acid and Neutral Grassland

2.2. This will support the following Glasgow City Council Strategies and contribute to emerging work nationally in relation to Nature Networks and '30 by 30', a global target to protect 30% of the planet for nature by 2030:

- Climate Plan
- Glasgow Open Space Strategy
- Metropolitan Strategic Drainage Partnership
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan/Pollinator Plan
- Glasgow Clyde Valley Green Network Blueprint
- Glasgow Tree Plan
- Glasgow Wildflower Action Plan
- Increasing the number and total hectareage of local nature reserves citywide

NRS continues to liaise with and support Early Years, Forest Schools, Childrens Play, Citizen Science, Education and Employability providers to maximise outcomes for the greenspaces and habitats we manage. The Health Improvement team at Glasgow City HCSP deliver a range of place based activity across our estate, linking health professionals and local anchor organisations in order to address social isolation, inequalities and other health issues.

2.3. The Green Connectors programme will identify opportunities where a series of plots with a relatively low habitat value could, if subject to habitat creation,

'join the dots' between two areas of high habitat value. An example of this being Springburn Park, with habitat creation, once established, providing the basis on which the boundary of the existing site of importance for nature conservation (SINC) could be increased in future. Greenspaces alongside our watercourses provide the opportunity to create a network both for habitats, wildlife and active travel, with vegetation managed to slow surface water run-off into those watercourses and capturing nutrients and debris. This results in improved water quality and contributes to wider surface water management measures.

2.4. Types of habitat creation activity, delivered via NRS Operational Resources along with partners such as TCV (formerly known as The Conservation Volunteers), RSPB, Green Action Trust, and volunteers and Friends Groups, could include:

- Tree planting
- Bulb planting
- Wildflower plug planting
- Planting and management of wetland plants
- Wildflower seed sowing

2.5. The total proportion of plots citywide managed as amenity grassland will continue to reduce, with an associated reduction in glyphosate and fuel usage. NRS will continue to manage the following locations as amenity grassland, receiving up to 7 cuts per year, and continues to liaise with community groups as to how the available grasscutting resources are deployed:

- Pitches and sports fields will continue to be cut via the service level agreement with Glasgow Life
- Visibility splays to transport junctions
- Perimeter cuts to road and path edges
- High profile lawns within designed landscapes
- Areas for picnicking, informal recreation and childrens play within parks and open spaces

2.6. From Autumn 2023, NRS will manage large meadows on an annual or biennial cut and collect, including Elder Park, Queens Park and Kings Park. These cuts will take place between mid-September and end-November each year subject to suitable weather conditions.

2.7. NRS will retain 60 hectares of neutral grassland uncut to naturalise into scrub woodland in line with the Glasgow Tree Plan. This will include plots unsuitable for grass cutting due to steep slopes, wet ground conditions, risk of damage to tree trunks, etc.

2.8. NRS will retain neutral and species rich grassland uncut to support protected species in line with the North East Glasgow Water Vole Action Plan.

- 2.9. Opportunities to utilise nectar rich bulb planting to enhance key gateways in and out of the city will be brought forward over the life of this programme. This autumn/winter Buchanan Bus Station will have bulbs planted as part of the City Centre Strategy. In autumn a 3.3km stretch of Great Western Road central reservation from Duntreath Ave (Drumchapel) to Anniesland Cross will be planted with over a million spring/summer flowering bulbs. In spring 2024 around 10,000m² of wildflower seed will be sown along the same stretch, delivering 2.7 hectares in total of visual and habitat enhancement.
- 2.10. NRS manages 19 hectares of former grassland for surface water management, including wetlands, swales, detention basins, rain gardens and wetlands, and expect that this figure will increase through the continued delivery of the Metropolitan Strategic Drainage Partnership.
- 2.11. A range of initiatives are underway to develop the skilled workforce to manage these greenspaces, including Climate Ready Apprenticeships and our education and employability initiatives with SRUC, TCV (formerly known as The Conservation Volunteers) and Seven Lochs Wetland Park. Nature and Biodiversity training for our operational teams will be provided by Keep Scotland Beautiful as part of our strategic plan commitments.
- 2.12. Species-rich grassland supports a variety of bird, mammal and invertebrate species in Glasgow, including butterflies, moths and other pollinators, with sensitive management providing them with food and shelter. This is vital, given that 11% of species in Scotland are at risk of extinction. Species populations have declined by 48% over the last 10 years and 33% of wildlife are found in fewer places (State of Nature Report 2019).
- 2.13. 59 new species were added to the Glasgow Species Audit in 2022/23 including: Yellow Bird's-nest (parasitic plant), Haw Goblet (fungus), *Oedemera lurida* (a false blister-beetle), *Hydropsyche contubernalis* (caddisfly), Horse-Chestnut Leaf-miner (moth), Orache moth, *Cryptachaea blattea* (spider). Creating, managing and enhancing habitats through Green Connectors allows species such as these to thrive in the city, with our Local Biodiversity Action Plan reporting allowing this increase in biodiversity to be reported.
- 2.14. A commitment of £300,000 per year, for 5 years, has been made to deliver Green Connectors, with tenders for the first tranche of work for Autumn 2023 and Spring 2024 described in more detail in Section 3.
- 2.15. Signage will be erected to highlight the contribution the sites listed in Section 3 are making to the climate and ecological emergency, with a QR code which links to further information.

3. Planting Works

Ward	Location	Area of Habitat (Hectares)	Description
1	Kings Park	1	Surface water management, wetland, grasslands, trees
1	Croftfoot Road	0.4	Trees, grassland
2	Hillpark	0.4	Trees, grassland
3	Househill Park (Hartstone Road)	0.45	Trees, grassland
3	Glenora Drive/ Braebank Avenue	0.1	Trees, grassland
4	Sandalwood Road	0.03	Trees, grassland
4	Craigmuir Crescent	0.1	Trees, grassland
4	Gifford Drive	0.4	Trees, grassland
4	Dundee Drive	0.2	Trees, grassland
4	Linthaugh Road	0.05	Trees, grassland
5	Plantation Park	0.15	Trees, grassland
5	Elder Park	4.2	Trees, grassland
5	Cruden Street	0.11	Trees, grassland
5	Drumoyne Crescent	0.08	Trees, grassland
6	Bellahouston Park	3.5	Trees, grassland
6	Moidart Road	0.1	Trees, grassland
7	Cathkin Park	0.6	Trees, grassland
7	Queens Park Rec Grounds	0.92	Trees, grassland, hedgerow
7	Curtis Avenue/ Mountfield Avenue	0.2	Trees, grassland
7	Curling Crescent	0.2	Trees, grassland
7	Kerrylamont Avenue	0.18	Trees, grassland
8	Jamieson Street	0	Trees
8	Hickman Street	0	Trees
8	Chapman Street	0	Trees
8	Myrtle View Road	0.8	Trees, grassland
9	Habitat creation for		

	2023/24 to be reported via Tree Action Plan		
10	Broomielaw to Lancefield Quay	0.27	Trees, grassland
10	Cowcaddens Road	0.01	Trees, grassland, hedgerow
11	Napiershall Street	0.25	Trees, grassland
12	Expressway screen at Broomhill	0.01	Trees, hedgerow
13	Knightswood Park	2.75	Trees, grassland, wetland
13	Dornal Avenue	0.15	Trees, grassland
13	Kelso Street	0.2	Trees, grassland
13/14	Great Western Road	2.7	Bulb and grassland
14	Blairdardie Drive	1.1	Trees, grassland, hedgerow
15	Maryhill Park	2.3	Trees, grassland, wetland, hedgerow
15	Maryhill Road/ Cumlodden Drive	0.35	Trees, grassland
16	Eriboll Street	0.75	Trees, grassland
16	Erradale Street	0	Trees
16	Hayston Crescent	0.13	Trees, grassland
16	Hayston Road/ Balmore Road	0.8	Trees, grassland
16	Crowhill Street	2.8	Trees, grassland, hedgerow
16	Liddesdale Square	0.4	Trees, grassland
16	Milton Park	0.6	Trees, grassland
17	Springburn Park	0.5	Trees, grassland
17	Edgefauld Road	0.45	Trees, grassland
17	Robroyston Park/ Quarrywood Road	0.2	Trees, grassland
18	Greenfield Park	3.6	Trees, grassland
18	Naver Street	0.2	Trees, grassland
18	Gartcraig Road	0.12	Trees, grassland
18	Morningside	0.08	Trees, grassland

	Crescent		
18	Merchiston Street	0.2	Trees, grassland
18	Newington Street	0.2	Trees, grassland
18	Carntynehall Road	0.09	Trees, grassland
19	Mount Vernon Park	1.2	Trees, grassland
19	Comrie Street	0.7	Trees, grassland
19	Orchard Park	0.4	Trees, grassland
20	Huntingtower Road	0.5	Trees, grassland
20	Sherbourn Park	0.6	Trees, grassland
20	Garrowhill Park	0.45	Trees, grassland
21	Mossvale Road	0.65	Trees, grassland
22	Firpark Street	0.7	Trees, grassland
23	Mansewood Park	0	Trees
23	Dowanhill Park	0	Trees
Citywide total hectarage of habitat created		40.58 Hectares	

4. Next Steps

4.1. A further programme of planting works will be identified for delivery in autumn 2024 and spring 2025, with updates being brought to future committees.

4.2. An online form will be created, to allow citizens to nominate sites for consideration for this programme.

5. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Current investment will be met from the £1.5 budget commitment to Green Connectors and any other funding secured.

Legal: No new Legal Issues have been identified

Personnel: Investment will be managed via existing staff resources

Procurement: Existing Glasgow City Council and Scotland Excel frameworks will be utilised.

Council Strategic Plan:

Grand Challenge 3: Fight the Climate Emergency in a Just Transition to a Net Zero Glasgow

Mission: 2 Become a net zero carbon city by 2030

- Increase the number of designated Local Nature Reserves in the city in collaboration with communities and support the development of a green network of areas managed for biodiversity across the city.
- Deliver the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, increasing planting of wildflowers and supporting nature restoration and regeneration.
- Increase biodiversity within parks and council-maintained green and open spaces, supporting wilding where appropriate and identifying opportunities for promoting nature-based activities, and train more staff in biodiversity protection.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

It is envisaged that this investment could contribute towards Outcome 6, by providing spaces which better support children, young people and families to meet outdoors through recreation and volunteering opportunities, and contribute towards Outcome 14 by providing spaces which better support outdoor learning for disabled children and young people by providing spaces suitable for Forest School and related activity

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

Potential positive impacts

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

The proposal delivers towards action 48 by working with partner organisations to fund acceleration of the Open Space Strategy Delivery Plan

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

Potential positive impacts- an increased quantity of plant material per hectare of land managed would be associated by an increase in water uptake by these plants, and an associated reduction in surface water runoff

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

Potential positive impacts- an increased quantity of plant material per hectare of land managed would be associated with an increase in carbon sequestered

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report

No

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that committee note both the progress achieved to date and the planned next steps.