

BIODIVERSITY REPORT - JAN 2018 - DEC 2020

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity in the course of carrying out their responsibilities. 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.

Biodiversity should be considered under the following headings :

- Governance - providing clear leadership and management on biodiversity
- Action - taking action to protect and enhance biodiversity
- Mainstreaming - integrating biodiversity into corporate projects, plans and strategies
- Monitoring- recording data and reporting trends
- Partnership - developing effective partnership working
- Communication - raising awareness and building capacity.

The Scottish Road Works Commissioner is an independent regulator set up in 2008 under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. The purpose of the Commissioner and the Commissioner's office is to improve and monitor national performance in road works.

As a public body, the Scottish Road Works Commissioner is required to report on its contribution to Scottish Biodiversity over the last three years (2018-2020). This is the report of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner (SRWC).

SRWC CONTRIBUTION TO SCOTTISH BIODIVERSITY DUTIES - JAN 2018 - DEC 2020

The SRWC is a small office and the business carried out supports the road works community in Scotland. The office operates from within a Scottish Government building and does not hold any land or gardens. However, the SRWC aims to contribute to Scottish Biodiversity and to the Scottish Government's aim to "*conserve biodiversity for the health, enjoyment and well-being of people of Scotland, now and in the future*" in an appropriate and measured way, in keeping with its duties and size.

GOVERNANCE

The SRWC comprises of the Commissioner and 5 members of staff. It is an Other Significant National Body and is sponsored by and supported through grant-in-aid from the Transport Scotland. The SRWC contributes through its governance in the following ways:

- Seeks to minimise the impact on biodiversity when developing new policies and procedures.
- Seeks similar standards and principles towards biodiversity conservation from all third parties involved in our business – suppliers, vendors and contractors.

ACTION

The SRWC is based in Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive in Edinburgh which is part of the Scottish Government's Estate. Many of the operational issues that support the biodiversity agenda are controlled by the Scottish Government however, as a small office and team, the following action has been taken:

- Staff are encouraged to walk and cycle to/from work where possible, prior to the pandemic, 17% of SRWC staff used public transport to commute and 17% travel by zero emission vehicle. Cycling during the summer is also a choice for a further 17%.
- Staff are encouraged to think about their travel choices for meetings and appointments during the working day, making use of public transport by default.
- The SRWC offers a Cycle to Work scheme.
- The SRWC has reduced private car mileage to a minimum over the past 3 years by providing options for travel including a pool car and encouraging public transport and joint journeys to meetings etc.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a reduction in our carbon footprint with all staff working from home since March 2020. The SRWC has undergone significant digital transformation and has eliminated almost all paper format publications and letters. These functions and services were accelerated due to the pandemic to ensure an ongoing service could be provided for our customers and stakeholders. As a result, our paper use has decreased significantly.

MAIN STREAMING

The SRWC believes that a commitment to Scottish biodiversity should be included in the on-going work of the office where possible. The SRWC will review this commitment in his Corporate Plan and Business Plan in 2021/22 and continues to consider biodiversity going forward.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The SRWC works closely with the Road Works Community in Scotland to facilitate knowledge sharing and the promotion of good practice. The SRWC encourages economy, efficiency and sustainability as a matter of course and supports the advancement of technology and undertaking research to reduce disruption and consider new materials and methodologies.

COMMUNICATION

Communication and engagement is a key mechanism used by the SRWC to pass on good practice in order to achieve our sustainability targets.

FUTURE PLANNING

In 2020 the SRWC modified the structure and remits to accommodate site work progressing the desired strategic direction and day to day operation. In order to progress the developing vision of the SRWC *“To Minimise Disruption to the Travelling Public By Improving the Co-ordination of Road Works In Scotland”*, significant interaction with stakeholders and partners is required. In line with duties under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011, the SRWC intends to protect Scotland’s Biodiversity by progressing the following areas -

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- Continue to encourage sustainable travel.
- Continue to offer cycle to work scheme.
- Continue to source sustainable sources of stationery.
- Consider any Scottish Government or Saughton House initiatives which relate to biodiversity.

WIDER REMIT

- Encourage replanting of verges after works.
- Encourage partners and stakeholders to make use of recycled aggregates for reinstatements.
- Encourage stakeholders to consider biodiversity when undertaking road works for and vegetation maintenance.
- Perform a mediating role within the road works community to minimise delay and disruption.

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2018 - 2020	1.0	January 20	December 23