



CSGN Priorities for Delivery

Bringing change to life

CSGN
Central Scotland Green Network

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The Central Scotland Green Network

The Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) is a national development in the Scottish Government's third National Planning Framework. With a wide-ranging remit, far beyond a 'green initiative', the CSGN is improving the vitality, health and well-being of central Scotland, as well as making the area more resilient to climate change.

The CSGN stretches from Ayrshire, Inverclyde and Dunbartonshire in the west, to west Fife and the Lothians in the east, covering 19 local authorities across 10,000km². It is the biggest greenspace project in Europe with the potential to benefit 3.5million people, around two thirds of Scotland's population.

As a strategic partnership programme with wide political and partner support, the CSGN supports the Scottish Government's economic, social and environmental objectives. To ensure the initiative is aligned with Ministers' ambitions, oversight of the CSGN is provided by the CSGN Programme Committee. Representation on the Programme Committee from different departments including health, housing and planning helps to develop support from across Scottish Government.

The overarching CSGN Vision is that by 2050, the area will be transformed into a place where the environment adds value to the economy and where people's lives are enriched by its quality. The CSGN is creating an environment which supports sustainable economic growth, encourages healthy lifestyles and good physical and mental well-being, and will help central Scotland to thrive in a changing climate and for nature to flourish.

The CSGN is being delivered by an active partnership of national agencies, regional organisations, local authorities, local delivery bodies and wider stakeholders, adding substantial value by combining expertise, resources and people to realise ambitious projects.



CSGN Themes for Delivering the Green Network

CSGNT and our CSGN partners are already making a difference. Our themes of action over the next few years are:

Vacant and Derelict Land - transforming places by bringing Scotland's vacant and derelict land back to life through permanent, interim or temporary greening.

Across Scotland there are over 11,000ha of vacant and derelict land (VDL) spread over nearly 4,000 sites. 3,118 sites or 77% of the total Scottish VDL area falls within the CSGN area. There is evidence that this concentration is increasing; of the 179 new Scottish sites recorded in 2013, eight out of ten fall within the CSGN area.¹

Disadvantaged Areas - working with disadvantaged communities to address environmental incivilities or deficits where they live.

86% of all Scotland's most deprived areas are located within the CSGN area.² People who live in the most deprived areas of Scotland are the least likely to consider they have greenspaces close to where they live, and are twice as likely to rate the quality of their local landscape as poorer than elsewhere.³

Active Travel - delivering strategic greened access routes to encourage journeys on foot for work, education and shopping.

£79.5m a year could be saved by NHS Scotland if just 1 in 100 inactive people took adequate exercise, based on the 3.5million people living in the CSGN area.⁴

Employment and Training - supporting sustainable economic growth through aligning employment, training and volunteering opportunities with delivery of the green network.

The annual economic value of the work of community groups in parks and greenspaces across the UK ranges between £17m and £35m.⁵ In the CSGN area, there are approximately 40,000 young people who are not in education and have never had a job and this figure is increasing.⁶

Urban Greening - increasing urban greening to increase the resilience of our cities and towns in a changing climate and to encourage nature.

The air pollution removal function alone of Edinburgh's 600,000 trees (at 100 metric tonnes per year) was worth more than £2.3m.⁷ There is also increasing evidence which demonstrates that trees and woodland can help mitigate the social and economic impacts of extreme flooding events, particularly in urban areas.⁸

Green Network and Businesses - raising the private sector's awareness of the value of greenspace to business and engaging them in investing in green infrastructure.

Green infrastructure within town centres can boost commercial trading by up to 40%.⁹ 92% of people feel that Scotland's landscapes make an important contribution to the economy.¹⁰

Greenspace for Living, Health and Wellbeing - ensuring every home in central Scotland has access to attractive, safe and well-maintained greenspace, and develop greenspace as a healthcare asset.

In central Scotland, there are 14.8ha of greenspace per 1,000 people (if private gardens are excluded), which is less than the Scottish average of 16ha.¹¹ Across Scotland, the most frequently cited reasons for visiting the outdoors are health or exercise (the motivation for 43% of visits). An evaluation of the 'Woods In and Around Towns' funding programme indicates that it returned at least £2.5m per year in health and recreation benefits valued – representing 'a significant positive return'.¹²

Woodland Creation - increasing woodland cover provides timber, helps to mitigate the effect of climate change and pollution, provides employment and opportunities for recreation.

In addition, properties increase in price by an average of 7% in environments landscaped with trees.¹³ Forestry and primary wood processing employs some 3,312 people in the CSGN area – mostly in the private sector.¹⁴ Around 761,000m³ of timber was produced within the CSGN area in 2010, contributing some £107.7m to the Scottish Economy (inclusive of forestry/logging and primary processing) or 27% of the Scottish total.¹⁵

Carbon Sequestration – One third of the CSGN area is covered by carbon rich soils (including peatlands). The safeguarding of these soils is essential in reducing the impact of global warming.

The CSGN area has 3,440km² of carbon rich soils which hold seven times more carbon than any other ecosystem (including forest cover).¹⁶ Some 171,186ha of the CSGN area are covered in woodland helping to stabilise soils, reduce run-off and mitigate the effects of climate change.¹⁷

Landscape - restoring and improving our rural and urban landscapes, connecting the green and blue spaces in towns and cities with the wider countryside and coast.

Negative perceptions of local landscapes were highest amongst those living in the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland (30% of whom rated their local landscape as 'poor' or 'very poor'). 76% of people want to see more effort focussed on urban landscapes.¹⁸

Community Growing - significantly increasing the area of land being used for allotments, community growing spaces, orchards and gardens. This improves social cohesion, increases the quality of the food we eat and improves food security.

Britain imports 40% of the total food consumed and this figure is rising.¹⁹ In the CSGN area it is estimated there are more than 5,000 people on waiting lists for an allotment.²⁰

Habitat Connectivity - safeguarding and extending habitats to create ecological networks across the CSGN bringing nature into our cities, towns and villages and helping species adapt to climate change.

Streets with trees can contain a higher number and diversity of birds if they connect directly to an urban park²¹, and research has estimated that nature is worth £21.5 - £23 billion per year to Scotland's economy.²²

Water Environment - reducing and managing the risk of flooding, while improving water quality and creating opportunities to improve or establish new habitats.

Around 100,000 properties in Scotland are thought to be at risk of flooding but if climate change predictions are realised, a much larger number will be at risk in the future. Flooding in Scotland costs around £50 million per year.²³

Outdoor Learning and Play – provide access for all children and young people to high quality outdoor environments which support play, learning, social relationships and emotional and physical wellbeing.

Research demonstrates that contact with nature can help children improve concentration levels, support healthy cognitive development and develop an increased sense of wellbeing and mental health.²⁴ Across Scotland, the vast majority of the urban population agree strongly that, greenspaces should be 'good places for children to play' (85%), 'safe places to encourage physical activity' (83%), 'places to relax and unwind in' (82%) and 'attractive places' (78%). When asked to rate their local greenspaces using the same measures, however, fewer than half agreed strongly that their local greenspaces met these expectations.²⁵

For the Vision to be realised by 2050, the CSGN needs:

- 1.** continued championing by politicians, local councillors, public health directors and others to further raise awareness of the CSGN's benefits and advocate its delivery.
- 2.** active commitment of public sector funders to provide capital and revenue resources and improved partnership working to develop integrated funding approaches. This will ensure that every budget makes some contribution to green network delivery, for example regeneration, transport and health budgets.
- 3.** capacity in our delivery bodies and partner organisations to be available to help local communities play their part in shaping the design, delivery and management of their local green network.
- 4.** the private sector, especially landowners, to develop or manage their land in ways which will deliver the CSGN. Kick-starting action could involve developing incentives to engage businesses in the delivery or management of green infrastructure and the greening of vacant and derelict land.
- 5.** employability, training and/or volunteering programmes that use the creation of the green network to offer positive opportunities for disadvantaged individuals, engaging a large number of people in caring for their local environment.



With greater public and private support we can do more. We need your help.



Five Years' Progressing the CSGN

Over the last 5 years we have helped regional, local and grassroots projects through the CSGN Development Fund and the CSGN Community Projects Fund. We have invested over £5 million in a variety of projects, from new path networks promoting active travel to the reclaiming of vacant and derelict land for community allotment projects. Larger strategic projects have also benefited from funding, such as the Central Scotland City to City Canoe Trail.

This commitment and access to resources is helping us to drive forward the delivery of the CSGN with our partners. It has seen high profile projects such as the John Muir Way come to fruition. Delivered in partnership with SNH at a cost of £2.3 million, the John Muir Way is a 134 mile route from Muir's birthplace in Dunbar, through Scotland's first National Park at Loch Lomond, to Helensburgh.

The Seven Lochs is a wetland park situated across the Glasgow and North Lanarkshire boundaries with an aspiration to become Scotland's largest urban wildlife park. It demonstrates how the integration of green network principles and practice into regeneration projects can protect and enhance local natural and cultural heritage sites, as well as promoting the general health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

The Cuningar Loop is a Forestry Commission Scotland led £6 million Legacy 2014 project, located opposite the Commonwealth Games Athletes' Village in the east end of Glasgow. This once vacant and derelict land site is being transformed into an attractive community greenspace that aims to attract over 100,000 visitors by 2021. Local people and visitors will benefit from newly created recreational spaces and extensive path, bridge and boardwalk networks within the surroundings of 15,000 newly planted trees, all on their doorstep.

The East Ayrshire Coalfield Environment Initiative aims to improve the quality of the natural environment in East Ayrshire, creating a place where people can live, work and visit. By transforming vacant, derelict and contaminated land, enhancing biodiversity and encouraging community engagement and pride, the initiative is helping to tackle the economic decline of the area which has been a contributing factor to high unemployment, poor educational attainment and poor health and wellbeing locally.

Through the Larbert Woods Hospital Grounds Greenspace Project, located at Forth Valley Royal Hospital patients, visitors and staff now have access to a high quality, multi-functional greenspace which they can use to help to improve their physical health and mental wellbeing. In addition, the local community's schools have a dedicated outdoor learning resource within the woodland, enhancing children and young people's education through learning in natural settings.

The long term delivery of the CSGN is a win-win-win for the economy, for people and for the environment. It will deliver a range of benefits as highlighted in SNH's Urban Green Infrastructure Benefits Factsheets (2014), from the increased value of property and land near greenspaces, to employment and training opportunities created through developing and maintaining green infrastructure. In addition, there will be benefits arising from health resilience associated with better access to greenspace, as well as the social cohesion that increased community engagement provides.

With the evidence and track record of projects that are making a difference to people's wellbeing, the CSGN is demonstrating what it can achieve for Central Scotland.

With greater public and private support we can do more. We need your help.

The CSGN Vision detailing the priorities for delivering the green network across the central belt of Scotland can be accessed on www.centralscotlandgreennetwork.org.

If you are interested in doing more, please contact:

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¹ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2012 and CSGNT workings | ² Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2012 and CSGNT workings | ³ O'Neil, J. Attitudes to greenspace in Scotland a review of key trends between 2004 and 2013. SNH August 2014 | ⁴ Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2013, ONS and CSGNT workings | ⁵ Ockenden, N., Moore, S. Community Networking Project Final Report. GreenSpace, Nov 2003 | ⁶ Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2013, ONS and CSGNT workings | ⁷ Based on figures for 2011 quoted in Hutchings, T. Lawrence, V. and Brunt, A. Estimating the Ecosystem Services Value of Edinburgh's Trees, Forest Research, August 2012 | ⁸ CSGN. Maximising the role of trees in flood control. CSGN Case study 26: October 2013 | ⁹ ECOTEC. The economic benefits of Green Infrastructure: The public and business case for investing in Green Infrastructure and a review of the underpinning evidence., Natural Economy North West (2008) | ¹⁰ TNS. Scotland's People and Nature Survey, 2013/14. Scottish Natural Heritage. Commissioned Report No. 679. 2014 | ¹¹ Based on CSGN working and figures obtained from greenspace scotland. The Second State of Scotland's Greenspace Report. January 2012 | ¹² Ambrose-Oji, B., Saraev, V., Peace, A., Conolly, T., Stewart, A., Chetcuti, J and Edwards, D., An Evaluation of the WIAT Challenge Fund: Changing use patterns, the value of recreation and health benefits, and lessons learned. Roslin, Forest Research report to Forestry Commission Scotland, March 2014 | ¹³ CABESpace. Decent Parks? Decent Behaviour? The link between the quality of parks and user behaviour. CABESpace. April 2005 | ¹⁴ Forest Research. CSGN Forestry Baseline Survey: Final Report. April 2014 | ¹⁵ Forest Research. CSGN Forestry Baseline Survey: Final Report. April 2014 | ¹⁶ SNH. Broad description of soil and geodiversity of the CSGN area. Report for CSGN Support Unit, Aug 2011 | ¹⁷ Forest Research. CSGN Forestry Baseline Survey: Final Report. April 2014 | ¹⁸ Cabinet Office. Food Matters. Towards a Strategy for the 21st Century. The Strategy Unit. July 2008 | ¹⁹ CSGN. Growing Spaces 2011 Community Growing Audit, Spring 2012 | ²⁰ TNS. Scotland's People and Nature Survey, 2013/14. Scottish Natural Heritage. Commissioned Report No. 679. 2014 | ²¹ Fernández-Juricic, E. and Jokimäki, J. A habitat island approach to conserving birds in urban landscapes: case studies from southern and northern Europe. Biodiversity and Conservation 10: pp2023–2043, 2001 | ²² Scottish Government. 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity. A strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland. The Scottish Government. 2013 | ²³ SEPA data quoted in Education Scotland. Climate Change in Scotland – Flooding. <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/weatherandclimatechange/climatechange/climatechangeinScotland/flooding.asp> Website accessed 19/12/14 | ²⁴ Dillon, J. et al Engaging and Learning with the Outdoors – The Final Report of the Outdoor Classroom in a Rural Context Action Research Project. National Foundation for Education Research. April 2005 | ²⁵ TNS. Scotland's People and Nature Survey, 2013/14. Scottish Natural Heritage. Commissioned Report No. 679. 2014

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