



NHS Grampian Biodiversity Duty Report 2017 – 2020



Robertson Family Roof Garden at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

Version No.: 1
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PUBLIC BODY

Please describe your organisation’s role and purpose, including any particular environmental responsibilities

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Summarise your organisation’s role and purpose, including a brief outline of governance and management structures.</p> <p>Summarise any relevance and impacts of biodiversity to your organisation, including your role in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing public information, community learning and education around nature and the environment; • Any key environmental impacts from your operations.
<p>Text Field</p>	<p>NHS Grampian is the Health Board for the North East of Scotland and is responsible for the provision of healthcare services to the population in this area. The Grampian region is a considerable geographical area, which covers a variety of environmental settings: from cities and towns, to mountainous regions, rural countryside and coastal villages. This provides the Health Board with the unique opportunity to develop and can actively participate in activities that will help local flora and fauna to prosper. Additionally, it is widely acknowledged that the development of green spaces benefits the physical and mental wellbeing of staff, patient and visitors to our various sites.</p> <p>The main NHS Grampian Health Campus at Foresterhill has a large collection of mature broadleaf trees. Recent developments within the site has placed great pressure on the need for parking and pedestrian walkways, we have however maintained large areas of parkland along with a fresh air garden to the front of the original hospital.</p> <p>Across the Foresterhill Health Campus site there are bird boxes installed which are in place to encourage the nesting of native birds within a suitable habitat. There has also been plantings of deciduous trees to ensure continuous ecological overlap in the age structure of the woodland species and associated fauna and flora across the site to increase the overall ecological role of the site as a green corridor.</p> <p>NHS Grampian has taken an active role in reducing the amount of non-native species on the Foresterhill Health Campus site and alerting the council when required.</p>



SECTION 2: ACTIONS TO PROTECT BIODIVERSITY AND CONNECT PEOPLE WITH NATURE

Please describe and explain any actions that your organisation has undertaken alone or as part of a partnership to benefit biodiversity directly, to tackle the main drivers of biodiversity loss, or to achieve wider outcomes for nature and people

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>You may wish to report on activities across the breadth of your organisation, including any actions that you have undertaken on your premises.</p> <p>Please explain how these actions have benefited biodiversity, noting successes and challenges, and any plans for future or follow-up work. These might include:</p> <p>Addressing or raising awareness of some of the key drivers of biodiversity loss, which might include work or projects to tackle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change; • Land use change; • Pollution. <p>Enhancing biodiversity at your premises through actions in and around offices, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing bird boxes / feeders; • creating habitat for wildlife, such as wildflower areas; • installing green roofs; • organising staff volunteering days; • sponsoring a species or habitat, or raising funds for a local wildlife trust or charity.
<p>Links to related resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on the Key pressures on biodiversity. • Guidance on Buildings and biodiversity - how to make space for nature in the built environment. • Information on placemaking, open space and green infrastructure. • Examples of smaller actions that can be enacted in the office or staff homes - Biodiversity - what can you do? • Case studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scottish Water Volunteering Programme



<p>Text Field</p>	<p><u>Community Garden Projects:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>NHS Staff Garden</u> <p>The Staff garden opened in March 2022 The Project, like the previously installed Robertson Family Roof Garden, will be charitably funded and maintained. A range of pre-COVID-19 fundraising projects were undertaken. Significant financial support has been given by NHS Grampians Endowment Committee, the Organ Donation Committee and from various groups, organisations and individuals. A number of donations have come from bereaved families, grateful for the care given, who wish to do something positive for the staff who looked after their relatives. The amount raised so far is about one third of the initial design and installation costs. However further redesign work has reduced this cost significantly. NHS Grampians in-house Estates Team have been very supportive and an external garden designer, architect and quantity surveyor have been appointed.</p> <p>The site is very central and can be easily accessed from a main corridor. However, as it is split level, it presents some challenges to ensure access for all. It now seems likely that the garden will be installed in phases. The first phase has been completed, with the installation of coloured glass artwork between the corridor and the garden. We are now looking at upgrading corridor doors on the lower level and the breaking through and installation of another in the upper level. Accessibility for all staff is key, so there are also plans in place for an external lift and a series of paths.</p> <p>Design plans include the creation of four areas, urban, sea, river and land and mountain. The Gordon and Ena Baxter Foundation generously gifted money for large boulders for the mountain area. The Health Improvement Fund donated money for a large picnic table. This has been commissioned in the shape of a fallen tree, cut in half horizontally. It is hoped that a small open but covered shelter can be installed in a later phase.</p> <p>The planting will reflect the four areas and will dramatically improve the biodiversity of the site. Behind the project is the clear benefit for staff, who will be able to use the garden, enjoying the fresh air and inspirational planting. In response to the challenges faced by staff from COVID-19 the decision was taken to open the undeveloped site enabling staff to get out from their wards and departments and particularly out from being their PPE. B&Q generously gifted 20 garden chairs, enabling social distancing, and on many occasions all have been in use.</p>
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2. Neuro Rehabilitation Community Garden, Woodend Hospital

Designs are in place for a new garden at the Neuro Rehabilitation ward at Woodend Hospital. This garden will be open for patients, families, staff and visitors to the unit – with the aim of providing a safe space, and providing a little normality during patient recovery.

Gardens have been found to be therapeutically beneficial for the wellbeing of patients – particularly those that are likely to spend a long time on the wards. Being able to get away from the environs of a ward and outdoors to feel the sun, rain and wind on your face, being surrounded by nature has an effect on the physical health and mental wellbeing of patients and those who care for them.

The current designs are based around an octagonal building on the current land, which is loosely based on the design of the original hospital building. This will house a kitchen facility where teas and coffees can be served. It is accessed via wide paths, with planted borders.

The paths will be constructed from a resin bound gravel which provides a smooth surface for wheelchairs. Wider paths have been incorporated into the design to allow access for bed users. The paths provide a variety of circulation routes where patients and families can sit. The will provide a level of seclusion for users.

The planting will be designed to be colourful, scented and long lasting. The garden can also be used to promote horticultural therapy, with a number of containers on wheels that can easily be moved around to allow patients to sow seeds, plant vegetables and harvest herbs. There will also be a wooden pergola located outside the day room, which will have climbing plants planted to provide shade and shelter.

This project has been designed but requires further funding, The Friends of Neuro group intends to promote and raise funds (~£2000) for this project.



Proposed design for the Neuro Rehabilitation Garden

3. Renal Unit Community Garden, Kincardine Community Hospital

Community garden for the Renal Unit at Kincardine Community Hospital, and done in collaboration with Friends of KCH, the Men's Shed and Rotary.



Proposed Greenspace Site at Foresterhill Health Campus

Plans have been put in place for the development of a greenspace area within the Foresterhill Health Campus site. This project will be led by a Greenspace Project manager, who is to be appointed. This proposed site is situated between the new Mortuary Building (under design) and the Foresterhill Health Centre. Under the current plans, existing trees on the site will be salvaged and incorporated into this area.

Foxes at Foresterhill Health Campus

Foresterhill Health Campus has become the annual home to a family of foxes. These urban foxes have been returning on a yearly basis to shelter and raise their fox cubs on the site, with some quadrangle areas providing a safe environment for raising these animals.

In 2020, two litters of fox cubs (~ about 8-9 cubs) were spotted on the site. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and with many staff working from home, the quieter setting meant that the fox family prospered and made multiple appearances through the day. This brought much needed relief and joy to a number of patients, visitors and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This was even reported on National News outlets. A visitor to the site managed to record footage of the fox outside Aberdeen Maternity Hospital, and can be seen on the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bdn_EyrvD9A



SECTION 3: MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY

Please outline any steps your organisation has taken to incorporate biodiversity measures into its wider policies, plans or strategies. This should include decision-making structures and staff and organisational roles and responsibilities.

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Outline any of your own body’s policies, plans and strategies that refer to biodiversity, or that may affect biodiversity positively or negatively, and describe how these are reflected in the structure of your organisation.</p> <p>These may include policies on managing green spaces, consideration of biodiversity in estate management, procurement policies and purchasing decisions, use of an Environmental Management System, and Sustainability and Climate Change commitments.</p> <p>Detail any areas in which your organisation has most successfully implemented mainstreaming of biodiversity, or has demonstrated leadership in a local or national context, including through working with others, or raising awareness of biodiversity or nature.</p>
<p>Links to related resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on Buildings, Highways and Infrastructure - Maintenance & biodiversity, • Research on Maximising the benefits of green infrastructure in social housing. • The Place Standard tool and associated Strategic Plan 2020-2023 provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place. • Guidance on establishing a Local Nature Conservation Sites system. • Case study - Procurement by the Scottish Courts and Tribunal (SCTS) Services. • The Forest Stewardship Council global forest certification system. • Guidance on Scotland’s Pollinator Strategy, projects, resources • Case studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Nature Conservation Sites systems in North Lanarkshire and Aberdeenshire. ○ A Pollinator Action Plan in Aberdeenshire
<p>Text Field</p>	<p>Individuals who lead on biodiversity and champions it as part of their role include (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of eHealth & Facilities (Board Level Sustainability Lead) • Head of Sustainability, Compliance & Risk • Head of Capital Projects • Greenspace Project Manager (tbc) • Environment & Energy Manager



- Waste Management Officer
- Sustainability Support Officer

NHS Grampian also has a senior level Sustainability Governance Group; which includes individuals from various departments who form strategies to promote sustainability – including those that actively promote the development of biodiversity on our estate. There is also an Operational Sustainability Group which leads on the implementation of these projects.

NHS Grampian has a Sustainability, Environment and Energy policy which is adhered to. The organisation believes that the effects of its operations and actions on the environment is of significant importance. Part of the policy states that the organisation is committed to:

“...the efficient management of emissions to air, water (including discharges to sewer) and land, the philosophy being that environmental issues should be addressed in an integrated way in order to achieve the highest level of environmental protection from the largest industrial activities.”

Nature and Biodiversity is also a featured topic of the National Sustainability Assessment, which scores health boards on their performance towards sustainability. NHS Grampian has a valuable and significant outdoor estate. It also has a legal duty and responsibility to enhance and protect that for the benefit of nature and biodiversity. There is increasing evidence that therapeutic contact with nature has important health and wellbeing benefits.

The board will also be establishing an Environmental Management System, integrating ISO 14001. This is being done in collaboration with an external specialist consultancy group.

In response to the Climate Emergency announced by Scottish Government, NHS Scotland have made six commitments, which have been signed off by all NHS Chief Executives:

1. NHS Scotland will be a ‘net-zero’ greenhouse gas emissions organisation by 2045 *at the latest*.
2. All NHS Scotland new buildings and major refurbishments will be designed to have net-zero greenhouse emissions from April 2020.



	<p>3. Each NHS Board should undertake a Climate Change Risk Assessment covering all operational areas and produce a Climate Change Adaptation Plan to ensure resilience of service under changing climate conditions.</p> <p>4. NHS Scotland transport GHG emissions from its owned fleet (small/ medium vehicles) will be net-zero by 2025.</p> <p>5. The NHS supply chain will be reviewed to determine the extent of associated greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impacts.</p> <p>6. Each NHS Scotland Board should establish a Climate Change/ Sustainability Governance group to oversee their transition to a net-zero emissions service.</p>
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SECTION 4: NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY

How has your organisation integrated biodiversity into nature based solutions to the climate emergency and other socio-economic outcomes?

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Climate change is a direct driver of biodiversity loss. Some species are dying out while others are being displaced due to warmer air temperatures, extreme weather patterns, and higher sea levels. As well as being a direct driver of biodiversity loss, climate change also worsens the other drivers. For example it enables quicker spread of non-native invasive species. Combined action for biodiversity loss and climate change can be achieved through nature-based solutions.</p> <p>This reporting section provides the opportunity for your organisation to provide details on how you are supporting the positive contribution biodiversity can make to building resilience, and helping nature to mitigate and adapt to climate change.</p> <p>Nature-based solutions can play a vital role in helping us to protect and enhance biodiversity, achieve net zero targets, and improve quality of life.</p> <p>You may wish to report on a range of specific processes or activities that your organisation has undertaken, including within your buildings and workforce, and projects that you have delivered.</p> <p>Integration might include incorporating biodiversity into nature-based solutions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The climate emergency, for example by developing climate change strategies that include nature, investing in green infrastructure, and taking action for pollinators. • Inclusive economic growth, for example by growing nature based industries, or investing in key natural visitor attractions • Health and wellbeing, for example by improving access to nature for all
<p>Links to related resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on how urban nature-based solutions can help Scotland's towns and cities mitigate and adapt to climate change providing guidance and examples. • The Helping nature to adapt webpage contains useful information on making use of nature's capacity to adapt to change as one of our best tools for managing climate change impacts, including through managing native woodlands and restoring peatlands. • The publication People, Place and the Climate Emergency includes examples and information on local nature-based solutions to deliver a range of socio-economic outcomes.



<p>Text Field</p>	<p>Health Facilities Scotland has been working on a Sustainable Construction Guide for all health boards in Scotland. The aim of this document is to design buildings to achieve net zero operational Greenhouse Gas emissions. This guide offers instruction on conserving and enhancing biodiversity, e.g. early appraisals of projects to allow the development of plans/strategies that can contribute to environmental security, prioritising the use of brownfield sites over greenfield sites etc.</p> <p>This guidance document is in its final draft and up for publication (possibly as an SHTM) in due course. Although this guide will not mandatory for current projects (such as the Baird Family Hospital, Anchor Unit and the Elective Care Centre), aspects of this will being used for the development and construction of the North East Scotland and North Isles Integrated Mortuary at the Foresterhill Health Campus site.</p>
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SECTION 5: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Public Engagement

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Detail communications and education activities have you undertaken to inform or engage directly or indirectly with communities, young people and the public. This might include actions to raise staff, customer and public enjoyment and understanding of, and connection with, biodiversity and nature, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting volunteering; • Exhibitions and events; • School outreach; • Outdoor learning; • Citizen Science initiatives; • Provision of public education programmes; • Information hosted on your webpage; • Blogs and press releases.
<p>Links to related resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas on volunteering outdoors. • Stats, stories, activities and inspiration to help bring nature and landscapes to life for young people and learners through education, including Beyond your boundary: easy steps to learning in local greenspace, and the Outdoor Learning Directory is a useful source of information and resources. • Ideas on citizen science activities that can increase public enjoyment, understanding and connection with nature. • Information on how to make more use of Scotland’s outdoors as ‘Our Natural Health Service’
<p>Text Field</p>	<p>This has not been done at this time.</p>



Workforce skills and training

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Detail activities that have been undertaken to support the development of your workforce, particularly in relation to skills relevant to biodiversity, nature, outdoor learning and community engagement in the natural environment.</p> <p>Activities might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training, education and capacity building; • Hosting conferences, exhibitions and events; • Collaborative working with other organisations and sharing best practice.
<p>Text Field</p>	<p>This has not been done at this time.</p>

Identify any opportunities that are available to your staff to take part in practical actions

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Activities might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering days, for example with environmental Non-Governmental Organisations; • Participation in staff networks that aim to deliver on or promote objectives related to biodiversity or nature; • Opportunities for secondments to other organisations working on biodiversity and conservation.
<p>Text Field</p>	<p>This has not been done at this time.</p>



SECTION 6: RESEARCH AND MONITORING

Describe any research activities that your organisation has undertaken to help develop understanding and awareness of biodiversity or nature

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Detail relevant research activities undertaken to raise awareness and understanding of nature and biodiversity, or to understand the way in which communities engage with the natural world. Where relevant, summarise the key changes that this research has supported within your public body.</p> <p>This might include research papers, surveys or reports undertaken by your organisation.</p>
<p>Text Field</p>	<p><u>Ecological Survey of New Mortuary Site</u></p> <p>It is the intention of the health board to construct a North East Scotland and Northern Isle Integrated Mortuary within the grounds of the Foresterhill Health Campus. A preliminary ecological survey has been carried out on the planned ground site which consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grassland and tall ruderal vegetation - Bordered line of trees and some mature broadleaved trees scattered centrally. - Stone walls partially covered in ivy - A culverted burn which surfaces partially towards the north of the site boundary - A potentially invasive butterbur species (this needs to be confirmed on flowering ~March-May) <p>The survey identified different species of plants and vegetation and whether they were species of importance. It also took into account the possibility of this area to be a favoured habitat for transient faunal species.</p> <div data-bbox="1267 651 2022 1225" data-label="Image"> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposed site for new mortuary</p>



	<p>The survey recorded this area as the potential habitat and/or foraging area for birds, bats, red squirrels, hedgehogs and a variety of insect species. Recommendations have been made to mitigate potential habitat destruction caused by construction, such as avoiding the felling of trees during the nesting seasons for birds and the retention of trees and greenspace where possible, avoiding the removal of grassland during the winter to prevent unintentional killing of hibernating hedgehogs, and the prevention of pollution running into the partially surfaced burn.</p> <p>It also advised on opportunities to increase biodiversity in the area to compensate for any loss of habitat, such as the planting of pollinator wild flowers and berry/fruit producing plants and trees, the recreation of habitats for hedgehogs and insects from log piles of any felled trees, bat boxes to increase roosting opportunities and the incorporation of green roofs or living walls into the building as a sustainable urban drainage feature as well as increased foraging opportunities for insects, birds, bats and increasing roosting opportunities.</p> <p>Where possible, the health board will adhere to the recommendations made from the survey.</p>
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What follow-up actions or monitoring have you undertaken to assess the impacts of the actions you have taken? How have you measured this? If you do not carry out any monitoring activities, please explain why.

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Where appropriate, you may wish to report on monitoring of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities relating to recording of engagement with or understanding of nature; • Your contribution in meeting national and international biodiversity targets; • Biodiversity related programmes or projects that you have delivered either alone or in partnership with others; • Implementation of relevant strategies or policies; • Organisational capability or development in relation to biodiversity or the natural world.
<p>Links to related resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on biodiversity data, including obtaining and sharing data from Local Records Centres Biodiversity - where to find data. • The State of Scotland's Nature report provides a useful overview. • The National Biodiversity Network provides a single hub for biodiversity data management in the UK. Biological Recording in Scotland is a useful source of information on surveys and biodiversity data management in Scotland.



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There has been no follow up action from this as of yet as construction of the mortuary has not yet commenced.



SECTION 7: BIODIVERSITY HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

Describe your organisation’s main achievements for biodiversity over the reporting period and what you are most proud of (this can include processes, plans, projects, partnerships, events and actions).

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Examples of key achievements might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading or contributing to programmes or projects that directly support the key steps in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, or contribute to international Biodiversity targets; • Demonstrating national leadership or expertise in relation to biodiversity or nature; • Meeting your strategic aims in relation to biodiversity; • Completion of key projects with relevance to biodiversity or nature; • Funding achieved or delivered; • Volunteering days or time invested; • Provision of successful education or public engagement activities.
<p>Text Field</p>	<p>Initiative from staff to complete garden projects, particularly those in outlying sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff were heavily involved in the progression of garden projects in their areas including getting actively involved in maintenance of areas (such as the garden at Fraserburgh Hospital) or hosting fundraisers that would go towards projects. • The successful completion of the Robertson Garden Sanctuary (roof garden at ARI for patients and visitors) spurred the action to develop a similar area for staff use within Foresterhill Health Campus.



Looking ahead, what do you think will be the main challenges over the next three years?

<p>Guidance on completing this section</p>	<p>Challenges might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and resource pressures; • Delivery of cross-cutting actions; • Preventing further loss of habitats and species; • Effective management of invasive non-native species; • Pressures for space; • Need to meet targets; • Encouraging enhanced partnership working.
<p>Text Field</p>	<p>Economic and resource pressures;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current spending and resources have been redistributed to cope with ongoing pressures from COVID-19 pandemic • NHSG had attempted to take forward the Greenspace Project under existing frameworks, however the costs which were generated via that approach did not come within the budget, hence the decision to tender in the marketplace. <p>Ongoing capital projects on site (construction of Baird Family Hospital & Anchor Unit, Elective Care Centre) will bring disruption of habitat, flora and fauna on site</p> <p>From environmental perspective, NHSG is working on meeting the net-zero carbon emissions targets as per the national Climate Change Commitments – with the current focus being on the installation of EV infrastructure.</p>