



**HIGHLAND COUNCIL
SCOTLAND'S CLIMATE CHANGE DECLARATION
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2010/11
(draft)
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Section 1 - Governance, Leadership and Management

1.1 Climate Change Governance

The Governance arrangements for climate change issues have remained unchanged for the past three years. The Highland Council has a Member led Climate Change Working Group to oversee progress towards the commitments outlined in Scotland's Climate Change Declaration. The Working Group meets four times a year and is made up of cross-party Members.

The Working Group oversees the production and implementation of a climate change strategy for the Highlands and makes appropriate recommendations on this to the Council. The strategy deals with mitigation and adaptation and will include targets for both. The group also oversees the implementation of the relevant commitments in the "Highland Council Programme" and "Scotland's Climate Change Declaration".

All papers and progress reports can be accessed on the [Climate Change Working Group](#) webpage on the Highland Council website.

1.2 Council's Programme "Strengthening the Highlands".

The Programme of The Highland Council was revised in 2011 to consider new actions that the current administration would deliver by 2012. Commitments aiming to tackle climate change are listed below:

Commitments to reduce the Councils internal greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

- We will reduce carbon emissions from the Council's operations by 12% by 2012 (from a 2007/8 base-line); covering emissions from buildings, business travel, internal waste, street lighting, fleet and water consumption.
- We will increase the use of renewable microgeneration technology sources to provide energy in the Council estate, with appropriate integration of Wind Turbines, Biomass fuel boilers, combined heat and power (CHP) and solar energy, increasing the overall output from 1800kW in 2008 to a minimum of 8000kW by 2012.
- We will develop 24 green travel plans for Council and partner sites, install active travel equipment and achieve the Cycle Friendly Employer Award for six sites by 2012.
- Introduce a programme across the Highlands to reduce energy use in street lighting.
- We will pursue initiatives to support sustainable procurement, including the procurement of local products and services by the Council and others.

Commitments to reduce the area-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

- We wish to see by 2012, a total of 1640 megawatts installed capacity in suitable locations in Highland with improved capacity of grid connections and as part of the implementation of the Council's Renewable Energy Strategy, support the potential for marine energy in the Pentland Firth.
- We will adopt and implement a new policy, following wide consultation, to ensure a greater degree and more equitable and widespread disbursement of community benefit, including community control and ownership, for Highland communities from renewable energy developments.
- Promote the Highland Climate Change Declaration and encourage 30 new organisations to share information and best practice
- Organisations commit to reduce carbon emissions by 3% per year.
- Work with our Local Access Forums to draw up and implement a system of core path plans for the Highlands.
- We will adopt updated Council sustainable design guidance and publish measurable commitments on energy saving by promoting higher standards of thermal and solar efficiency for new buildings.
- Ensure that all of our building projects, for both new and refurbished facilities, will comply with best practice in sustainability to ensure the Council is seen as an exemplar organisation in sustainable design and facilities management.
- The Council will work with the Highland Biodiversity Partnership and Local Biodiversity Groups to promote and enhance biodiversity within the Highlands
- We will work with the Scottish Govt, HIE and the private sector to extend and improve the provision and use of high speed broadband services for our businesses and communities.
- Work with the bus operators to enhance, develop and promote the bus network in both rural and urban areas, improving the quality, frequency and accessibility of buses.
- The Council will work with the Highland Biodiversity Partnership and Local Biodiversity Groups to promote and enhance biodiversity within the Highlands
- Promote the development of an integrated transport network.
- Work with Highlands and Islands Airports, HIE and partners to attract new and enhanced air services into the Highlands at all airports. We will continue to work to safeguard Inverness to Gatwick flights, campaign to reinstate the Inverness to Heathrow flights and develop Wick Airport.
- Work with partners to improve local, national and freight rail services including shorter journey times.
- We will improve Council houses by investing £28m to improve energy efficiency in 4000 houses and £9m to replace 1200 kitchens and 600 bathrooms over the next 4 years from 2008-9. We will set out a plan to ensure that all Council owned houses meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.
- We will work with our local authority partners to campaign for fair and equitable fuel prices across the Highlands and Islands, and promote alternative renewable fuels to replace hydrocarbon based fuels. We will support the development of a strategic network of rural filling stations across the Highlands

- Increase the amount of waste recycled in the Highlands to 50% by 2013.
- Develop sustainable options for waste treatment within the Highlands and put measures in place to reduce the amount of residual waste disposed of in landfill outside the Highlands by 26,500 tonnes by 2013.
- Introduce a programme of alternate weekly collection of municipal waste by April 2012.
- Limit the amount of biodegradable waste going to landfill.

Commitments to adapt services to deal with the impact of climate change

- In adapting to the impacts of climate change we will map the opportunities and threats facing Highland and develop appropriate actions to build resilience to such impacts by 2012.
- Work with the Scottish Government and SEPA to introduce the requirements set out in the Flood Risk (Scotland) Act 2009 and continue to progress Flood Prevention Orders for areas where there is a history of flooding affecting residential properties.
- We will continue to support allotments where there is demand, with 8 new allotment schemes supported by 2012.
- We will complete the Inverness South West Flood Relief Channel by 2012-13.
- Allocate resources appropriately between winter maintenance to drainage and watercourse maintenance, as well as local small scale flood prevention schemes, in recognition of the effects of climate change, with a minimum of 10 small scale flood prevention schemes completed each year.

1.3 Single Outcome Agreement commitments to address climate change:

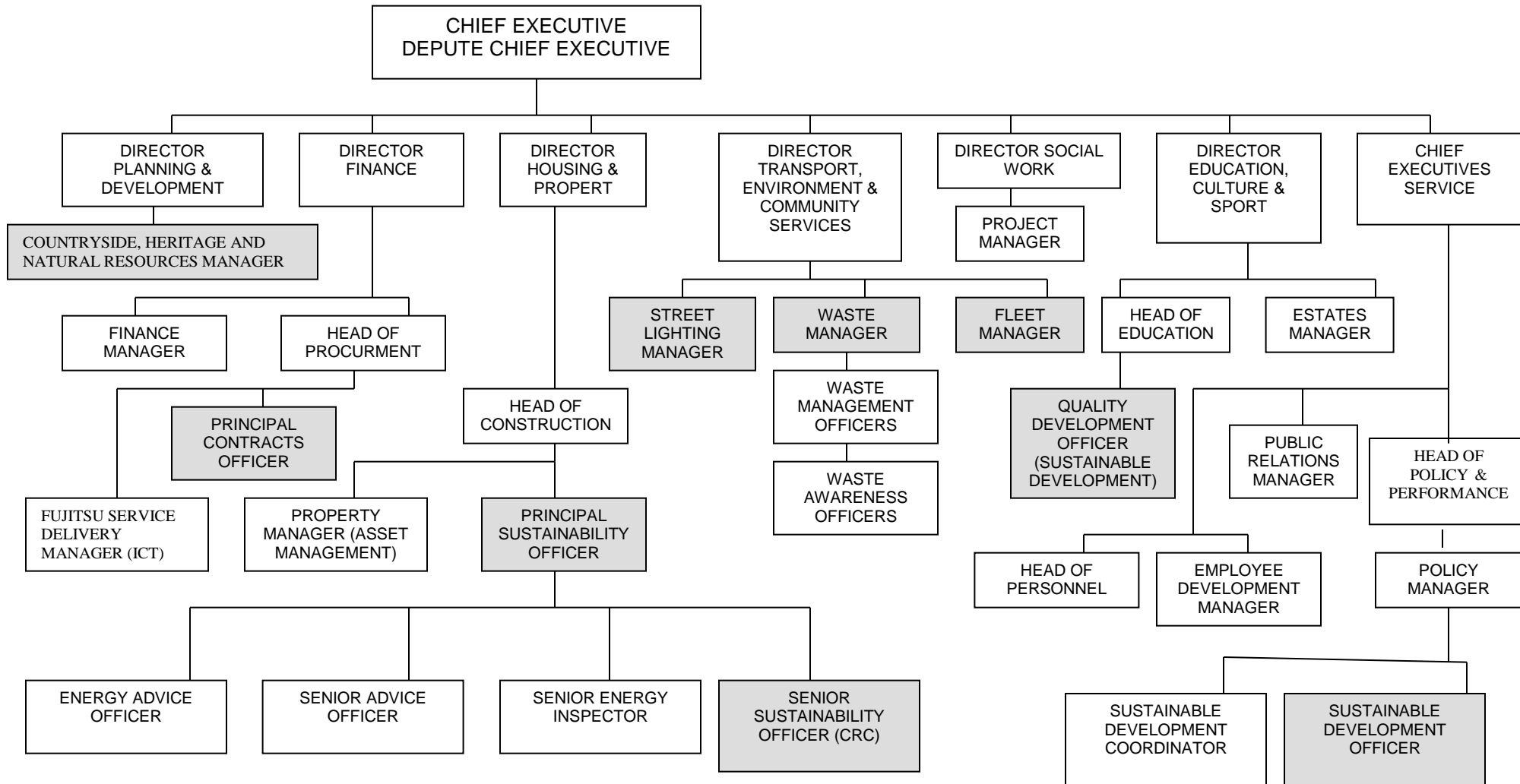
Climate Change and related issues have been integrated into the Highland Community Planning Partners Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government. The table below highlights the National Outcomes that relate most closely to the issue of climate change in Highland with specific local outcomes listed for each one.

National Outcome	10.	We live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
Local Outcome	10.1	New development and growth is planned and designed for sustainability
	10.3	Invest in the infrastructure for rural communities
	10.4	Limit the impact of distance from services in rural and remote communities

National Outcome	11	We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
Local Outcome	11.1	A well supported voluntary sector with sustained high levels of volunteering in the Highlands
	11.2	More communities own, manage or have a stake in local assets
	11.3	Improved quality of life through community led action and more people feeling connected to their communities
National Outcome	12.	We value and enjoy our built environment and protect and enhance it for future generations
Local Outcome	12.1	Recognition and awareness of the outstanding natural heritage of the Highlands
	12.2	Limit pressures on species and habitats
	12.3	Improved environmental awareness and action
	12.4	Improve the quality of housing
National Outcome	14	We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production
Local Outcome	14.1	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from regional public sector operations
	14.2	Promote renewable energy and improve municipal waste management
	14.3	Adapt public services to deal with the impact of global warming

1.4 Internal Management of Actions towards Climate Change:

The Highland Council Carbon Management Plan is the framework for reducing carbon emissions from the Councils own estates and practices. A number of key individuals are responsible for taking actions to meet specific targets within the plan. A Carbon Management Officers Group meets regularly to discuss progress against the targets set and to feedback discussions from the Member-led Climate Change Working Group. A flow-chart demonstrates where these staff sit within the organization can be found below:



The Sustainable Development team has a strategic overview of progress towards tackling climate change and sits within the Policy and Performance Unit of the Chief Executive's Office.

Work to influence area-wide emissions and partnership working within Highland is led by the Planning and Development Service through the coordination and reporting of the Highland Environment Forum which meets bi-annually. The countryside Heritage and Natural Resources Manager works closely with the Sustainable Development Officer to encourage organizations from the public, private and voluntary sectors to take action.

Monitoring: The implementation of our Performance & Risk Management System (PRMS) is now providing more effective recording and monitoring of all Climate Change Work Plan actions. Within PRMS, timescales and targets are monitored allowing for effective performance management against targets, any decline in performance is automatically reported to senior management by the system. The system enables actions and indicators to be flagged using RAG (Red, Amber, Green) with the addition of a purple to highlight completed work.

Importantly PRMS is a fully delegated model allowing the lead officer to update progress on their responsibilities in real time. This provides greater flexibility and greater reporting options for individual managers to committee reports. All reporting is electronic and completely paperless this has now been used to great effect for the Council's Climate Change Working Group allowing for a higher degree of challenge and scrutiny. In addition work plans continue to be monitored quarterly through the Council's Quarterly Performance Reports, also now using the system and the paperless electronic format.

In 2009, the Council introduced an appraisal system for all projects being considered for Capital funding which included an element for Sustainability. The result of the assessment led to Carbon Management and Energy projects being prioritised as the top two highest scoring out of all projects submitted. The Energy team, together with the Carbon Trust are now in the process of developing Carbon SMART, a more in depth tool to assess the Carbon Impact of all Capital projects.

In 2010, the Highland Council introduced Climate Screenings of all papers going to committee that require the agreement of action. This covers all committees and all subject matters and is in addition to those Policy, Plans and Strategies requiring SEA or EIA.

1.5 Leadership: Best Value 2 Report

The Accounts Commission is a statutory, independent body which, through the audit process, assists local authorities in Scotland to achieve the highest standards of financial stewardship and the economic, efficient and effective use of their resources.

In May 2010 the accounts commission published their findings following a best value 2 audit of Highland Council. The study found that there has been excellent progress in reducing public service energy use and reducing carbon emissions. The council

has well-developed arrangements for promoting sustainability. It has clearly defined aims and objectives, with strong leadership and commitment shown on sustainable development by senior members and officers. It is viewed as a corporate priority with sustainability featuring prominently in strategic plans such as the SOA, Strengthening the Highlands and the Corporate Plan, and includes SMART targets.

<http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/bestvalue2.php>

Cycle Friendly Employer Award and Grant

Six Highland Council sites have been awarded a Cycle Friendly Employer Award from Cycling Scotland. The award is in recognition of the Council's efforts to enable staff to cycle to work and meetings. The Council was commended for on-site facilities including: cycle parking; personal storage and showers; staff incentives including the cycling allowance and the Bike to Work scheme and green travel plans for Council sites.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) application for Active Travel

The Highland Council has made an ERDF application for a Green and Active Travel Project. The project will consist of developing, upgrading and promoting some key cycle routes in the Highlands. The Highland Council and HITRANS are developing Active Travel Master Plans for all the significant population centres in the Highland Council area. These Master plans set out a core active travel network and identify priority areas where investment can achieve the greatest impact in terms of increasing levels of walking and cycling.

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport/transportplanning/ActiveTravelMasterplans.htm>

Electric Vehicles

The Council replaced two conventional transit vans with electric versions assisted by funding from the Scottish Government in 2010/11. It is hoped that the Council can purchase an electric hybrid car and charging points with a further allocation of funding from the Scottish Government in 2011/12. The vans were purchased with the assistance of £73,827 worth of funding from the Scottish Government. The full cost of both vehicles to The Highland Council was £16,172.

PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2011/12, the Council's Governance arrangements for climate change will change as a new Rural Affairs and Climate Change Group replaces the Climate Change Working Group. Local elections in early 2012/13, will result in a review of the Council's Programme. The Carbon Management Officers Group will continue to meet quarterly to review progress and provide continuity during these changes.

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Section 2 - Reducing Local Authority's greenhouse gas emissions from estate and services.

2.1 Scope of measuring GHG emissions

The Highland Council Carbon Management Plan 2007/08-2011/12, aims to reduce emissions by a total of 7450 tonnes by 2012, resulting in a 12% saving over the four years of the plan. It sets out a strategy for emissions reductions and cost savings from those carbon emitting activities that Highland Council can monitor and influence. Targets are broken down into sectors as follows:

CO₂ emissions reduction targets by Sector 2007/08-2011/12				
	Sector	Scope	Target	CO₂ saving (tonnes)
1	Energy use in Buildings	Energy use in Council properties includes all schools but excludes PPP buildings.	12%	5226
2	Staff Travel	Excludes commuting to and from work.	12%	524
3	Fleet (baseline 2008/09)	Reporting fuel consumption of fleet vehicles only and excluding plant equipment.	5%	207
4	Internal Waste	Excludes municipal waste which is considered as area-wide emissions.	20%	1034
5	Street Lighting	Excludes traffic lights and bollards	6%	447
6	Water	The Top 100 buildings have been ranked in order of water consumption.	10%	14
TOTAL:			12%	7450

For the purpose of reporting, all data is calculated into carbon (CO₂) or carbon equivalent (CO_{2e} in the case of waste) using the Department of Energy and Climate Change [Guidelines for Reporting Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#).

2.2 Progress

In 2010/11, the third full year of implementation of the carbon management plan, the Highland Council's total CO₂ emissions from all six sectors amounted to 64,116 tonnes. A reduction of 1397 tonnes or 2.2%, over the previous year, 2009/10. Progress is slower than anticipated at this time. Excluding fleet, a total of 3650 tonnes CO₂ has been saved since 2007/08 amounting to 6.3% over the Highland Councils overall carbon footprint. The baseline for fleet had to be re-set.

Progress is slower than anticipated at this time due to two, consecutive cold winter seasons increasing the energy demand for heating. Full details of progress are published each August in a report to Highland Council [Resources Committee](#) and the full [Carbon Management Plan](#) is also available online.

Finance

£833 000 has been made available for energy efficiency measures from the Capital Programme each year from 2007 to 2011.

The forecast income from our historic investment in projects which benefit from Renewable Heat Incentives (RHI) and Feed In Tarrifs (FITs) income is £0.585m per annum.

The Capital Programme currently includes £7.8 million approved investment from the current year through to 2016/17. In 2011, the Energy and Sustainability team within the Housing and Property Service will be purchasing 20 boilers and delivering them to site for installation early in 2012/13. This would bring forward capital spend of around £1.8m to 2011/12 with installation costs of around £1m requiring Capital funds in 2012/13 programme. The total spend of £2.8m would bring an estimated return of £0.251m per annum from RHI and a windfall of around £0.025m from CRC, in addition to reducing energy costs.

Budget cuts within the public sector make it increasingly difficult to forecast future investments but currently energy saving projects have remained a high priority for Highland Council. Energy cost savings and income generation potential has been identified to encourage future investment.

Income from renewables.

Estimates for the potential income based on an outline scoping exercise for renewable installations in the Council estate are as follows:

Premises	Quantity	Potential Annual Income		
		Electricity	Heat	Total
Buildings	950	£1.1m	£3.9m	£5m

Replacing all existing oil sites with biomass would bring early pay back with an annual income of approximately £3.9m from the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme at a cost of about £21m. Installation of electricity generation to appropriate sites would cost around £16m and bring income of around £1.1m pa. This information is being used to develop business case proposals for the capital programme.

Highland Council Carbon Footprint progress against target 2007/08-2010/11

	= below expected target		= on or exceeding target
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	CO2 emissions (tonnes)			% change in CO ₂ emissions		
	Base line 2007-08	2009-10	2010-11	2009/10- 2010/11	Over Baseline 2007/08- 2010/11	Target to be achieved by 2011
Target 1 : Energy Use in Buildings						
Electricity	23156	24327	22347	-8.14%	-3.49%	
Gas	4110	4000	4643	16.08%	12.97%	
Oil	16828	13467	13888	3.13%	-17.47%	
Total:	44057	41794	40878	-2.19%	-7.22%	-9%
Target 2: Staff Business Travel						
Business Miles	1461	1340	1,475	10.07%	0.91%	
Lease Miles	450	386	356	-7.87%	-20.91%	
Training Miles	204	186	115	-38.14%	-43.59%	
Equivalent Car hire Miles	477	393	338	-13.89%	-29.04%	
Member Miles	208	185	174	-5.75%	-16.31%	
Home Carers	944	785	710	-9.55%	-24.77%	
Support Workers	197	332	166	-49.92%	-15.73%	
Re-located Miles	21	19	117	524.52%	451.12%	
Motorbike	1	0.44	0.22	-50.10%	-39.80%	
Public Transport	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Total:	3963	3625	3452	-4.8%	-12.9%	-9%
Target 3: Fleet *Baseline of 2008/09						
Vehicles Petrol	126*	123	110	-11.08%	-13.28%*	
Vehicles LPG	5*	2	-	-100.00%	100.00%*	
Vehicles Diesel	9436*	9299	9133	-1.78%	-3.21%*	
Vehicles Gas Oil	1028*	1115	1116	0.12%	8.57%*	
Total:	10595*	10540	10,359	-1.71%	-2.23%*	-3.75%
Target 4: Internal Waste						
Internal Waste Top 40	519	517	515	-0.39%	-0.68%	
Waste from Primary Schools	832	947	868	-8.34%	4.34%	
Waste from Secondary Schools	794	757	732	-3.30%	-7.81%	
Total:	2144	2221	2115	-4.77%	-1.37%	-15%
Target 5: Street Lighting	7065	7202	7192	- 014%	1.8%	-4%
Target 6: Water Top 100	141	-	120	n/a	-15%	-10%
TOTAL (Excluding Fleet)	57,370	54,973	53,757	-2.21%	-6.3%	-9%
TOTAL (Including fleet)	66,193*	65,513	64, 116	-2.13%	-3.1%	

2.3 CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme

The CRC Energy Efficiency scheme came into effect in April 2010. It requires Highland Council to pay a tax, currently set at £12 per tonne of CO₂ emitted from core energy supply. A footprint report must be disclosed and accurate supply information is essential to avoid overpayment or penalty to the Council. The first payment through the scheme is based on emissions in 2010 and amounts to £569,400. It is due to be paid in October 2012.

A CRC performance league table is published annually, providing organisations with a ranking and scorecard based on their energy management and their efforts to improve their energy efficiency. Rankings are based on weighted scores. Highland Council ranked 322nd overall (out of 2103 organisations, 1301 rankings), placing the organisation in the upper quartile of the league table. Highland Council Ranked 11th out of 27 participating Local Authorities in Scotland.

Local Authority	Rank	PLT Ranking	Weighted Score	Emissions (tCO ₂)	Early Action Metric (%)
Falkirk Council	1	134	1970	28961	80.5
South Ayrshire	1	134	1970	18012	80.5
Fife Council	3	141	1963	78383	79.5
Shetland Islands Council	4	166	1938	11754	76.5
Angus Council	5	199	1905	25238	73.4
North Lanarkshire Council	6	260	1843	76985	65
East Lothian Council	7	280	1824	14818	61.53
Glasgow City	8	281	1822	93079	61.5
South Lanarkshire	9	284	1820	57398	61
Aberdeen City Council	10	313	1788	35010	56
Highland Council	11	322	1780	47450	55.5
West Lothian Council	12	341	1763	31468	53.84
Moray Council	13	381	1677	13070	50
Perth and Kinross Council	13	381	1677	22261	50
East Dunbartonshire Council	15	579	1524	17128	42.5
Stirling Council	16	617	1486	16296	39
North Ayrshire Council	17	675	1429	19193	34.59
Renfrewshire Council	18	678	1426	24732	34.1
Midlothian Council	19	874	1224	17326	24.5
Aberdeenshire Council	20	932	1170	45697	20.5
East Ayrshire Council	21	949	1152	23571	19
Scottish Borders Council	22	985	1117	18315	16
West Dunbartonshire Council	23	1010	1092	23474	13.5
East Renfrewshire Council	24	1088	1012	15686	8
Dumfries and Galloway Council	25	1259	826	29528	0.5
Dundee City Council	26	1301	402	38083	0
Edinburgh City Council	26	1301	402	54810	0

2.4 Action

Increasing the Installed Capacity of Renewables

As of the end of March 2011, The Highland Council had 7190kW renewables as follows:

Technology	Quantity of sites	Rating
Biomass Boilers	24	5840kW
Wind Turbines	15	84kW
PV systems	68	281kW
Heat Pumps	20	985kW
		Total 7190 kW

Woodchip biomass is considered to be a carbon neutral fuel because the trees that are cut for fuel use are re-planted, maintaining a continuous carbon cycle. In 2010/11 a total of 1,295,460Kwh was generated from biomass boilers. These biomass boilers replaced oil fuelled systems and so have avoided a total of 358 tonnes CO₂ from being emitted and saved £45,000 in costs. In addition, a total of 84,917kWh was produced through renewable electricity generation, saving around £7,600 or 45 tonnes CO₂.

ICT Contract

The Council is investing over £14m in the transformation and modernisation of its ICT infrastructure and systems. Following a full inventory of ICT equipment the contract providers, Fujitsu, estimated that ICT equipment accounts for 6% of electricity used in Highland Council buildings. Fujitsu have committed to refresh 4,600 corporate computers with more energy efficient equipment in 2011/2012. There will also be a refresh of 6,400 curriculum computers from 2011-2014 (67% in 2011; 11% in 2012; 11% in 2013 and 11% in 2014). This new equipment is expected to reduce energy use of ICT equipment by 59% and associated CO₂ emissions by 1,893 tonnes per annum.

Carbon Assessment of Capital Programme

Work is underway to develop an assessment tool to with robust criteria that provides information on Climate Change & Sustainability impacts of investment decisions. This will be implemented in 2012.

Revising the Carbon Management Plan

The Councils Carbon Management Plan is under review to include the wider estate now in scope for the CRC Energy Efficiency scheme and using the most recent CO₂ conversion factors. Targets and timescales will be aligned to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to close the current gap in progress.

PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

The key priority for 2011/12 will be to close the current gap in emissions reductions targets by reviewing the Carbon Management Plan and setting targets to 2020 in line with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act, 2009. As part of this we will identify new carbon saving projects for inclusion in Capital Programme 2017 to 2022. We should see the first impacts of the ICT contract demonstrated in emissions reporting for this coming year which should help to close the current gap.

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Section 3 - Taking action to reduce the emissions from the Local Authority area

3.1 Highland Area-wide Emissions – Per Capita Emissions

In September 2011, The Department of Energy and Climate Change published revised Local Authority Carbon Dioxide figures showing estimates of emissions of carbon dioxide for Local Authority areas (for those sectors under the influence of Local Authorities), for the years 2005-2009. This is the most up to date information available to Local Authorities.

Table 1: Highland total per capita CO₂ emissions 2005-2009

Year	Per capita - Industry and Commercial (tonnes)	Per capita - Domestic (tonnes)	Per capita - Road Transport (tonnes)	Per capita - Total (tonnes)
2005	4.8	3.6	2.8	11.2
2006	4.5	3.6	2.9	10.9
2007	4.4	3.5	2.9	10.7
2008	4.3	3.5	2.8	10.5
2009	3.7	3.2	2.7	9.7

The data in Table 1 above shows per capita CO₂ emission for the region and demonstrates 9.7 tonnes CO₂ per Capita in 2009. CO₂ emissions for Highland have reduced by 14% between 2005 and 2009 but remain higher than the Scottish average of 6.4 tonnes CO₂ per capita in 2009.

Table 2: Highland total CO₂ emissions supporting per capita details in Table 1.

Year	Industry and Commercial (kt)	Domestic (kt)	Road Transport (kt)	Grand Total (kt)	Population ('000s, mid-year estimate)	Per Capita Emissions (t)
2005	1014.6	769.1	605.6	2389.3	213.6	11.2
2006	964.0	768.3	612.6	2344.9	215.3	10.9
2007	949.2	758.5	621.2	2328.8	217.4	10.7
2008	937.9	757.5	605.1	2300.5	219.4	10.5
2009	818.4	712.5	601.6	2132.5	220.5	9.7

The data in Table 2 shows that overall emissions for Highland have decreased between 2005 and 2009 from 2389 ktCO₂ to 2132 ktCO₂ despite population size growing in this time from 213 000 to an estimated 220 000. Per capita emissions have decreased between 2005 and 2009, meaning that more people are using less. The greatest overall reductions have been in the industry and commercial sector.

Table 3: Top 10 highest CO₂ emission producing Scottish Local Authorities in 2009.

	Local Authority	Total ktCO ₂
1	Glasgow City	3167.6
2	Edinburgh, City of	2923.2
3	Fife	2422.7
4	Highland	2132.5
5	North Lanarkshire	2107.2
6	Aberdeenshire	1962.8
4	South Lanarkshire	1753.9
8	Dumfries and Galloway	1291.2
9	Perth and Kinross	1250.9
10	West Lothian	1100.6

Table 4: Top 10 worst performing Scottish Local Authorities per capita emissions 2009

	Local Authority	Per Capita tCO ₂
1	Highland	9.7
2	Moray	9.6
3	Stirling	8.8
4	Dumfries and Galloway	8.7
5	Perth and Kinross	8.6
6	Shetland Islands	8.5
7	Orkney Islands	8.2
8	Scottish Borders	8.1
9	North Ayrshire	8.1
10	Aberdeenshire	8.1

It can be seen in Table 3 that in terms of total emissions (within the control of Local Authorities) Highland Council is the 4th greatest emitter, behind Glasgow City, Edinburgh City and Fife Council. In relation to per capita emissions, Highland is the worst performing Local Authority in Scotland with the highest per capita emissions, as shown in Table 4.

With regards to progress in reducing these emissions Highland Council has performed above average by reducing 14% between 2005 and 2009. However,

seven Local Authorities continue to reduce emissions at a faster rate than Highland, including Fife Council (20% reduction) and Aberdeen City (18% reduction).

Table 5: Total % emissions reduction of all Scottish Local Authorities 2005-2009

Performance Ranking	Local Authority	% Emissions Reduction
1	Fife	20.0%
2	Aberdeen City	18.0%
3	Glasgow City	17.0%
4	West Lothian	15.0%
5	Stirling	15.0%
6	North Ayrshire	15.0%
7	Falkirk	15.0%
8	South Lanarkshire	14.0%
9	Inverclyde	14.0%
10	Highland	14.0%
11	Edinburgh, City of	14.0%
12	East Lothian	14.0%
13	East Ayrshire	14.0%
14	Dundee City	14.0%
15	East Renfrewshire	13.0%
16	East Dunbartonshire	13.0%
17	West Dunbartonshire	12.0%
18	Scottish Borders	12.0%
19	Renfrewshire	12.0%
20	Perth and Kinross	12.0%
21	North Lanarkshire	11.0%
22	Dumfries and Galloway	11.0%
23	Aberdeenshire	10.0%
24	Shetland Islands	9.0%
25	Midlothian	9.0%
26	Angus	9.0%
27	South Ayrshire	8.0%
28	Orkney Islands	8.0%
29	Clackmannanshire	8.0%
30	Argyll and Bute	8.0%
31	Moray	7.0%
32	Eilean Siar	3.0%
AVERAGE		12%

3.2 Land Use and Land Use Change Emissions

The Department of Energy and Climate Change also publish an annual data set of regional CO₂ emissions that includes an estimate of the removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere through Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF). The estimates are significant for Highland, the largest of all Scottish Local Authorities in terms of geographical area. As with the previous data set, the period covered is from 2005 to 2009.

Table 6: Effect of LULUCF on regional emissions in Highland 2005 to 2009

Year	Total Domestic, Industrial and Transport Emissions (kt)	Total LULUCF removals (kt)	Total (kt) once LULUCF deducted	% change 2005-2009
2005	2389	-2142	275	
2006	2345	-2060	312	
2007	2329	-1967	390	
2008	2301	-1952	376	
2009	2133	-1854	307	

Table 6 above demonstrates that while domestic, industrial and transport emissions have reduced consistently year on year within Highland, the amount of CO₂ removed from the atmosphere by LULUCF each year has also decreased and as such the mitigating effects of land use removals have reduced. This decrease may be due to recent increase forest harvesting activities and more work is needed to explore these changes further. Including LULUCF, Highland has shown the largest percentage increase in CO₂ emissions in the UK since 2005 and is the only Scottish Local Authority to show an increase in this time. Total emissions including LULUCF have increased by 12% between 2005 and 2009, a very different picture than the 14% per capita reduction demonstrated by those sectors within the control of Local Authorities.

Represented in this way the data should be viewed with caution. While a decrease in the amount of removals in Highland is not good, Highland remains Local Authority with the largest CO₂ emissions removals from LULUCF in Scotland representing 40% of Scotland's total as demonstrated in Table 7 below. More than half of Scottish Local Authorities had CO₂ gains from LULUCF in 2009 (although these gains are decreasing since 2005). When considering the UK as a whole, a total of 4789ktCO₂ were removed from the atmosphere through LULUCF in 2009. Highland and Argyll and Bute Council's areas alone accounted for 64% of these national removals. Argyll and Bute is the only Local Authority in Scotland where LULUCF removals outweigh all emissions from other sectors. It is therefore important that we do more to understand the impact of land use change on emissions, both locally and nationally, in order that we safeguard our important land assets.

Table 7: Total Co2 removals from Scottish Local authorities in 2009 (negative numbers represent removals and positive represents gains)

	LA Region Name	N. LULUCF Net Emissions
1	Highland	-1,854
2	Argyll and Bute	-1,193
3	Dumfries and Galloway	-801
4	Scottish Borders	-407
5	Perth and Kinross	-291
6	Stirling	-233
7	East Ayrshire	-227
8	South Ayrshire	-223
9	South Lanarkshire	-161
10	Moray	-66
11	North Ayrshire	-59
12	East Renfrewshire	-15
13	West Dunbartonshire	-6
14	Dundee City	6
15	Glasgow City	6
16	Midlothian	7
17	East Dunbartonshire	7
18	Inverclyde	8
19	Renfrewshire	8
20	Clackmannanshire	12
21	Falkirk	22
22	Aberdeen City	22
23	Edinburgh, City of	26
24	West Lothian	26
25	North Lanarkshire	32
26	East Lothian	37
27	Angus	51
28	Orkney Islands	53
29	Shetland Islands	68
30	Eilean Siar	82
31	Fife	107
32	Aberdeenshire	278
	Scotland Total	-4,678

3.3 Action to reduce area wide emissions

Highland Climate Change Declaration

Through the signing a Joint Regional Declaration on Climate Change Highland Partners have committed to reduce their internal emissions by 3% per annum. Currently 21 organisations have signed up to this commitment and to:

- Measure their carbon footprint and reduce it by 3% per year
- Provide an annual update of progress
- Share information and work with partners in Highland to promote good practice.
- Encourage businesses and communities to take action.

The full declaration and list of signatories is found on the [Highland Council Climate Change web pages](#) together with the first annual progress report for 2010/11

Climate Challenge Fund (CCF)

Seventeen Highland Communities were successful in receiving funding from CCF in 2010/11 for projects to reduce CO₂ emissions. Collectively the estimated savings from these projects were 5988 tonnes CO₂. A summary of projects can be found in in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Successful Climate Challenge Fund Projects in Highland 2010/11

Project Name		Total CO2 Reduction Estimate (tonnes)	Summary
1	Lochaber Initiative on Fuel and Energy (LIFE) www.lochaber-environmental-group.org.uk	311.00	Building on the success of the RENEW Project LIFE (the Lochaber Initiative on Fuel and Energy) aims to widen the client base within Lochaber by addressing fuel poverty issues. The Project aims to reduce energy and fuel consumption through participative projects to raise awareness with the use of OWLs thermal imaging techniques and through improving access to local renewable fuel and energy sources thus reducing Lochaber's CO2 emissions.
2	GALE Carbon Cutting Activities www.galeactionforum.co.uk	108.50	Reduce the carbon emissions of the Gairloch and Loch Ewe community by building a passive community building establishing a lift-share scheme and encouraging people to shop locally.

Highland Council SCCD Annual Report 2011

3	Carbon Cutting Plan www.knoydart-foundation.org	21.57	Knoydart Community will build on the success of its local food renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in a range of new initiatives designed to cut carbon emissions further. The project aims to reduce waste through innovative schemes to tackle transport emissions and to develop new energy efficiency measures; with children's leadership being a key new aspect of its work.
4	Lochaline Allotments www.mcdclochaline.co.uk	27.43	Lochaline Allotments Garden is a community based project that is aimed at providing growing space to local residents of Morven who wish to grow their own produce but are not able to do so due to land not being easily available. Creation of allotments garden will provide local residents with essential vegetables thus reducing the cost of food and fuel to individual households CO2 emissions it will raise awareness of food miles waste recycling composting and energy consumption.
5	Riverside Garden Site www.spanglefish.com/laugg	5.05	Ullapool can get growing thanks to the Climate Challenge Fund! After years of searching Lochbroom and Ullapool Growers Group have located an allotment site within the village and with the assistance of the Fund there is potential for 60 families to start growing their own fresh fruit and vegetables.
6	Cutting Carbon at the Community Centre	2.10	Mallaig and Morar Community Centre is cutting its carbon output through improving insulation and reducing electricity usage. The project is designed to make users of the facility more aware of the energy they use and its resultant impact on the environment.
7	Camuscross & Duisdale Transition Township www.camuscross.org	28.00	Camuscross & Duisdale Initiative a crofting township in South Skye is working towards becoming Scotland's first Transition Township in order to increase community resilience and sustainability. It will conduct a micro hydro design feasibility study into the community-owned reservoir encourage the use of croft and garden ground for local food production and construct paths to reduce car dependence and carbon emissions.
8	Baby Footprints- Helping Highland Families Cut Down on Carbon www.hrnp.org.uk	100.00	The Baby Footprints project will encourage families with babies and young children to become actively involved in reducing their carbon footprint in ways which are practical cost saving and fun.

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9	Close the Door Campaign Highlands www.foe-invernessandross.org.uk/	1,250.00	Many of the shops on high streets in Inverness and Ross-shire have their doors open even in temperatures well below zero with heat pouring out wasting money energy and increasing carbon emissions by an average of about ten tons. Friends of the Earth Inverness and Ross is hoping to work with retailers to help them stop losing energy and money by leaving their store doors wide open during cold spells and tell them about studies which suggest that closing the door will not reduce customer footfall and in fact could save them as much as half their heating costs and also help them to access energy advice.
10	HEN at Belladrum www.highlandenvironment.org.uk	17.50	To have both a HEN House (Marquee) and HEN Run (designated area for similar groups) situated in the Heilan Fields area of the Tartan Heart Belladrum Festival 2011. This is an expanded element of the Festival and the idea of HEN bringing many environmental organisations and groups under one banner was enthusiastically received by the Festival.
11	Applecross Micro Hydro	110.82	Applecross Community Company's project is the development to planning permission stage of one or more micro hydro schemes on this remote peninsula. The long term aim of this project is twofold; to work towards Applecross becoming a carbon neutral community and to generate an income which can be used to support schemes identified by the community to ensure that it continues to thrive.
12	Kirkhill and Bunchrew Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Programme	114.00	The programme will help community residents become more energy efficient. This will help reduce energy use energy bills and the subsequent energy carbon footprint.
13	East Caithness Rural Community Powerdown	3,106.00	LLCCDC will provide energy saving advice and support to reduce CO2 emissions through Seaview House Energy Advice Centre with our new heating system demonstration project as well as our community allotments and polytunnel grow your own demonstration project. We are delighted to have opened a new partnership with our local primary schools to provide immersion activities and incentives to our local children as encouragement for their development as carbon emission reducers of the future.

14	Eat It! Community and School Project www.rowan.org.uk	40.31	The Eat it! Project aims to reduce carbon emissions of families and schools by helping them to reduce their food waste. The project will raise awareness of the environmental issues around food including the carbon emissions created by its production storage transportation and disposal and promote positive sustainable behaviour change that will result in significant carbon reductions in the participating households and schools.
15	Community owned small micro hydro electricity scheme on the big Burn Golspie	0.00	The charitable company Golspie Community Power aims to develop a small hydro-electricity scheme on the Big Burn in Golspie Sutherland. Profits from the sale of electricity to the National Grid will be devoted to local charities and projects that provide clear community benefit.
16	Tain Sustainability Education and Carbon Reduction Project	636.00	Five Highland Schools embark on a programme of Sustainability Education and Carbon Reduction. Tain Royal Academy along with Craighill Primary; Inver Primary; Edderton Primary and Bonar Primary hope to reduce their carbon emissions by 10% as a result of embarking on a pilot project with the Park Ecovillage Trust Findhorn.
17	Caithness Community Woodfuel www.dunnetforest.org	110.00	Dunnet Forestry Trust will launch the Caithness Community Woodfuel Project in July 2011 with the objective of promoting the use of sustainable woodfuel and reducing carbon emissions. Chairman Jean Barnett said: 'building on our popular winter log sales the Trust can now enable Caithness homes to further reduce their carbon emissions by using Dunnet Forest woodfuel throughout the year still using our low impact harvesting system but with new equipment which is even kinder to the forest and to the global environment'
Total Emissions Savings		5,988.28	

Highland Renewable Energy Strategy:

The Council Programme contains the commitment:

“We wish to see by 2012, a total of 1640 megawatts installed capacity in suitable locations in Highland with improved capacity of grid connections and as part of the implementation of the Council’s Renewable Energy Strategy, support the potential for marine energy in the Pentland Firth”.

By the end of 2010/11 a total of 946 megawatts had been installed.

The Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (HRES identifies the capacity in the Highlands for a range of renewable energy targets and provide locational guidance and support economic development. Further information is available from the link below:

- [Highland Renewable Energy Strategy](#)

Policies for renewable energy are being incorporated in the Highland wide Local Development Plan together with Supplementary Guidance on onshore wind energy. A report on progress was considered by the Council's Planning, Environment and Development Committee on 22 September 2010; [Draft Supplementary Guidance](#) has been published for consultation.

The new policy and guidance will supersede parts of the strategy and planning guidelines of HRES relating to on-shore wind energy. It is important though to note that HRES and the Renewable Energy Resource Assessment on which it is based continue to provide an overarching strategy and much useful information to those involved in renewable energy development including onshore wind.

PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

A key priority for 2011/12 will be to increase the number of signatories signing up to the Highland Declaration, to provide opportunities for knowledge exchange between the partners and to continue to monitor and report progress towards emissions reductions. Through the partnership, more work is needed to increase understanding and awareness of the land use impact on CO₂ removals in Highland. Highland Council will offer support, advice and encouragement to communities wishing to apply for further CCF funding and will actively seek to involve them in joint working through the Highland Environment Network (see section 5).

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Section 4 - Assessing the risks of climate change impacts and working with others to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

4.1 Identifying Climate Impacts

The Highland Council Programme contains within it the revised commitment:

“In adapting to the impacts of climate change we will map the opportunities and threats facing Highland and develop appropriate actions to build resilience to such impacts by 2012.”

A number of research projects and workshops have taken place to provide information and feedback to assist in the identification of climate impacts. The Highland Council has carried out two separate LCLIP media trawls. The first Highland LCLIP was conducted in 2009 and looked at press releases between 2002 and 2008. A total of 110 weather incidents were logged. The second LCLIP looked at the period from November 2010 to July 2011 and logged a total of 152 weather incidents.

The Council's Annual Public Performance Survey asked residents about their experiences of weather impacts. The results of this survey, together with the LCLIP findings will assist in the review of Highland Councils response to weather incidents. More details are available on the associated web pages below:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/sustainabledevelopment/climatechange/local-climate-impact-profile.htm>

4.2 Assessing Vulnerability of Communities

Workshops have taken place in various communities organised by Highland Council or through partnership working with SNH, SCVO, UHI Millennium Institute and Adaptation Scotland. In addition, Highland Council has participated in the A9 Corridor Project, ClimATIC and Roadex, exploring climate impacts and responses out with the Highland area.

In 2010-11 a series of vulnerability assessments were undertaken in the community of Gairloch and Loch Ewe with the aim of creating a toolkit to help develop community based actions to build resilience to Climate Change. Parallel to this, SNH undertook a community dialogue pilot project around the issues of climate change in the community of Nairn. A web-based community toolkit is being developed by consultants on behalf of SNH. Highland Council is a member of the working group overseeing the creation of this toolkit and is feeding back findings from the Gairloch project. It is hoped that Highland communities will trial the finalised toolkit when it is available in 2012. Notes from all community workshops and results of the Gairloch vulnerability assessments can be found on the Highland Council Adaptation webpage:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/sustainabledevelopment/climatechange/adaptation/communityaction.htm>

4.3 Assessing Vulnerability of Organisations

Work has taken place within the seven Highland Council Services to assess the organisations vulnerability to changing weather systems.

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/sustainabledevelopment/climatechange/adaptation/workshops.htm>

Work with other organisations In Highland has been limited to the representatives present at the various workshops. A number of community planning partners such as SEPA and the Forestry Commission have completed Adaptation actions plans independently.

Through the Highland Climate Change Declaration, twenty one organisations have committed to:

“Encourage and work with others in our businesses and communities to take action to adapt to the impact of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.”

The first annual report on progress, published in September 2011, showed no stated actions on climate change Adaptation and therefore more work is needed in this area in the future.

4.4 Action

Officers responsible for climate change adaptation at Highland Council are systematically working through the worksheets provided by Adaptation Scotland. This resource was not available at the outset of the Highland Council’s adaptation approach and therefore certain elements have been completed out of sync with the defined phases. In terms of progress Highland Council is at “Phase 4 - Implementing Adaptation Actions”. However, Highland Council recognise that there are some earlier requiring completion.

In 2011, the Highland Council produced and consulted upon the draft document “Adapting to Climate Change in Highland”. This document will be reviewed and updated annually.

In 2011, the Highland Council introduced climate change screening of all committee papers to assess both mitigation and adaptation impacts of decision making. In line with the duties of the Climate Change Scotland Act (2009) this screening is now being enhanced to cover a third arm of sustainability.

In 2011, flood risk guidance was produced for Highland householders as a first step in assisting communities to become more self-resilient.

All action towards climate change Adaptation is summarised on the Highland Council web page below:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/sustainabledevelopment/climatechange/adaptation/>

4.5 Financing Adaptation Activities

Currently work underway to build resilience to weather impacts and adapt to climate change is not financed under the heading of “Adaptation” and a more coordinated approach to capturing this information and plan future investment is still to be explored.

PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Map the threats and opportunities of Climate Change across Highland.
- Pilot the community toolkit in conjunction with SNH
- Capture more detailed information on the costs of Adaptation
- Monitor and report progress on a regular basis.

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Section 5: Developing effective partnership working and climate change communications.

5.1 Partnership Working – The Highland Environment Forum

The Community Planning Partnership Performance Board established an Environment Forum which will make recommendations to the Community Planning Partnership Performance Board in delivering the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and will report its performance to it. It will ensure that joint actions are agreed and taken forward.

Establishment and membership of the Highland Environment Forum helps to ensure that the Council:

- Meets its obligations under the SOA with the Scottish Government and other Community Planning partners;
- Delivers its programme for the Highlands 2009 – 2012 in partnership, and;
- Maintains appropriate linkage with the work of the Councils Planning, Environment and Development Committee, and the Land, Environment and Sustainability Strategy Group.

The Highland Environment forum meets bi-annually and is coordinated by the Highland Councils Planning & Development Service.

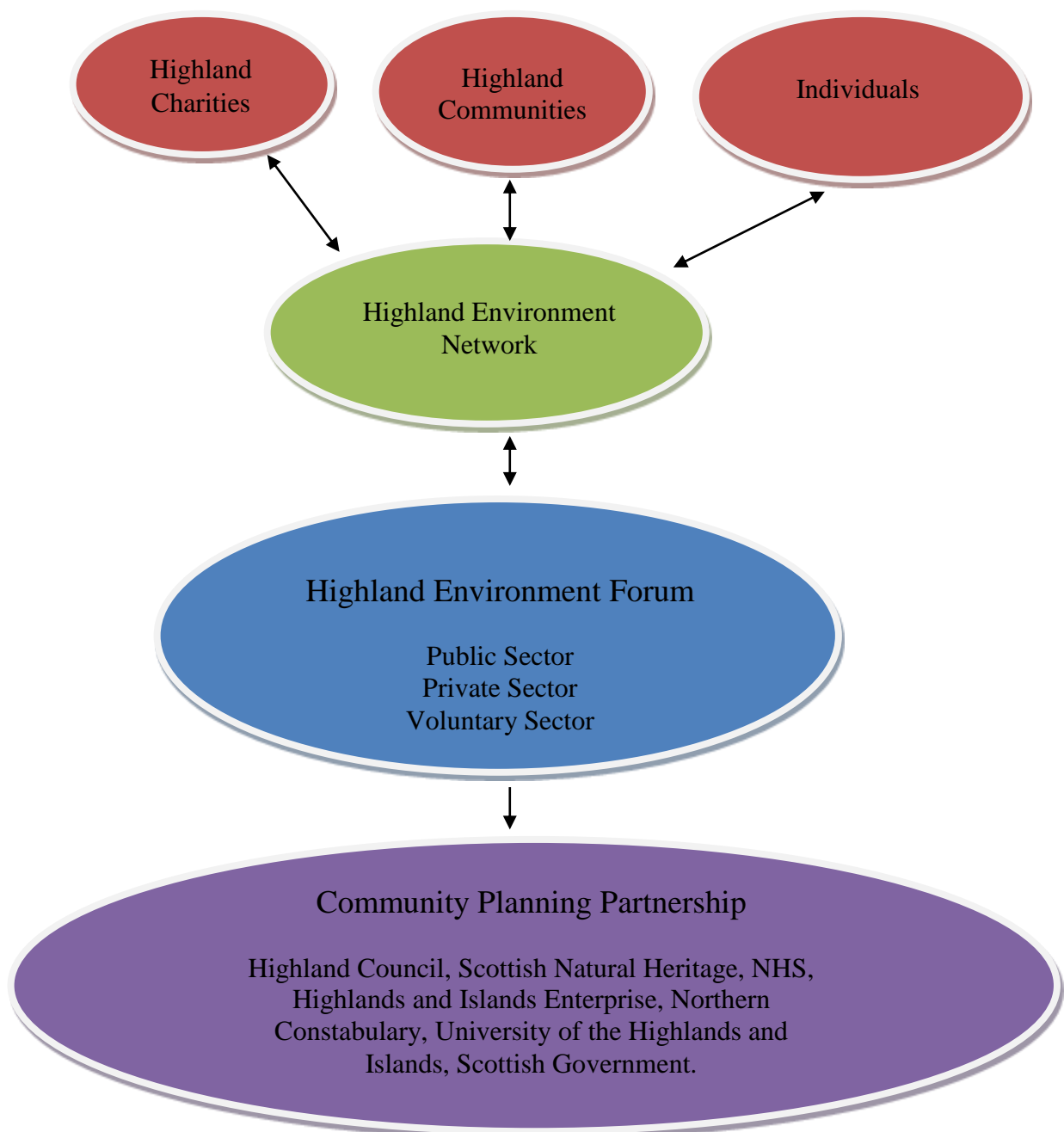
Membership of the Highland Environment Forum includes the following organisations:

- Crofters Commission
- Scottish Crofting Foundation
- SNH
- SEPA
- Forestry Commission
- Cairngorm National Park
- Fishermen's Federation
- Federation of Scottish Aquaculture Producers
- Highland Biodiversity Partnership
- RSPB or Scottish Environment Link
- Association of Salmon Fishery Boards
- Highland Farm and Wildlife Advisory Group
- National Farmers Union Scotland (Highland Branch)
- Association of Deer Management Groups
- Highland Birchwoods Ltd
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Community Energy Scotland
- Highland Environmental Network
- Community Recycling Network for Scotland.

5.2 The Highland Environment Network (HEN)

In 2010/11 the Highland Council continued funding to the Highland Environmental Network (HEN), a voluntary organisation serving the Highland area. The Council has a partnership agreement to ensure that HEN acts to coordinate community action on climate change and sustainable development across Highland by providing a central point of contact for community groups interested in learning about how they can take action, and what support is available. Included in this agreement was the development of a website to signpost individuals and community groups in Highland to relevant information on sustainable development issues for the area.

HEN also offers a series of events and training opportunities for Highland Communities and sits on the partnership group of the Highland Environment Forum to disseminate and feedback progress of a strategic nature.



The HEN Annual Conference – “Greening at Grassroots, Empowering Local Communities”, was held on Sat 12 March, 2011 at the Fortrose Academy Theatre & Black Isle Leisure Centre, with funding from FEVA (Forum for Environmental Volunteering Activity) and in-kind support from Highland Council and various community volunteers and HEN committee members. Presentations, workshops and displays were programmed in the theatre, classrooms, and the Leisure Centre. Approximately 60 people from across the Highland Region attended the conference. There were several displays which form a key part of the HEN Conference, giving organisations the opportunity to show their work, and engage with others. The conference report is available on the HEN website at:

www.highlandenvironment.org.uk

HEN members co-ordinated a tent at Belladrum Festival 2011 where individuals were encouraged to sign the declaration and pledge to reduce carbon from a number of areas in their lives. 110 signatories were collected over the weekend significantly higher than the target of 50 people originally set. HEN are following up these commitments with signatories and will report back on the level of success.

5.3 Progress towards the Highland Climate Change Declaration

Twenty one Highland organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors, known as the Highland Environment Forum, have published their first annual report of progress towards the Highland Climate Change Declaration and set themselves a target of adding a further 30 signatories by April, 2012.

Collectively the Forum members saved 1,660 tonnes in CO₂ emissions in 2010/11 with most organisations meeting the annual 3% reduction target. Scottish Natural Heritage gathered the organisational data on behalf of the partnership.

Examples of joint working underway include the purchasing of electric vehicles and sharing of premises, conferences, events and provision of advice and support to communities.

A copy of the Highland Climate Change Declaration and annual report of progress can be found at www.highland.gov.uk/climatedeclaration

5.4 Communication:

The timely and accurate communication of carefully chosen messages to specific individuals and groups, through appropriate and effective channels, is a key component of the Council’s work to tackle climate change. A communication plan has been developed to promote behavioural change and understanding of the issues both internally through Council staff, pupils and Members and externally with partners, communities and individuals.

The Highland Council Communication Action Plan is available online together with examples and downloadable resources on the [Green Council](#) web pages.

Examples of actions and events taking place in 2010/11 include.

Energy Awareness Toolkit Pilot

The Energy Team, bid into a Scotland-wide scheme for the development of a pilot energy-awareness toolkit for use by Local Authorities. Highland Council is one of six Local Authorities in Scotland participating in the scheme and the pilot is a three year campaign running from 2011 and 2013. Four half day training sessions were organised where managers and responsible officers were introduced to the scheme and its objectives. 139 staff from all areas and services attended the events and attendees now have access to a range of materials to assist them to promote the energy efficiency message and contribute to the Council's carbon saving targets.

Highland Council Water Saving Campaign

Water consumption at HQ has fallen by 20% in the last year, saving £2,425 in water charges and 0.75 tonnes of CO₂. This follows the installation of urinal flushing controls, water efficient taps and low flush toilets in a number of toilets blocks. The Council's '[Reduce Water Waste](#)' campaign has also raised awareness of water efficiency amongst staff.



Waste Minimisation

Waste generation at HQ has fallen by 50% since 2008, saving £4,500 in waste collection costs and 34 tonnes in CO₂ emissions. Once again a combination of [awareness raising](#), staff support and the appropriate facilities has proved a winning formula. Further reductions in waste generation are expected in 2011, following the Council's decision to withdraw disposable plastic cups from all sites, excluding schools. Staff have been encouraged to use re-usable water bottles, which can be purchased from the canteen for £2.20.

Green Ambassadors

There are 124 Green Ambassadors across Council services and buildings to date ensuring that messages are not only cascaded from Senior Management but are distributed and discussed at individual site level. Green Ambassadors are surveyed annually to determine what actions have been taken and their opinion on ideas for the future. Below is a sample of actions across the organisation in the last year:

- Low carbon working and planning was encouraged;
- Heating and ventilation systems were controlled more efficiently;
- Heaters were switched off in rooms not in constant use;
- Colleagues were reminded to turn off appliances and lights, turn down heating and put on more clothing;
- Composting of office food waste was promoted;
- Staff were encouraged to use recycling bins;

- Car-sharing and video/telephone conferencing were promoted and the number of meetings organised and attended were reduced;
- Staff attended Bike Week and advertised new cycling infrastructure;
- Office furniture was re-used rather than purchasing new items.



A team of volunteers have helped transform an area at HQ beside the canteen into a garden for staff to enjoy their lunch or just chill. The emphasis has been on re-use and recycle and donations have included a water butt, pond, slabs, picnic benches, bird table, nest box, trampoline fabric (to line the raised beds), bulbs, compost, herbs, plants, and assistance with transport.

Bike Week

Staff from throughout the Highlands took part in Bike Week from 18 June 2011. Free security tagging was offered to staff by the Northern Constabulary and local bike shops carried out health checks of Employees bikes. Staff were encouraged to cycle in to work on the week and in total x cycle miles were logged. HQ gained the Cycle Friendly Employer Award in recognition of the Council's efforts to enable staff to cycle to work and meetings.



Subsequently the Council was granted £1,800 from Cycling Scotland to increase personal and bike storage at Headquarters. The Council has been commended for on-site facilities including: cycle parking; personal storage and showers; staff incentives including the cycling allowance of 20p per mile, the previous Bike to Work scheme and the 26 Green Travel Plans developed with funding from the Energy Saving Trust. It is hoped that additional Council sites will obtain the cycle friendly employer award.

Public Performance Survey and Citizens Panel Response to Climate Change

At the last meeting on 8 September 2011 a report was circulated which informed Members of climate change related information gathered through analysis of the Council's 2011 Public Performance Survey. Content of the Survey relating to Climate Change was generally positive and further opportunities to communicate the Council's activities to the public will be progressed, including in the Council's Annual Newspaper.

Community Workshops on Climate Change Impacts

A series of workshops took place between November 2010 and April 2011 in Gairloch and Loch Ewe with the aim to:

1. Provide an understanding of weather events in Gairloch and Loch Ewe in the recent past;
2. Assess current vulnerability to weather events;
3. Increase Highland Councils understanding of the impacts of projected climate change on a rural community;

4. Provide supporting data to enable the implementation of an Adaptation Strategy for Highland Council;
5. Trial information and guidance for community groups;
6. Develop a toolkit for use by other communities;

Earth Hour

The Council again took part in WWF's Earth Hour initiative – an annual global event to highlight the threats of climate change. Urquhart Castle, Inverness Castle and Eilean Donan Castle joined other Highland sites and thousands of iconic global structures by turning off their lights for the hour. In terms of the number of individual signatories signed up to participate Highland Council ranked 29th out of UK Local Authorities.

PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2011/12 the Council's Communication Plan in relation to climate change will be refreshed and expanded. A programme of internal communication with staff will continue to be delivered and there will be a re-launch of the Green Ambassadors scheme, including a focus on pupils in schools. This re-launch will be accompanied by refreshed resources and tools and include e-learning packages. A key focus for the year ahead will be to undertake greater external publicity of the good work underway by Highland Council. Better community engagement is required and can be achieved through the piloting of a community toolkit and the annual public performance survey and focus groups. Options to increase joint working with partners will be explored through the Highland Environment Forum.

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