



**Council**  
**Climate and Nature Summary**  
**2024/25**



## Introduction

Aberdeen City Council recognises and takes very seriously the dual crises of climate change and nature loss. We have declared a 'Climate and Nature Emergency'.

Our assets and services are wide-ranging and inevitably create risks and opportunities related to climate and nature. To address these, we have put in place a Council system to help us understand, plan, monitor and report on these. The key elements are: a Council Climate Change Plan and targets; a Carbon Budget; a Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee and regular reporting, including this Climate and Nature Summary.

This summary highlights some of the many ways we are addressing the climate and nature emergency whilst still delivering vital services to our citizens. This summary covers the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

We are also involved, as are many others, in climate and nature activity right across Aberdeen each year, in part through Net Zero Aberdeen & Aberdeen Adapts. To find out more, visit:

[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen)

In this summary we often use the terms 'climate' and 'nature'. The Council use these generic terms to refer to the wider concepts of climate: change, risk, mitigation, adaptation, resilience and nature / biodiversity loss and recovery.



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# The system for change

Throughout this report you will see sections colour coded to reflect work that is Council only (blue) and work that is Council and its partners (green)

Council only

Council and partners

Driver	Climate	Nature
Major legislation	Climate Change (Scotland) Acts 2009–2024	Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011
Leadership and governance	Climate and Nature Emergency	
	Community Planning Aberdeen – Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
	Net Zero Environment and Transport Committee Council Climate Oversight Group	
	Energy Board	
	Aberdeen Net Zero and Adaptation Board	
Key targets	Net Zero Council by 2045	Local Outcome Improvement Plan 15. 26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026.
	Net Zero Aberdeen by 2045 Adaptation Goals for Aberdeen	
Plans	Council Climate Change Plan & Carbon Budget	Natural Environment Strategy
	Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap Aberdeen Adapts: Adaptation Framework	
Statutory reporting	Climate Change Report (annually)	Biodiversity Duty Reports (every three years)
Summaries	Council Climate and Nature Summary	
	Net Zero Aberdeen & Aberdeen Adapts Report	
Statistics	Climate Change Report Statutory Performance Indicators	Nature Data and Indicators project North East Scotland Biological Records Centre

# Climate and Nature in numbers

Aberdeen's land  
protected for nature

**21.3%**



Aberdeen tree  
canopy cover

**17.3%**

Trees planted 2024/25  
**22,241**

**46%**  
of tree planting during the  
reporting period was re-  
stocking of trees due to  
storm damage

**47%** reduction in  
**emissions** from energy use  
in Council buildings since  
15/16 baseline

## Aberdeen B-Lines

**71** kg seeds sown  
**6,700** plugs planted  
**2,070** bulbs planted

**190** volunteers  
**2** bee banks built  
**12.24 hectares** area  
enhanced



**150,000** bulbs

**150+ Meadow-  
in-a-box**



donated and distributed by  
the Council to communities  
across the city



**3,631** homes  
**30** public buildings  
remained connected to **district  
heating**

**3**  
new district heating connections

**>240**  
**Gold Standard affordable homes  
built**

**50**  
**Council homes retrofitted**  
improving EPC rating from  
C to B

## Scope of activity

Throughout this report you will see  
**sections colour coded** to reflect  
work that is Council only (blue) and  
work that is Council and its  
partners (green).

Council only

Council and partners





# Climate and Nature in numbers

Awards in 2024/25



## Keep Scotland Beautiful

including 'Rose Bowl' and 'Best City'

## 9 Greenspace Green Flag Awards

The most Aberdeen has ever achieved.

Read more on page 15



## 24 active Eco-Schools



(Schools & Nurseries)

A global programme that empowers students to engage in sustainability and environmental education

## 11 School Green Flag Awards

down from 14 in 23/24

## 35 work days

~ £11.2k

Time and cost of  
controlling Invasive Non-  
Native Species (INNS)

## Green Champions Network

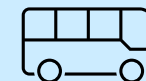
Grew from **80 to 89**  
champions taking part in

**11** initiatives

**5** activities

**29**

community-led  
environmental projects  
funded by the Local  
Environmental Action  
Fund (LEAF)



**31**

**Bus shelters with sedum roofs**  
installed in 2024/25. These provide  
multi benefits for nature and climate

**75**

Total installed  
since 2023

Low carbon heat from Energy  
from Waste and Biomass

**5,607,900 kWh**

consumed in Council  
buildings

## Staff Climate Training 307 staff

completed internal  
Climate Change Training  
since the courses  
launched

**79%** reduction in  
streetlighting  
emissions since 15/16  
due to LED replacement  
programme  
(**17%** ↓ since 23/34)



# Where do our emissions come from?

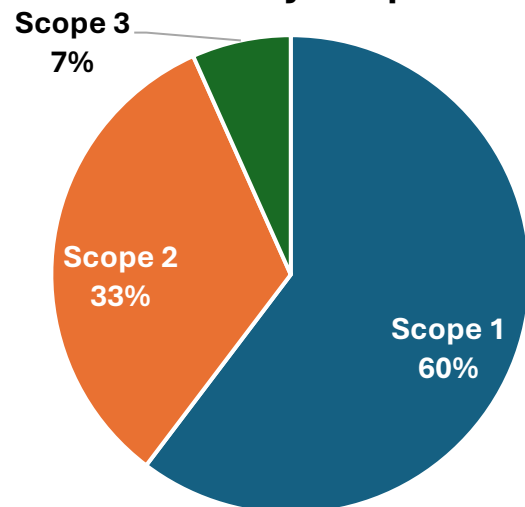
## Emissions reduction by Scope<sup>1</sup> since 23/24

**Scope 1:** < 1% ↓ (29% since 15/16)

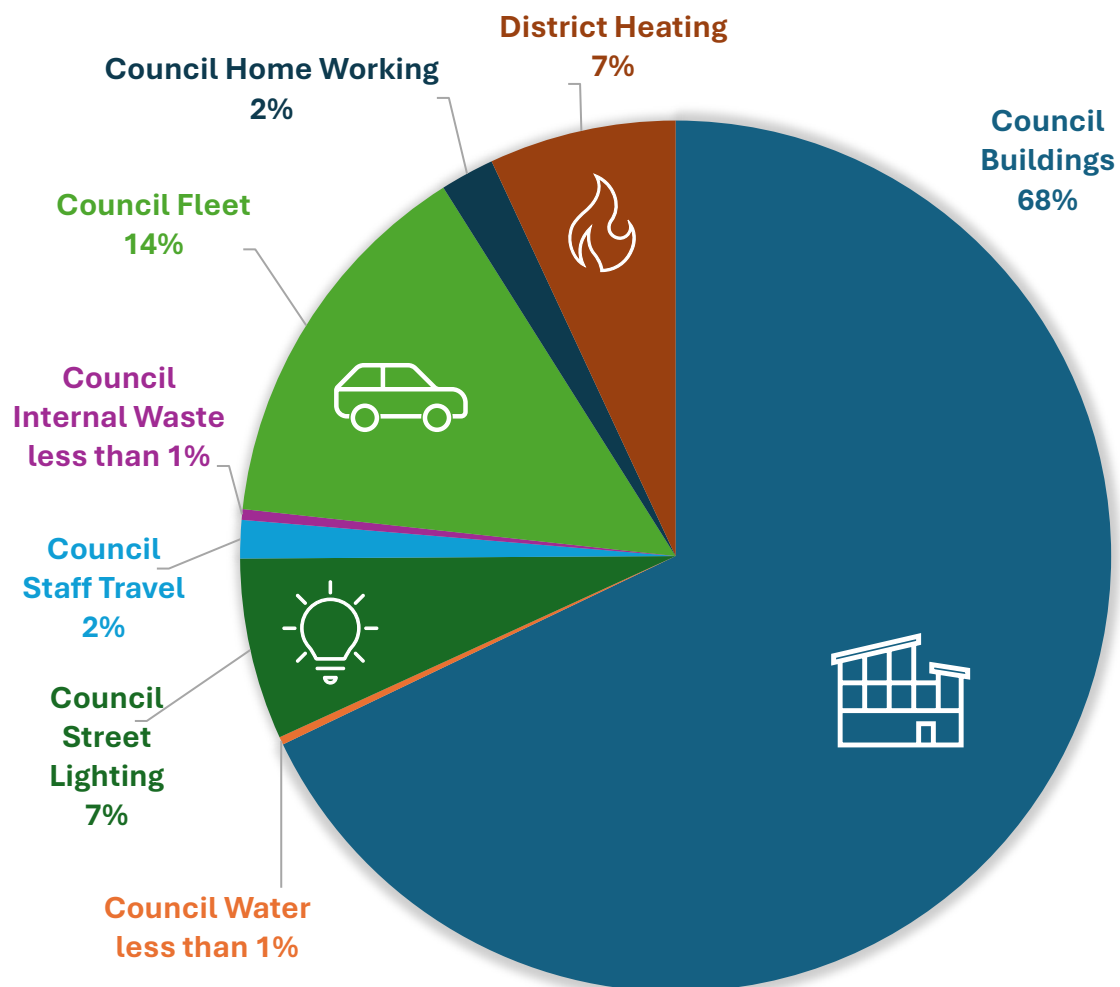
**Scope 2:** 10% ↓ (60% since 15/16)

**Scope 3:** 43% ↓ (36% since 15/16)

## Emissions by Scope 24/25



## % breakdown of emissions sources 24/25



<sup>1</sup>**Scope 1** – Direct emissions from fossil fuel use e.g. energy consumed in buildings and fleet operations.

**Scope 2** – Indirect emissions related to energy e.g. consumption of purchased electricity, heat, and steam.

**Scope 3** – Other indirect emissions.

## Our emissions – key facts

### 2024/25 emissions

**25,971 tCO<sub>2</sub>**

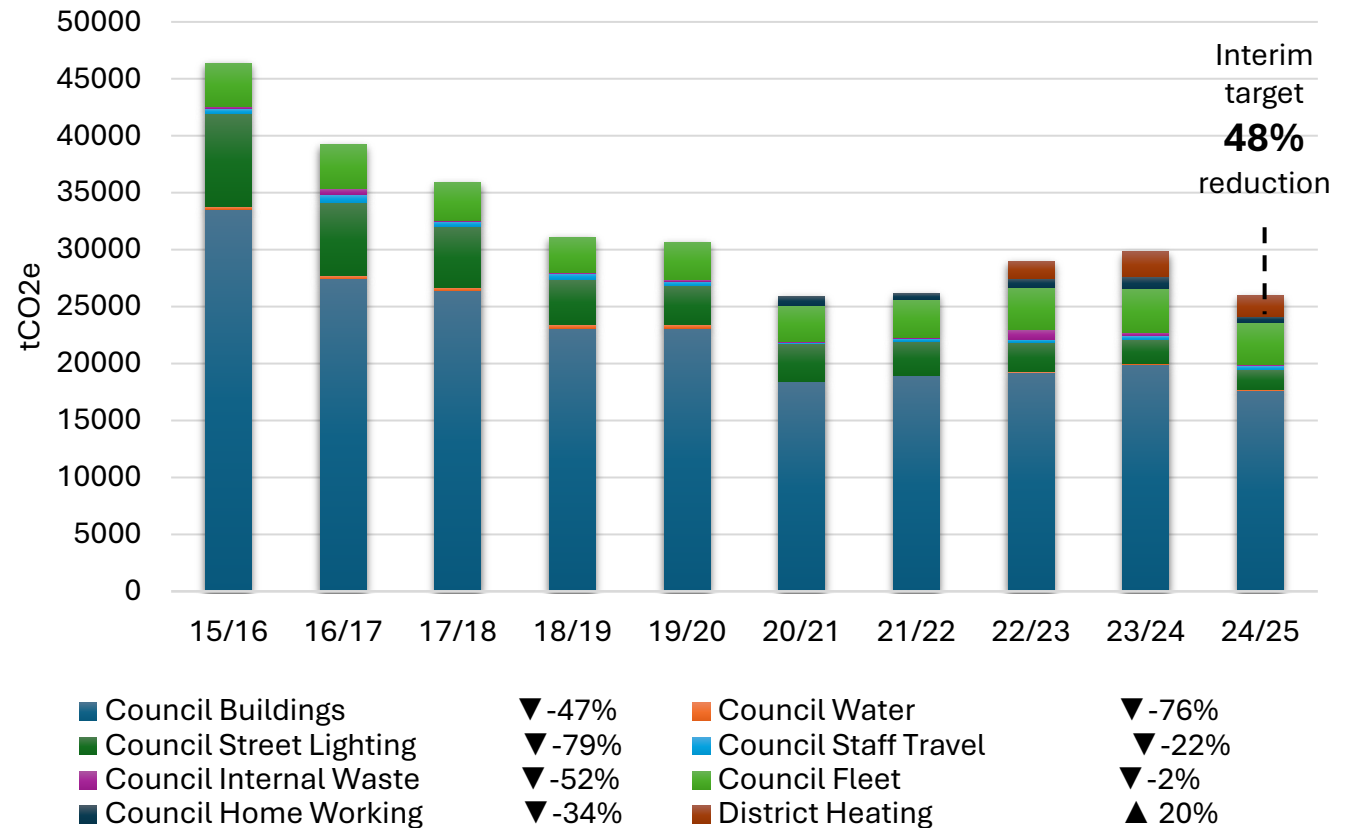
1,663.5 tCO<sub>2</sub>e reduction since  
23/24

**48%**

**Reduction in emissions since  
the 15/16 baseline of our  
Council Climate Change Plan**

Total emissions for 24/25 in the  
scope of the plan were **24,167  
tCO<sub>2</sub>e<sup>2</sup>** (22,204 tCO<sub>2</sub>e  
reduction from 15/16)

### Emissions By Source : % change since 15/16 baseline



**8%** under the cumulative carbon budget for the period of our Council Climate Change Plan 2021-25.

Though an **0.2%** exceedance on our 24/25 carbon budget target

District heating data is not included in the 2015/16 baseline and the emissions inventory for the Council Climate Change Plan and carbon budget.<sup>1</sup> District heating data has been available since 2022/23 and added an additional 1,805 (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) in 24/25, without this emissions would have been 24,167 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.<sup>2</sup>

# Climate and Nature in action

## Leadership and Governance

- The Council's Climate Oversight Group has a remit for implementation and delivery of the Council Climate Change Plan, taking a project assurance role to review performance and progress and keep the plan on track. The Group includes Senior Officers delivering workstreams under the plan.
- Work took place in 2024/25 to establish an Energy Board. The purpose of the Energy Board is to consider all internal and external factors to the Council to fully understand the current and future energy, carbon and nature management issues and its potential impact on the Council and the place of Aberdeen.
- At the Council's May 2024 meeting of its Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Committee an Internal Audit on '[Biodiversity and the Natural Environment](#)' was approved. This audit was prepared across the first quarter of 2024 and resulted in a Net Risk Rating of Moderate and an Assurance Assessment of Reasonable being provided. This was viewed as a positive outcome but with some areas for improvement highlighted. Work was completed on 3 recommended actions from the audit during 2024/25, relating to Risk Management, Training, and Procurement Business Cases. Work on the remaining 4 recommended actions are ongoing. The audit will help in our efforts to better protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment in the city moving forward.
- Relevant plans, policies and reports are communicated to the [Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee](#) (NZET), established in 2022.
- To build in additional consideration for the natural environment, sustainability and climate change, several Council procedures and processes were updated during the reporting period;
  - Climate change and nature indicators were included in the staff Capability Framework and annual appraisal process
  - An Environmental Impacts section was added to the Council Integrated Impacts Assessment (IIA) template. Adding this section enables consideration of environmental impacts in major decisions, helping to deliver a greener, more resilient city.
  - Biodiversity and natural environment was added to the climate compliance cluster risk register, these risks are considered together, acknowledging the twin crises. A climate place-based risk is also included at Corporate risk level.
- The [Council Carbon Budget](#) for 2024/25 was approved alongside the financial budget at the Full Council meeting in March 2024.



# Climate and Nature in action

## Leadership and Governance

- For citywide climate and nature work, the collaborative Aberdeen Net Zero and Adaptation Board is in place. A summary on citywide climate work, including Council actions, is also reported annually: [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen)
- Supporting community resilience, the Council distributed 47 resilience boxes and supplied over 40 battery packs for vulnerable residents in Aberdeen during 2024/25. In addition, around 200 people attended a Community Resilience Conference in 2024 which was jointly hosted by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. The event was aimed at community groups to initiate or enhance their resilience activities and arrangements.
- The Council contributes to multi agency co-ordinated emergency response and resilience efforts in extreme weather events. This included Storm Éowyn (January 2025) where Council buildings including schools and libraries were closed, services including waste collections and repair work were disrupted and the tree squad dealt with over 30 fallen trees. Further information is included in the [Resilience Annual Report](#) (March 2025).
- The Council offers a [Property Level Protection scheme](#) to help eligible households and businesses install flood protection measures. The scheme offers grant funding of 75% to help with the cost of protecting properties from flooding.

# Climate and Nature in action

## Projects

### [Aberdeen City Council Local Nature Conservation Sites \(LNCSs\) review](#)

The purpose of Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) is to safeguard biodiversity and geodiversity of at least local importance, primarily through Local Development Plans. In 2022 a review of the Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCSs) was started. It was the first time the sites had been reviewed since designation in 2013. The results of the LNCS Review were reported at [Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee \(NZET\) in March 2025](#). The Committee agreed with the report's recommendations, and these are being worked through. While these recommendations are being actioned, further work will start on drafting new LNCS sites.

### **Open Space Audit (OSA)**

An open space audit is used to assist with protecting and improving green spaces through the planning process and by supporting blue green infrastructure policies. A refreshed Open Space Audit for Aberdeen city was published in 2025. This will inform the update to the citywide Natural Environment Strategy which outlines how we collectively manage and improve green and open spaces for the benefit of the people, nature and economy of Aberdeen. A report on the Audit went to the [NZET Committee in June 2024](#) and links to the Audit Main Report, Mapping and Interactive Data Dashboard are [available here](#).

### **Nature Data and Indicators project**

[Community Planning Aberdeen](#) (CPA) is the strategic partnership for public services in the city, working to deliver the [Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) (LOIP). The LOIP was first published in August 2016 and is refreshed every two years to ensure it reflects current circumstances and that the Partnership remains focussed on the priority issues for the city to achieve the vision of Aberdeen as 'a place where all people can prosper'. To address the LOIP stretch outcome "15. 26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026", the Council has identified there is a growing requirement to gather data on biodiversity and the natural environment. This is to: a) better understand the state of nature locally, b) draft any required response actions and c) help to set, monitor and report on outcomes, such as the LOIP target 15, as well as local and regional strategies and plans, and delivery plans associated with the [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy](#) (SBS). The Nature Data and Indicators project was supported by the [NZET Committee in October 2023](#), and the project has been running during the reporting period. Initial data outputs have been incorporated into this summary report and will continue to be monitored and reported on in this summary and other reports.

### **Bus shelters with sedum roofs**

The bus shelter replacement project was first reported in the [Aberdeen City Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2023](#). Many climate and nature actions can have multiple benefits. Whilst providing shelter for public transport users and using renewable power for travel information, the new sedum roof bus shelters with solar panels are also providing nature benefits. The roofs are acting as 'stepping stones' for wildlife within the urban environment. This ongoing project delivered 31 new shelters in the reporting period, with more expected in the next. A further update will be given in the 25/26 summary.

# Climate and Nature in action

## Projects

### LED street lighting

There was a continued reduction in energy consumption and related emissions (over 360 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) in 24/25 following completion of the 8-year rolling street lighting replacement programme. This programme upgraded street lighting in Aberdeen to LED (light emitting diode) technology.

### Transition to clean energy

Decarbonising continued across the Council's assets. This included the completion of Kaimhill housing development with 40 ground source heat pumps and 200 new houses at Cloverhill with air source heat pumps. In addition to existing operational connections to district heating and solar Photovoltaic (PVs) at a number of our premises, connections to district heating and solar PV panels were installed for the new Riverbank School.

### Heating upgrades and energy efficiency improvements

An ongoing programme of improvement actions including window and door replacements, insulation, boiler and control upgrades contributed to emission savings in 24/25. Works completed during the reporting period included improvements to heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems at Aberdeen's civic building the Town House.

### Project Doric

A "whole house" retrofit demonstrator project, for 50 existing council properties providing tenants with renewable energy and reducing energy consumption. The retrofit included installing energy efficiency measures, including window, door, heating replacements and property insulation, as well as renewables including air source heat pumps, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and battery storage. The project used smart modelling software and infrared survey techniques to target resources and support monitoring and analysis of energy use. The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings for the buildings improved from C to B.

### Secure Cycle Storage

Six cycle storage units were installed at Tillydrone and Seaton multi-storeys, providing a secure space for up to 120 bicycles, and winning a 2024 Cycle Forum Award. These facilities can promote cycling for commuting and leisure, reducing carbon emissions, traffic congestion and improving health and wellbeing.

### Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Rollout of electric vehicle charge points continued, increasing from 173 to 221 sockets (including ChargePoints for Council Fleet, Car Club and the public). There have now been 146 public sockets installed to date with further expansion planned.



# Climate and Nature in action

## Projects

### Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF)

The Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF) is a grant programme designed to support community and environmental projects in Aberdeen. The fund is administered through the [North East Scotland Climate Action Network \(NESCAN\) Hub](#) on behalf of Aberdeen City Council. The fund also directly supports the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) improvement project “15.5 - to increase by 50% the number of community groups delivering local environmental improvements in their neighbourhoods by 2026”. Projects funded by LEAF can include protecting, enhancing and increasing biodiversity, improving existing or developing new spaces that benefit communities, and helping communities to mitigate, adapt to and build resilience to climate change, including the use of nature-based solutions. In the reporting period 2024/25, 29 community-led environmental projects were funded, to the value of £58.2k. A full report on the fund during 24/25 can be found here: [Public-LEAF-Funding-Report-24-25-.pdf](#) The recently published Aberdeen Open Space Audit identifies priorities for improvements at a site, community and city-wide level. The fund therefore actively supports and encourages projects which help support and address the priorities and areas for improvement identified in the Audit.

## Student projects

- Through the ABDN Internship Programme, which focuses on providing work placements for University of Aberdeen students, a MSc student worked as an intern in a partnership between the Council and University of Aberdeen’s Estates & Facilities department. The aim was to collect and review local greenspace maintenance regimes, supporting both the Council’s and University’s green initiatives. Through the collection of data from Council teams, this internship created a centralised database for the Council to streamline grounds maintenance data and project data such as Aberdeen B-Lines. The database allows for more data supported decisions for future work on changes to ground maintenance regimes and informs policy, strategy and project work.
- The Council hosted several student projects from the University of Aberdeen during the reporting period including:
  - “Understanding the people’s perception on Aberdeen B-lines project and identifying best management practices and data collection methods”
  - “The Northeast of Scotland’s Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals”
  - “Net Zero Aberdeen and Aberdeen Adapts: Place based climate action delivery models”



# Climate and Nature in action

## Engagement and education

- The Council's Countryside Ranger Service manages 25 countryside sites across Aberdeen City for biodiversity, education and public access. These sites total more than 1,000 hectares and include one Site of Special Scientific Interest, four Local Nature Reserves and fourteen Local Nature Conservation Sites. The Duthie Park Rangers work with schools, community groups, and the public to provide environmental education opportunities for all ages and abilities at Duthie Park. Both services enable the Council to deliver environmental education and access to nature for the citizens of Aberdeen.
- In October 2024, Council officers delivered training for Councillors on the Council's strategies and policies for the natural environment, biodiversity, outdoor access, open space and protected trees. The aim was to support Councillors' development to be more confident when responding to constituent concerns and in their work on various Council Committees and working groups.
- The "Green Workplace" staff intranet area, launched in 2021, continued to be expanded this period with new content and activities to give staff and Councillors access to climate, nature and sustainability information, policies, processes, guidance, tips, and ways to get involved.
- [Green Times Magazine](#) is a quarterly digital magazine showcasing the latest environmental news, events, projects, and volunteering opportunities in Aberdeen. Around 3,500 subscribers are kept up to date with the latest news on topics such as: climate change, biodiversity, community projects, volunteering opportunities, sustainability, training and events, food growing, funding opportunities, schools, energy, transport and waste news and more. The magazine was published 5 times during the reporting period. In 2025/26, Green Times transitioned to [social media](#) in order to expand its reach and facilitate real-time engagement with audiences. This new platform also enables collaborative social media campaigns with partners, and for news and events from community groups to be shared directly.
- In November 2024, officers from the Council delivered a lecture to students of the MSc Sustainable Transitions programme at University of Aberdeen. The topic of the lecture was 'Environmental policy', and as a more hands-on part of the lecture a short game to understand the process of planning and the environment was run.

### Countryside Rangers

**314** volunteers working

**883.33** hours

**118** bags of litter collected

**112** educational event with

**3363** people attending

### Duthie Park Rangers

**120m2** wildflower area maintained

**6** events

**4500** people and pupils engaged

**300** workshop attendees and

**750** park volunteers

# Climate and Nature in action

## Other staff engagement and activities

- In March 2024, members of the Local Development Plan Team assisted the Countryside Rangers plant a mixture of crab apple, rowan, hazel, hawthorn, oak and birch trees on Elrick Hill. In September 2024, the team also assisted the B-Lines Conservation Officer and other volunteers with further plug planting of common rock rose and kidney vetch on the hills and embankments situated around Torry Battery.
- In June 2024 the Climate and Natural Environment Policy Team took part in a FIT count for pollinators assisted by the Aberdeen B-Lines Conservation Officer as part of their team anchor days. Records were collected in real time by the Coordinator for [North East Scotland Biological Records Centre](#) (NESBReC), the Council's partner for biological records and habitat data.
- In April 2024, 441 colleagues responded to our Climate & Nature Staff Survey. 45% of respondents reported that climate change and nature recovery are part of their job role. 89% stated that they often or always take action to reduce waste, and 80% often or always take action to save energy.
- A range of initiatives were carried out by City schools and the Youth Climate Change Group are detailed within the [24/25 Education Climate Change Report](#).
- A staff 'Taking Action on Climate Change' training course continued over 2024/25, 74 employees have attended to date.
- 49 employees completed the internal Climate Change eLearning module titled "Meeting Our Climate Change Duties" between March 2024 and April 2025. 233 employees have completed the training since its launch.
- Organised and led by the Council, the 'Glitterpick' litter picking event aims to make the city more sparkingly clean in the summer months. It involves litter picks starting every hour over 24 hours. In the reporting period the Glitterpick had 40 separate clean-ups from organisations including primary and secondary schools, community groups, council staff and individuals.



### Volunteer and staff days for litter picks

**238** litter picks

**3754** participants carrying  
out litter picks

**2448** bags filled



# Climate and Nature in action

## Land management

- Being a public owner of large areas of land in Aberdeen, the Council has a significant contribution to make to the [Community Planning Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) (LOIP) Stretch Outcome “15 - to have 26% of Aberdeen's land managed or protected for nature by 2026”. Currently, 21.3% of land within the Local Authority boundary is calculated to be managed or protected for nature. This figure is rising due to continued refinement and measurement of what land in the Local Authority boundary is considered to be managed or protected for nature. During 24/25 the Council increased the area of land actively managed or protected for nature through the Spaces for Nature and Aberdeen B-Lines schemes. These schemes cover an area totalling 96.53 hectares. The review of management across the Council estate continues to ensure land is managed more for nature and to capture and store carbon. These benefits are in addition to those these spaces provide for people such as reduced flooding and access to nature.
- The Council planted over 20,000 trees during 24/25; this was some of the highest numbers of tree planting for many years. Around 200 of these were new street trees, which provide important habitat connectivity in built-up areas. Around 9,000 of the trees planted were part of restocking woodlands in recovery from previous storms, still including responding to the effects of Storm Arwen which hit back in 2021. Further information can be found [here](#).

## Aberdeen In Bloom

- The Council and its partnering community organisations, Friends groups, and residents, all contributed to the accolades at the annual Beautiful Scotland awards which were held in Aberdeen in September 2024. The wins add to Aberdeen's extensive success, having won a medal in either Britain in Bloom or Beautiful Scotland every year since 2008 and has been award-winning in the competitions since 1964. In 2024 Aberdeen also celebrated 60 years competing in Britain in Bloom and Beautiful Scotland.
- The [complete list of prizes in 2024 is](#):
  - The Rosebowl, won by Aberdeen Communities Together (led by Aberdeen City Council).
  - Aberdeen Communities Together won the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society Award and the VisitScotland Award for Tourism.
  - Aberdeen Communities Together also won the City Award and a gold certificate, as well as being awarded runner up, along with Aberdeen City Council, in the David Welch Memorial Award for Something Special - for their Meadow in a Box project.
  - Aberdeen City Council also received a runner-up certificate for the Wright Sustainability Award for the Aberdeen B-Lines project.
  - Powis Residents Group received the Residential Community Award and a Silver Gilt certificate.
  - In the non-judged category, Brighter Bucksburn and Cove in Bloom received Certificates of Recognition.

## Key partnerships for climate and nature

Working with partners assists the Council in delivering on statutory duties and to enable effective engagement on the climate and nature emergency. Each of our key partners for biodiversity welcomes the public to work with them on the overall objective of learning about and helping the natural environment.

### North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC)

NESBReC provide information on species and habitat data to the Council to assist us in making decisions relating to nature conservation, land-use planning, development management and site management plans. In the reporting period, NESBReC has also been bringing their expertise to Council working groups. Looking ahead, they will also be a key partner in the Council's approach to developing Nature Networks.

### Dee Catchment Partnership (DCP)

The Dee Catchment Partnership unites some 16 organisations in the shared goal of caring for the river Dee's recovery of nature and climate, in support of sustainable livelihoods on Deeside. The partnership met three times during the reporting period to share information and knowledge on the work and actions taking place in the catchment area. Members from the partnership have also attended Den Burn Restoration Steering Group and provided advice on their experience of working on restoration projects.

### North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership (NESBiP)

The partnership have continued to deliver positive benefits for biodiversity through attending six partner events and hosting four community events themed on pollinators. The biggest event NESBiP hosted was the Spring 2024 seminar on Wild Pollinators in March, with members of the public, organisations and businesses all in attendance to promote awareness and working together to solve the issues affecting pollinators across the NESBiP region.

### Net Zero & Adaptation Board

The Council also supports further citywide partnership working on climate and nature. An Aberdeen Net Zero and Adaptation Board is in place, providing leadership and expertise to support the city transition to net zero and to increase climate resilience. Information on the Board and annual progress updates on city-wide collaborative partnership work are available on the [Net Zero Aberdeen website](#).

### Granite City Good Food – Sustainable Food Places Partnership Aberdeen

The Council is part of the Granite City Good Food Partnership working to progress healthy, sustainable food systems for the city. The partnership progressed application for a gold Sustainable Food Places Award in the reporting period, building on the silver award in 2022. Work to tackle the climate and nature emergency forms part of the accreditation.

### Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) and the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)

Progress on improvement projects to deliver outcomes under the LOIP for climate change, sustainable travel and nature is reflected in the 24/25 Annual Outcome Improvement Report [AOR-24-25.pdf](#)

# Case Study 1: Nature recovery in the City

## Elrick Hill wetland restoration

The Council's Countryside Ranger Service manages 25 countryside sites across Aberdeen City for biodiversity, education and public access. A [Local Nature Conservation Site \(LNCS\)](#) is a non-statutory local designation identified by Local Authorities and protection is afforded through the Council's [Local Development Plan](#). These sites are of local importance for nature conservation. Elrick Hill is a part of the Three Hills LNCS.

The site has an area of [blanket mire](#) which is around 50m long and 20m wide. This wet habitat falls under the overarching classification of blanket bog, which is a [Scottish Biodiversity List](#) priority habitat.

The Council determined, with information gained from a July 2024 ecological survey, that measures should be taken to restore and enhance the wetland area. The project was funded by Nature Restoration Fund money and contracted out to specialist ecological restoration contractor The Habitat People.

The scope of the project included the removal of large birch trees and hand pulling of smaller ones to prevent water uptake. Bracken has already been cut back several times a year on the eastern edge of the wetland for the last three years, which has reduced the spread of this highly invasive species into the sensitive wet habitat. Some hummocks of heather were dug up to provide holes in which water can accumulate, keeping the site wetter.

Monitoring of the wetland is done by the Council's Countryside Rangers during their monthly patrols. This monitoring will observe what plant biodiversity is like, and to monitor the small areas of standing water in the wetland. The results can then be used to plan additional work to progress the restoration of the blanket mire.





## Case study 2: Aberdeen B-Lines

### Aberdeen B-lines

“Aberdeen B-Lines” was a [Buglife](#) partnership project with the Council that aimed to transform areas of Council-owned grassland within the city into nature-rich, pollinator friendly wildflower habitats. The project worked specifically across twelve sites along the coast and the Rivers Don and Dee; in total an area of 12.24 hectares (ha) has been enhanced with a view to establish pollinator friendly habitat. The project created wildflower habitats both through seeding and plug planting, as well as changes in grassland management.

These activities were undertaken with help from volunteers and using locally sourced native wildflower seed and plants. The project also installed two bee banks, engaged local communities via Family Fun Days, school visits, pollinator walks and news articles as well as sessions focused on creating pollinator habitats like bee hotels.

The B-Lines project ran until April 2025. A new partnership project with Buglife with similar scope, *Aberdeen Nectar Networks*, will run in 2025/26. Aberdeen Nectar Networks brings the successes of Aberdeen B-Lines to the Council and additional partners across the city including Robert Gordon University, NHS Grampian and Cove Woodland Trust.

Aberdeen B-Lines was runner up for the Wright Sustainability Award at the 2024 Keep Scotland Beautiful Awards. It has been shortlisted for the Nature of Scotland Awards and the internal Council STAR Awards in 2025.

The “Aberdeen B-Lines” project was supported by the Scottish Government’s Nature Restoration Fund, managed by NatureScot, along with funding from Milkywire, Hugh Fraser Foundation, J & JR Wilson Trust, Nimar Charitable Trust, among others.



## Case study 3: Energy efficient lighting – Marischal College

### Energy Efficient Lighting – Marischal College

The Energy Efficient Lighting project at Marischal College (Aberdeen City Council's main office) involved the replacement of outdated internal lighting systems with modern, energy-efficient lighting and an advanced control system. The primary objectives were to improve the building's energy performance to reduce both cost and carbon emissions.

Implementation officially began in April 2023 and was completed by May 2024. The total investment amounted to £2.810 million provided through a SALIX loan, with ongoing annual operating costs estimated at £289,000. The project was delivered on time and within budget, thanks to effective collaboration among the internal energy and facilities teams alongside external contractors and consultants.

The completed project is expected to deliver an annual carbon saving of 106 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from the year 2024–25 onwards. The key metric for monitoring progress is electricity consumption, allowing the Council to track the effectiveness of the new system over time.

Key benefits include substantial reductions in electricity usage, resulting in notable carbon savings, reduced annual operational costs, as well as improved lighting control and energy management throughout the building.

The project supports Aberdeen's broader climate objectives and provides a replicable model for energy efficiency improvements in other public buildings.



The **lighting replacement in Marischal College** reduces emissions by **106tCo2** annually and provides staff an improved working environment



## Case study 4: District heating – Energy from Waste plant

### District Heating with Heat from Energy from Waste Plant

The District Heating project utilising heat from the Energy from Waste (EfW) plant is a key initiative aimed at decarbonising building heating systems by replacing traditional gas boilers with a sustainable heat source. This project involves supplying a local district heating network with waste heat generated from the EfW facility, offering a more environmentally responsible alternative to fossil fuel-based heating.

Although the official start year precedes 2024, the network initially operated using gas boilers while the EfW plant completed its commissioning phase. Full transition to waste heat occurred in August 2024. The first complete year of projected carbon savings will begin in 2025–26. The system serves several key community sites, including Tullos Community School, Deeside Family Centre, and the Greyhope School and Community Hub.

The project is estimated to deliver an annual carbon reduction of 444 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent, with performance monitored based on the number of building connections to the district heating network. This transition not only reduces reliance on fossil fuels but also promotes the efficient reuse of heat that would otherwise be lost.

Funding for the project is jointly provided by Aberdeen City Council and the Scottish Government, with the council acting as the accountable body overseeing implementation. The initiative aligns with broader strategic goals to reduce emissions from public buildings and improve long-term energy resilience.

Key benefits include a substantial reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the innovative use of energy that would otherwise be wasted. The project exemplifies how municipalities can lead in low-carbon infrastructure development while supporting public services.





## Photo credits

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Front	A field of wildflowers at Aberdeen Beach	Guy Bergman
2	Black and white Candle snuff fungus growing in moss on a dead branch in a woodland	Abbie Ferrar
4	The verge of a foot path in Aberdeen which has white, purple, pink and yellow native wildflowers growing amongst the grass	Lina-Elvira Back
5	A group of people posing for a photo to celebrate winning Beautiful Scotland awards	Norman Adams
5	A group of Council operatives in reflective vests sowing seeds in a field in Aberdeen	Norman Adams
12	A composite picture with lavender flowers in the background of a student with a laptop at a desk having a video conference call.	Lina-Elvira Back
14	A group of people standing by a bed of flowers at Duthie Park wildlife garden	Lina-Elvira Back
17	A bog with water pools and a tree line at Elrick Hill	Lina-Elvira Back
17	A purple Northern marsh orchid flower in a boggy grassy area at Scotstown Moor	Lina-Elvira Back
18	An infographic showing key data and information for the Aberdeen B-Lines project	Buglife Scotland
19	A view of the front of Marischal College building, Broad Street, Aberdeen	Norman Adams
20	A metal sculpture of a tree with leaves in front of Greyhope School and Community Hub	Norman Adams



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2	Net Zero Aberdeen & Aberdeen Adapts	<a href="http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen">http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen</a>
3	Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/12/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/12/contents</a>
3	Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/6/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/6/contents</a>
3	Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/6/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/6/contents</a>
3, 16	Community Planning Aberdeen	<a href="https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/">https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/</a>
3, 10, 15	Local Outcome Improvement Plan	<a href="https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/community-planning-structure/our-plans-and-strategies/local-outcome-improvement-plan/">https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/community-planning-structure/our-plans-and-strategies/local-outcome-improvement-plan/</a>
3	Net Zero Environment and Transport Committee	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=685">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=685</a>
3, 10	Scottish Biodiversity Strategy	<a href="https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scotlands-biodiversity-strategy-2022-2045">https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scotlands-biodiversity-strategy-2022-2045</a>
3	Natural Environment Strategy	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/Natural%20Environment%20Strategy.pdf">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/Natural%20Environment%20Strategy.pdf</a>
3, 10	Biodiversity Duty Report	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-06/ACCBiodiversityDutyReport2020FINALGraphicVersionv2%20%281%29%20%281%29.pdf">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-06/ACCBiodiversityDutyReport2020FINALGraphicVersionv2%20%281%29%20%281%29.pdf</a>
3, 14, 16	North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC)	<a href="https://nesbrec.org.uk/">https://nesbrec.org.uk/</a>
4	Meadow-in-a-box	<a href="https://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/projects/meadow-in-a-box-urban-greening-project/">https://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/projects/meadow-in-a-box-urban-greening-project/</a>
5	Eco-Schools	<a href="https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/eco-schools/">https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/eco-schools/</a>

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8	Biodiversity and the Natural Environment Audit	<a href="http://councilcommittees/documents/s156684/AC2418%20-%20Biodiversity%20and%20the%20Natural%20Environment.pdf">http://councilcommittees/documents/s156684/AC2418%20-%20Biodiversity%20and%20the%20Natural%20Environment.pdf</a>
8	Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=685">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=685</a>
8	Council Carbon Budget 2024/25	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s154003/CarbonBudget2024-25Council6March2024.pdf">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s154003/CarbonBudget2024-25Council6March2024.pdf</a>
9	Net Zero Aberdeen website	<a href="http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen">http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen</a>
9	Resilience Annual Report	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s166974/EP Resilience Annual Report 2025 March.pdf">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s166974/EP Resilience Annual Report 2025 March.pdf</a>
9	Property Level Protection Scheme	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/information-about-flooding/property-level-protection-flood-grant">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/information-about-flooding/property-level-protection-flood-grant</a>
10, 17	Aberdeen City Council Local Nature Conservation Sites	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/natural-heritage">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/natural-heritage</a>
10	LNCS Review at NZET Committee March 2025	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s167430/Review%20of%20Local%20Nature%20Conservation%20Sites%20updated.pdf">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s167430/Review%20of%20Local%20Nature%20Conservation%20Sites%20updated.pdf</a>
10	30x30 Sites	<a href="https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/30-30-and-nature-networks/30-30-explained">https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/30-30-and-nature-networks/30-30-explained</a>
10	Open Space Audit at NZET Committee June 2024	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=685&amp;MId=9062&amp;Ver=4">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=685&amp;MId=9062&amp;Ver=4</a>
10	Open Space resources	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/open-spaces">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/open-spaces</a>
10	Nature Data and Indicators project at NZET Committee October 2023	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=685&amp;MId=8509&amp;Ver=4">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=685&amp;MId=8509&amp;Ver=4</a>
12	Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF)	<a href="https://nescan.org/fund-leaf/">https://nescan.org/fund-leaf/</a>
12	North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCOAN) Hub	<a href="https://nescan.org/">https://nescan.org/</a>

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13	Green Times Magazine	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen/green-times-magazine">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen/green-times-magazine</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/gogreenaberdeen">https://www.facebook.com/gogreenaberdeen</a>
14	24/25 Education Climate Change Report	<a href="https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s170571/24-25%20Education%20Climate%20Change%20Report%20Final.pdf">https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s170571/24-25%20Education%20Climate%20Change%20Report%20Final.pdf</a>
15	Committee Report Trees and Woodland June 2025	<a href="http://councilcommittees/documents/s170180/Committee%20Report%20Trees%20and%20Woodland%20June%202025%20Final.pdf">http://councilcommittees/documents/s170180/Committee%20Report%20Trees%20and%20Woodland%20June%202025%20Final.pdf</a>
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16	NESBiP	<a href="https://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/">https://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/</a>
16	Granite City Good Food Partnership	<a href="https://www.granitecitygoodfood.org/">https://www.granitecitygoodfood.org/</a>
16	Dee Catchment Partnership	<a href="https://www.deepartnership.org/">https://www.deepartnership.org/</a>
16	Net Zero & Adaptation Board	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen/net-zero-and-adaptation-board">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/net-zero-aberdeen/net-zero-and-adaptation-board</a>
16	Annual Outcome Improvement Report 24/25	<a href="https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/AOR-24-25.pdf">https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/AOR-24-25.pdf</a>
17	Local Development Plan	<a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan</a>
17	Blanket Mire/Bog	<a href="https://www.nature.scot/landscapes-and-habitats/habitat-types/mountains-heaths-and-bogs/blanket-bog">https://www.nature.scot/landscapes-and-habitats/habitat-types/mountains-heaths-and-bogs/blanket-bog</a>
17	Scottish Biodiversity List	<a href="https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scottish-biodiversity-list">https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scottish-biodiversity-list</a>
18	Aberdeen B-lines Project	<a href="https://www.buglife.org.uk/projects/aberdeen-b-lines/">https://www.buglife.org.uk/projects/aberdeen-b-lines/</a>
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