



## Reporting on Scottish Biodiversity Duty 2020

Biodiversity and the Care Inspectorate (Level three organisation)

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### Introductory information on public body

The Care Inspectorate is the unified independent scrutiny and improvement body for care, social work and child protection services and has a significant part to play in improving services for adults and children across Scotland. It regulates and inspects care services and carries out social work and child protection inspections. The Care Inspectorate operates from 14 locations across Scotland. Its headquarters are co-located with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) in Dundee. As an office-based organisation, with varying office locations and sizes, it is considered that our primary contribution to the conservation of biodiversity is through the efficient use of the resources available and sustainable suppliers.

Our Executive Team, Resources Committee and Board are committed to being an efficient regulator, not only in terms of the way we provide our core function of improving care services throughout Scotland, but also by ensuring the resources we use are sourced in a sustainable way. We invest in more efficient equipment, recycle where possible and look at improvements in our business practices to meet our Carbon Reduction target and improve sustainability.

To regulate care services, we need to inspect them. This involves a high degree of travel for Inspection staff but through the continual reduction in the lease car CO2 emissions threshold, restriction of hire car grades and priority given to the use of public transport where appropriate, we aim to keep the impact to a minimum. We also promote the use of bicycles through our cycle to work scheme.

### **Actions to protect biodiversity, nature-based solutions, climate change, and connecting people with nature**

The Care Inspectorate has taken a variety of actions to meet its Carbon Management targets and improve sustainability since 2011.

Office Based Improvements:

Our larger offices all have lighting control systems and building management systems, to minimise the waste of energy by the efficient heating and lighting of the offices.

- Voltage Optimisation – to reduce electricity consumption.
- LED Lighting Replacement – to reduce electricity consumption.
- Removal of desk bins – to encourage recycling.
- Cistern Optimisers – to reduce water consumption by toilets.
- Use of recycled paper for all documents and publications.
- Elimination of personal printers to use Multi-functional Devices with mailboxes – to reduce paper use and energy consumption.
- Server Optimisation – reducing the cooling required for server rooms and energy consumption.

- Replacement of equipment with energy efficient ones – reducing energy consumption.
- Business and digital transformation project – reduce paper use and travelling.
- Planters are changed seasonally with diverse plant life to create habitats and food sources for local wildlife.
- Transplanting of replaced flowers from the planters to surrounding flowerbeds when planters are changed – Increase diversity in flowerbeds. All flowerbeds contain trees and shrubs which are wildlife friendly.
- Installation of bee and insect homes at our head office – increase insect activity.
- Introduction of Green Champions scheme to enhance communication and awareness-raising by actively promoting and monitoring environmental projects.

#### Premises Selection:

When there is a lease break, the needs of the organisation are considered. Being an efficient regulator, we look at:

- The size of the office needed, including the number of desks required against our desking strategy.
- Location relative to the services to be visited, to reduce the travel required.
- Property Condition – the better the condition, the less resources needed to maintain it.
- Access to public transport – to allow for ease of access for both users and carers but also to reduce the impact on the environment of our staff commuting to the office.
- Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating – the better the rating, the less resources used in the normal running of the office.
- Planting of trees and shrubs that encourage insect and avian activity.
- Opportunities to improve our carbon footprint and biodiversity by installation of green infrastructures such as wildflower areas, green roofs, living walls, and wildlife gardens.

#### Travel:

- Travel is strictly regulated with approval required from line managers for all but core activities.
- The expectation is that public transport will be used where possible to reduce carbon emissions.
- Improved videoconferencing, Teams and unified communications facilities for remote offices or those managing staff in remote locations, reducing the need to travel for meetings, inspections and supervision events.

- Lease Car option with reducing CO2 emissions threshold to make necessary journeys more efficient.
- Cycle to Work Scheme allowing cheaper access to bicycles for staff to cycle to work where possible.

Altering our working processes:

- Local specialist teams instead of national to reduce business mileage for staff, allowing them to be more productive and reduce fuel usage.
- Inspection Planning – using computer-based planning tools to select the closest Inspector with the correct specialism to make an Inspection, again reducing the business miles covered in conducting their visits.

## **Mainstreaming biodiversity in our organisation**

The Care Inspectorate has a duty under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to help achieve the Scottish Governments target to have net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. The Care Inspectorate began our Carbon Management Programme in 2012. Our principle plan relating to climate change is our Carbon Management Plan (2018-2023). Included in our carbon emissions are our utilities, travel, and waste disposal.

Our Estates Management Plan identified a key issue facing our organisation's carbon management plan as the restrictions in place on our estates by our office lease agreements. There were resource and lease restrictions that meant that measures that could have been undertaken, e.g. estate rationalisation, LED lighting replacement and voltage optimisation, could not be used to their full potential. The Care Inspectorate also works with waste contractors to ensure that we recycle as much of our waste products as possible in local areas

Under our Business Travel and Subsistence Policy the Care Inspectorate aims to reduce our travel related carbon emissions. The Care Inspectorate actively encourages employees to use alternatives to travel such as videoconferencing. Where physical meetings are required, public transport and car sharing are encouraged to reduce travel related carbon emissions.

As a result of a review of our Carbon Management Plan, the Care Inspectorate has introduced a Green Champion scheme to enhance communication and awareness-raising by actively promoting and monitoring environmental projects both locally and among wider stakeholders.

## **Workforce development**

We have registered with Tayside Biodiversity Partnership and attend Resource Efficient Scotland training sessions to promote best practices. Our employees have access to an environmental awareness e-learning module which introduces key concerns that should be recognised by all employees in our organisation. The course makes it clear what is expected of each employee and explains how they can contribute to maintaining an environmentally friendly workplace, and home life.

We recently introduced a Green Champion Scheme to aid in the delivery and promote awareness of environmental projects. Our aim is to have a green champion present in each of our 13 offices to provide a local support. Green Champions are encouraged to complete the CPD Certified Green Champions training course provided by Zero Waste Scotland to improve resource efficiency and environmental performance of our organisation.

The Care Inspectorate encourages employees to participate in volunteering activities. While this has been limited during the last year due to the Covid-19 outbreak, we are hoping that more volunteer opportunities will be available in the future. These volunteer days will include outdoor activities with a positive impact on biodiversity conservation, such as litter picking, native tree planting and path building.

We also have a Healthy Working Lives (HWL) group that promotes all aspects of healthy working and that has included pedometer challenges, to encourage staff to get out and walk more. We also have an annual photographic competition for staff which features Scottish wildlife and countryside.

## **Research and monitoring**

In accordance with our Carbon Management Plan, the Care Inspectorate's target is to have reduced its carbon emissions by 28% by 2023. This equates to a reduction of 956 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2023. Included in our recorded carbon emissions are our utilities, travel, and waste disposal. Any improvements we make are monitored through our annual sustainability reporting requirements, measuring in our performance against targets set in our Carbon Management Plan.

The Care Inspectorate also encourages employees to be aware of their carbon footprint in their personal lives. Our Healthy Working Lives group raised awareness of species conservation and the impact of our personal life choices on carbon emissions by means of an article on our internal news. Employees were encouraged to complete the WWF carbon footprint calculator tool to identify their impact on the environment and to receive information on possible improvements that could be made.

## **Biodiversity highlights and challenges**

The main challenges to our organisation are the limitations in biodiversity opportunities due to office lease restrictions and our carbon emissions due to travel requirements. After carbon costs associated with having offices, e.g. gas, electricity, water and recycling, travel is our largest. Our highlight would be our business and digital transformation project which will enable our employees to use Teams and other unified communications rather than travelling to meetings. The reduction in staff travel in the performance of their duties and management of staff should have a significant effect on our sustainability and contribute to an improved environment for all. During the Covid-19 outbreak our staff have been working from home and become accustomed with using videoconferencing and our online platform. We are estimating that more employees may be homeworkers thereby reducing our utilities and travel environmental impact.

In the future, we are hoping to get more involved with local and national biodiversity initiatives for example the Bumblebee Conservation Society. We are planning to install some bee and insect homes at our head office to encourage insect activity in addition to our seasonal species-specific planters. When looking at future office leases we will take into consideration the ability to improve our biodiversity by opportunities to install green infrastructures, such as wildflower areas, green roofs, living walls, and wildlife gardens.

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