

Report

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	26 February 2020
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	South Lanarkshire's State of the Environment Report 2019
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ inform the Committee of the completion of the South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report 2019
- ◆ report on the key findings from the Report

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the State of the Environment Report 2019 be approved and disseminated across the Council and to relevant Council partners and external agencies for use in the preparation of plans, policies, programmes and strategies and their Strategic Environmental Assessment and as an information resource.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act, 2005 requires all public bodies, including the Council, to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) of all plans, policies, programmes and strategies (plans). A wide range of Council led plans have, or are undergoing SEA, including the Community Plan, Connect, Local Development Plan, Local Transport Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy.
- 3.2. An integral part of the SEA process is the identification and monitoring of a wide range of environmental issues. The South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report is the body of data used to monitor and report Council activity against key environmental indicators. It is the recognised source for the core data which allows SEAs on our plans to be undertaken.
- 3.3. With the Scottish Government declaring a climate emergency in May 2019, the State of the Environment Report will be a vital resource in outlining South Lanarkshire's progress in reducing its contribution to global warming and associated impacts from climate change on communities, the natural environment and inclusive growth.

- 3.4. The first comprehensive State of the Environment Report was prepared in 2009 and has been reviewed biennially to support SEAs and to fulfil the Council's monitoring obligations. The Report provides an effective means of tracking changes in the local environment. This ensures that the Council not only has a clear understanding of the current condition of the local environment but also has the accurate environmental baseline data needed to allow its statutory SEA and monitoring work to be undertaken. The Report also helps to promote awareness of local environmental issues and priorities.
- 3.5. The Report itself provides and assesses data across a suite of SEA environmental issues and also includes transport. The SEA environmental issues are:
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ◆ Population and human health | ◆ Biodiversity, fauna and flora |
| ◆ Historic and cultural heritage | ◆ Material assets and landscape |
| ◆ Waste | ◆ Soil |
| ◆ Air, noise and light | ◆ Water |
| ◆ Climate change | |

The trends identified across these issues allow the Council to assess the overall condition of South Lanarkshire's environment. The key indicators included also help to identify where there is an opportunity to improve environmental issues and the progress being made towards a sustainable South Lanarkshire.

- 3.6. Officers from Community and Enterprise and Education Resources have 'converted' the State of the Environment Report to Glow, the digital platform used by all South Lanarkshire Council's schools to be used as a teaching resource. The State of the Environment Glow site was launched in May 2019 and will be further updated following approval of this report.

4. Development of the Report

- 4.1. The 2019 edition of the State of the Environment Report has been prepared by the Council's Planning Officer (SEA) within Community and Enterprise Resources with data and other contributions sourced from across the Council, partners, government bodies and external agencies. Development of the Report has been overseen by the Corporate SEA Working Group.
- 4.2. The report requires to be formally approved by the Executive Committee as its approval has not been delegated to officers. The Report and its findings will be promoted to a wide range of stakeholders including the Community Planning Partnership Board, and presented to other groups and forums upon request.

5. Key Findings

- 5.1. There are 55 indicators in the Report which are each assigned a status of 'good', 'fair' or 'poor', and traffic lighted as green, amber and red, respectively. Each of these indicators also has a directional trend of either 'improving', 'no change' or 'deteriorating'. The basis for the status identified within the tables, and accorded to each indicator along with its trend, is demonstrated by the information contained within the explanation column included as part of Appendix 1. The status of each indicator is based on an opinion agreed by the Corporate SEA Working Group. There are two indicators where there is insufficient data to assign a status and trend, these are raised bogs and light pollution.

- 5.2 The findings from the Report are illustrated in the following table and summarised in Appendix 1.

Status/Trend	Improving	Unchanged	Deteriorating	Total	
Good	15	9	0	24	43.6%
Fair	12	9	2	23	41.8%
Poor	6	2	0	8	14.6%
Total	33	20	2	55	
	60.0%	36.6%	3.6%		100%

- 5.3. The Report highlighted that 24 (43.6%) of the key indicators had 'good' status and that 15 of these have a trend that is improving. These include an increase in life expectancy and our renewable energy capacity: a decrease in vacant and derelict land and traffic congestion and a reduction in our waste generation and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 5.4. Nine of the indicators with a good status had an 'unchanged' trend from the previous edition. These include the number of various historic and cultural assets and the number of train passengers at our rail stations.
- 5.5. There are 23 (41.8%) indicators with a 'fair' status, 12 of which have an improving trend. These cover a wide range of environmental issues and indicators, including the condition of the road network which continues to improve due to additional funding, improvements to our woodlands and greenspace and our energy consumption.
- 5.6. The Report identifies nine indicators with a 'fair' status which have an 'unchanged' trend. This is because the environmental issues have stabilised, such as the number of noise complaints received by the Council, or, where there are limitations on available data. Two indicators are bordering on falling into the 'poor' category. These relates to a continuous drop in bus patronage and a continuous increase in river flow rates which, if linked to the increased annual precipitation rates associated with climate change, could result in increased flood risk.
- 5.7. Eight (14.6%) of the indicators, based on an assessment of the information contained in the State of the Environment Report are judged to be of 'poor' status. Of these, six are improving and the other two have a trend which is 'unchanged'. The indicators which are poor but improving are related to health and the prevalence of early and premature death from coronary heart disease, cancer and stroke, long range pollutants originating outwith South Lanarkshire, for example, Grangemouth refinery, flooding and walking and cycling. The indicators with poor status and unchanged trend relate to the number of alcohol related deaths and traffic emissions.
- 5.8. There are no indicators in the 2019 Report where the status is poor and the trend deteriorating.
- 5.9. An analysis of the changes from the 2011 Report highlights continuous improvement in thirteen indicators. These include life expectancy, health (coronary heart disease), environmental waste, greenhouse gas emissions and walking and cycling. Improvement has been sustained in nine indicators, including countryside access, and emissions and use of public transport (rail). The trend within nine indicators has stabilised. These relate to human health (cancer, stroke and alcohol related deaths),

ancient woodlands, local air quality and traffic congestion. No indicators have shown a deterioration within the same timeframe. These changes are summarised in Appendix 2.

- 5.10. The nine indicators where changes were evidenced between the 2017 Report and the 2019 editions are also highlighted in Appendix 2. Improvement was sustained for groundwater and wetlands and for public transport (rail). There was a stabilisation in respect to health (cancer and stroke), local air quality, road traffic congestion and road safety. Continuous improvement was noted for water quality and walking and cycling.
- 5.11. Following Committee approval, the State of the Environment Report will be uploaded to the Council website. It is the intention to develop infographics to relay the key messages from the Report to the general public.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. None.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. None.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 8.1 The State of the Environment Report is a valuable resource for the Council and partners in strategic planning. It provides the environmental baseline used in the Strategic Environmental Assessment of all Council led plans, policies, programmes and strategies.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations contained in this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a significant change to an existing policy, function or strategy, and therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 10.2. The draft State of the Environment Report has been subject to internal consultation, facilitated through the Corporate SEA Working Group. Comments received have been reviewed, and where appropriate, the Report has been amended. Following approval by the Executive Committee it is intended to further disseminate the Report to relevant partners and stakeholders and to make it available to the general public through the corporate website.

Michael McGlynn

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

16 January 2020

Link(s) to Council Values and Objectives

- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable
- ◆ Make communities safer, stronger and sustainable

Previous References

- ◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ◆ South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report 2017
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Council Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2017 - 2022

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:

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South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report 2019

Current status: Good

Environmental Issue	Indicator	Status and Trend	Explanation
Population and human health	General population	↑	Life expectancy (male) – Life expectancy for men has increased over recent years and is comparable with the Scottish average.
Population and human health	General population	↑	Life expectancy (female) – Life expectancy for women has increased in recent years, and is just below the Scottish average.
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Local Nature Reserves	↑	The Council's Nature Reserve at Langlands Moss is in good condition. Considerable improvement was made to the Reserve in partnership with the Friends of Langlands Moss. Further potential LNR sites have been identified.
Material assets and landscape	Built facilities	↑	Schools have been renewed or modernised. There are a wide range of sport, leisure and cultural facilities in South Lanarkshire.
Material assets and landscape	Vacant and derelict land	↑	The area of vacant and derelict land decreased by 37% since 2003 through re-development. The number of these sites also decreased.
Waste	Environmental waste	↑	Street cleanliness in the area continues to improve and satisfaction levels remain above the Scottish average. The Council continues to effectively respond to reports of abandoned cars and flytipping.
Waste	Waste generation	↑	The level of waste generated by households continues to reduce with individual households now producing an average of 0.98 tonnes per annum.
Waste	Waste management	↑	The Council continues to record high levels of recycling at its Household Waste and Recycling Centres with 62.5% of materials collected at the sites recycled or composted in 2018/2019.
Waste	Waste treatment	↑	By recycling, composting and thermally treating waste, the Council has increased the amount of waste being diverted from landfill.
Water	Water pollution	↑	Point source pollution remains a threat to the quality of the water environment. This is closely monitored by SEPA. Licensed activities continue to increase year on year.
Climate change	Environmental awareness	↑	The Council is implementing its Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy. All schools are registered with the Eco-Schools programme and work to promote environmental awareness and sustainability in schools continues.
Climate change	Greenhouse gas emissions	↑	Carbon emissions continue to decrease in South Lanarkshire year on year. Emissions per capita remain below the Scottish average.
Climate change	Renewable capacity	↑	South Lanarkshire's renewable energy capacity increased by over 88% since 2011. The area is an energy exporter.
Transport	Congestion	↑	There has been a decrease in residents experiencing congestion compared to baseline figures since completion of major road improvement works across the area.
Transport	Road safety	↑	The Council is on track to meet the Government's 2020 casualty reduction targets. The overall number of casualties has reduced in the last two years.
Historic and cultural heritage	Battlefields	↔	The number of registered battlefields on the Inventory of Historic Battlefields remains the same as the previous Report.
Historic and cultural	Gardens and Designed	↔	The number of Gardens and Designed Landscapes areas in South Lanarkshire remains unchanged since 2016.

Environmental Issue	Indicator	Status and Trend	Explanation		
heritage	Landscapes				
Historic and cultural heritage	Historical heritage	↔	The area has a wealth of historic and tourist attractions, including the New Lanark World Heritage Site. These continue to attract large numbers of visitors to South Lanarkshire.		
Material assets and landscape	Landscape	↔	The importance of quality landscapes in the area continues to be recognised and protected through the local planning process.		
Soils	Soil capacity	↔	There has not been a significant level of development within the green belt. As a result, there is no evidence to suggest that soil capacity has been affected.		
Soils	Soil quality	↔	Current data indicates good soil quality in a Scottish or regional context. At present there is limited data on soil quality specifically within South Lanarkshire.		
Air, noise and light	Airborne nuisance	↔	Airborne nuisance complaints remain low and variable. Odour remains the main nuisance reported to the Council.		
Transport	Public transport	↔	Rail – The number of train passengers at South Lanarkshire rail stations has remained consistent year on year.		
Transport	Traffic growth	↔	Road traffic growth is slowly increasing linked to economic improvements.		
↑	Improving	↔	No change	↓	Deteriorating

Current status: Fair

Environmental issue	Indicator	Status and trend	Explanation
Population and human health	General population	↑	Population – The area's population is growing at a faster rate than the Scottish average, with the proportion of older population showing the greatest increase. However, the population of people aged less than 25 years is declining.
Population and human health	Healthy lifestyles	↑	Environmental recreation – Although the rate of South Lanarkshire residents undertaking recreation activities is low, there is continuous improvement in their rate of participation.
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Ancient woodland	↑	There is no change in the area of ancient semi natural woodland cover. There is limited data on the overall condition of this habitat. However, 32 ha of plantation has been removed from Council owned ancient woodland sites.
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Native woodland	↑	Although total native woodland cover is increasing, further work is required to improve connectivity of habitats, expanding native broadleaf woodland cover.
Historic and cultural heritage	Archaeological sites	↑	The number of archaeological sites recorded across South Lanarkshire continues to increase year on year.
Historic and cultural heritage	Built heritage	↑	The number of Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas remain constant. The number of Listed buildings and buildings on the 'Buildings at Risk' register have reduced.
Material assets and landscape	Recreational land	↑	Although redevelopment has increased specific recreational provision further greenspace improvements are required, particularly through linkage with other issues including biodiversity and habitat connectivity, health and social and environmental deprivation.
Soils	Contaminated land	↑	Since 2005, 30% of potentially contaminated sites have been investigated and remediated under the planning system.
Air, noise and light	Local air quality	↑	Air quality across South Lanarkshire is generally good and improving but there are a few areas in excess of national limits set to protect human health. There are three Air Quality Management Areas in South Lanarkshire.
Water	Water quality	↑	The number of rivers achieving High/Good overall status under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) has significantly increased since the last Report.
Climate change	Energy consumption	↑	Both gas and electricity consumption continue to decrease in South Lanarkshire. Average domestic consumption per household is slightly above the national average.
Transport	Road network condition	↑	The condition of the road network continues to improve due to additional funding from the Council's Roads Investment Plan.
Population and human health	Healthy lifestyles	↔	Environmental deprivation – There is a relationship between those areas suffering from environmental deprivation and low SIMD score. No new data is available at the time of publication.
Population and human health	Healthy lifestyles	↔	Lifestyle – No new data is available on the number of residents who report on their health condition/status.
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Designated areas	↔	Not many sites have been surveyed since the previous report. Although there has been some isolated improvement, in general the condition of the designated features remains similar to previous reports.

Environmental issue	Indicator	Status and trend	Explanation		
Material assets and landscape	Countryside access	↔	The extensive path network is deemed to meet the area's needs, however, there remain concerns about the condition and standards of paths and infrastructure.		
Material assets and landscape	Minerals	↔	Minerals remain an economically important resource across South Lanarkshire. Closed sites are being restored in a manner that will help to enhance the environment.		
Soils	Land use	↔	The available data on soil use is limited and outdated. Work is ongoing nationally to address this data gap.		
Air, noise and light	Noise	↔	The number of noise complaints received by the Council has increased in recent years. The majority of complaints relate to domestic noise. Two areas in South Lanarkshire have 'Quiet Area' status.		
Air, noise and light	Point source emissions	↔	The number of permits issued for industrial activities in South Lanarkshire by SEPA has remained consistent since the last Report.		
Water	Groundwater and wetlands	↔	The status of groundwater bodies in South Lanarkshire is unchanged since the previous Report. The data available on ponds and wetlands remains limited.		
Water	River flow	↓	The annual water flow rates in the rivers across the region have continually increased. This increase is closely linked to the increase in annual precipitation rates.		
Transport	Public transport	↓	Bus – The bus patronage figures published in the Scottish Transport Statistics (2018) indicate a fall of 29% in the ten years between 2007/08 and 2017/18 in bus patronage within the South West and Strathclyde area which also includes Dumfries and Galloway.		
↑	Improving	↔	No change	↓	Deteriorating

Current status: Poor

Current Status: 100%

Environmental issue	Indicator	Status and trend	Explanation		
Population and human health	Health	↑	Coronary heart disease – Remains a major source of early or premature deaths. The South Lanarkshire mortality ratio is slightly lower than the Scottish average.		
Population and human health	Health	↑	Cancer – Continues to be the main cause of death for those aged less than 75 years. Death rates are slightly higher than the Scottish average.		
Population and human health	Health	↑	Stroke – Remains a major cause of death for those aged less than 75 years. Strokes accounted for fewer deaths in South Lanarkshire when compared to Scotland as a whole.		
Air, noise and light	Long-range pollutants	↑	There are no identified long range pollutant emitters in South Lanarkshire. Long-range pollutants originating outwith South Lanarkshire remain a concern.		
Water	Flooding	↑	Severe weather events have resulted in increased flood incidents in the area. The Council's approach to flood management continues to improve.		
Transport	Walking and cycling	↑	There has been a slight increase in the percentage of people walking and cycling. The Council is implementing its Cycling Strategy and its Core Path Plan to promote active travel.		
Population and human health	Alcohol related deaths	↔	The number of alcohol related deaths has remained consistent over recent years.		
Climate change	Transport emissions	↔	Fuel consumption and kilometres travelled have fallen for personal road use although at a slower rate than other sectors. There was an increase in freight consumption due to the rise in online retail consumerism. Vehicles are more energy efficient and less polluting and the Council continues to promote infrastructure for electric vehicles.		
↑	Improving	↔	No change	↓	Deteriorating

Changes from 2011 SOE Report

Environmental issue	Indicator	Status and trend					Comment
		2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	
Population and human health	General population (Life expectancy male)	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	General population (Life expectancy female)	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	Health (Coronary heart disease)	↓	↓	↔	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	
	Health (Cancer)	↑	↓	↔	↔	↑	Stabilised
		Fair	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	
	Health (Stroke)	↓	↓	↔	↔	↑	Stabilised
		Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	
	Alcohol related deaths	↓	↔	↑	↔	↔	Stabilised
		Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor		
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Designated areas	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	Improvement sustained
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
	Ancient woodland	↔	↔	↔	↑	↑	Stabilised
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
Historic and cultural heritage	Built heritage	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
	Battlefields	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	Improvement sustained
		Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	Historical heritage	↓	↔	↔	↔	↔	Improvement sustained
		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
Material assets and landscape	Recreational land	↔	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
	Countryside access	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	Improvement sustained
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
Waste	Waste generation	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	

Environmental issue	Indicator	Status and trend					Comment
		2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	
	Environmental waste	↔	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Good	
Air, noise and light	Noise	↓	↔	↔	↔	↔	Stabilised
		Poor	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
	Local air quality	↓	↓	↓	↔	↑	Stabilised
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
Water	Water quality	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
	Groundwater and wetlands	↓	↔	↑	↑	↔	Improvement sustained
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
	Flooding	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	
Climate change	Greenhouse gas emissions	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	Traffic growth	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	Improvement sustained
		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	Traffic emissions	↔	↑	↑	↔	↔	Improvement sustained
		Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	
	Environmental awareness	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	Continuous improvement
		Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Good	
Transport	Congestion	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	Stabilised
		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	Road safety	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Stabilised
		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	Public transport (Bus)	↑	↔	↔	↓	↓	Deteriorating
		Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	
	Public transport (Rail)	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	Improvement sustained
		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
	Walking and cycling	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	Continuous improvement
		Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	