

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Executive Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>16 May 2018</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>South Lanarkshire's State of the Environment Report</b>
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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 2017.
- ◆ 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 2017 be approved; and
- (2) that the contents of the report be disseminated across the Council and to relevant Council partners and external agencies for use in the preparation of strategies, policies and plans 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. 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. 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.

3.4. 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 |
| ♦ Historical 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 in the Report also provide a means of identifying where there is an opportunity to improve environmental issues and the progress being made towards a sustainable South Lanarkshire.

3.5. Following the 2011 update, data from the State of the Environment Report was edited and uploaded to a dedicated site within Glow (the Scottish Government's national intranet site for education) to be used as a teaching resource. The State of the Environment Glow site has been accessible by students and teachers across all schools in South Lanarkshire since 2010. It was further enhanced following publication of the 2015 Report and will again be refreshed following approval of this Report.

3.6. The South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report has been cited as an example of good practice in SEA research carried out on behalf of the Scottish Government and the statutory Consultation Authorities, Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (Land Use Consultants Ltd, October 2017).

#### **4. Development of the Report**

4.1. The State of the Environment Report 2017 has been prepared by the Council's SEA Officer 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 have been presented to the Sustainable Development Member Officer Group and the Sustainability Partnership. It will be promoted to a wide range of stakeholders, including the Community Planning Board, the Sustainable Development Co-ordination Group and other groups on 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 a subjective 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.

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

Status/Trend	Improving	Unchanged	Deteriorating	Total	
Good	14	8	2	24	43.6%
Fair	11	10	2	23	41.8%
Poor	3	5	0	8	14.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 5.3. The Report highlighted that 24 (43.6%) of the key indicators had 'good' status and that 14 of these have a trend that is improving. These include an increase in life expectancy, our renewable energy capacity and people travelling by train: a decrease in vacant and derelict land and a reduction in our waste generation, greenhouse gas emissions and traffic growth.
- 5.4. Two of the indicators with a good status had a deteriorating trend. These were an increase in the number of people experiencing congestion, mainly due to the major road improvement works across the area, and an unfortunate increase in fatal and serious road casualties in the last few years.
- 5.5. There are 23 (41.8%) indicators with a 'fair' status, 11 of which have an improving trend. These cover a wide range of environmental issues and indicators, including the condition of the road network, improvements to our woodlands and greenspace and our energy consumption.
- 5.6. The Report identifies 10 indicators with a 'fair' status which are stabilised because progress has stalled or no new data is available. A further two indicators are bordering on falling into the 'poor' category. These represent the significant reduction in the number of passengers using public bus services and an 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 three are improving and the other five have a trend which is unchanged. The indicators which are poor but improving are long range pollutants, flooding and coronary heart disease. Three of the five indicators with poor status and unchanged trend relate to human health and the causes of early and premature death from cancer and stroke and alcohol related deaths. The remaining indicators with this trend are walking and cycling and traffic emissions.
- 5.8. There are no indicators in the 2017 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 twelve indicators. These include life expectancy, healthy lifestyles, waste generation, greenhouse gas emissions and environmental awareness. Improvement has been sustained in seven indicators, including natural and historical heritage, noise, traffic growth and emissions. The trend within six indicators has stabilised. These relate to human health, our ancient woodlands and local air quality. However, analysis indicates deterioration for three indicators, all related to transport; congestion, road safety and the reduction in use of public bus services. These changes are summarised in Appendix 2.

- 5.10. The ten indicators where changes were evidenced between the 2015 Report and the 2017 edition are also highlighted in Appendix 2. Improvement was sustained for countryside access, environmental recreation, traffic growth and traffic emissions. There was a stabilisation in respect to coronary heart disease, alcohol related deaths, ancient woodland and local air quality. There was deterioration in respect of road traffic congestion and the use of public bus services.

## **6. Employee Implications**

- 6.1. None.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1. None.

## **8. Other Implications**

- 8.1. The State of the Environment Report is a valuable resource for the Council and partners in strategic planning and in the undertaking of Strategic Environmental Assessments of policies, plans, programmes and strategies.
- 8.2. There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations contained in this report.

## **9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 9.1. 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.
- 9.2. 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)**

18 April 2018

## **Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/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 2017

Current status: Good

Environmental Issue	Indicator	Status and Trend	Explanation
Population and human health	General population	↑	<b>Life expectancy (male)</b> – Life expectancy for men has increased over recent years and is comparable with the Scottish average.
Population and human health	General population	↑	<b>Life expectancy (female)</b> – 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	↑	The majority of schools have been renewed or modernised, however, their use as community hubs should be monitored. 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 has decreased by 34% in the last decade through re-development. The number of these sites also decreased.
Waste	Environmental waste	↑	Street cleanliness in the area continues to improve with South Lanarkshire maintaining the third highest ranking of all Scottish local authorities in the Street Cleanliness Score in 2015/2016.
Waste	Waste generation	↑	The level of waste generated in the area continues to reduce with individual households now producing an average of 1.03 tonnes per annum.
Waste	Waste management	↑	Recycling services continue to improve with residents now able to recycle a full range of key materials at the kerbside.
Waste	Waste treatment	↑	The level of recycling and composting of waste has continually increased across South Lanarkshire, with more than half of all household waste recycled or composted in 2016/2017. Waste disposal via landfill continues to reduce.
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 preparing a new 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 are notably below the Scottish average.
Climate change	Renewable capacity	↑	South Lanarkshire's renewable energy capacity increased by 85% since 2011. The area is an energy exporter.
Transport	Public transport	↑	<b>Rail</b> – There is a significant increase in the number of train passengers at South Lanarkshire rail stations year on year.
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 heritage	Gardens and Designed Landscapes	↔	The number of Gardens and Designed Landscapes areas in South Lanarkshire has slightly reduced because Hamilton Palace was removed from the Inventory in 2016.

Environmental Issue	Indicator	Status and Trend	Explanation		
Historic and cultural heritage	Historical heritage	↔	The area has a wealth of historical 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 the 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	Traffic growth	↔	Road traffic growth is slowly increasing linked to economic improvements.		
Transport	Congestion	↓	There has been a decrease in residents experiencing congestion compared to baseline figures but an increase over recent years. This was largely due to major road improvement works across the area.		
Transport	Road safety	↓	Although the Council is currently on track to meet the Government's 2020 casualty reduction targets, there was an increase in fatal and serious casualties in the last two years.		
↑	Improving	↔	No change	↓	Deteriorating

**Current status: Fair**

Environmental issue	Indicator	Status and trend	Explanation
Population and human health	General population	↑	<b>Population</b> – 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	↑	<b>Environmental recreation</b> – 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, 36ha 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	↑	There is no change to the number of Scheduled Monuments and conservation areas since the last Report. Listed buildings and buildings on the 'Buildings at Risk' register have slightly 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, 29% of identified contaminated sites have been investigated and remediated under the planning system. 88% of all potentially contaminated sites have undergone preliminary investigation.
Water	Groundwater and wetlands	↑	The status of groundwater bodies in South Lanarkshire continues to improve. The data available on ponds and wetlands remains limited.
Climate change	Energy consumption	↑	Although both gas and electricity consumption continue to decrease in South Lanarkshire, the domestic consumption per household remains 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	↔	<b>Environmental deprivation</b> – There is a relationship between those areas suffering from environmental deprivation and low SIMD score. No new data is available.
Population and human health	Healthy lifestyles	↔	<b>Lifestyle</b> – 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.
Material assets and landscape	Countryside access	↔	Although the extensive path network is deemed to meet the area's needs, there remain concerns about the condition and standards of paths and infrastructure.
Material assets and	Minerals	↔	Minerals remain an economically important resource across South Lanarkshire. Closed sites are being

Environmental issue	Indicator	Status and trend	Explanation		
landscape			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	Local air quality	↔	Air quality across South Lanarkshire is generally good but there are a few areas in excess of national limits set to protect human health. Two new Air Quality Management Areas have been declared since the last Report.		
Air, noise and light	Noise	↔	The number of noise complaints has increased slightly 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	↔	There has been an increase in the number of permits issued for industrial activities in South Lanarkshire by SEPA.		
Water	Water quality	↔	There has been a slight decrease in the proportion of rivers achieving High/Good status under the Water Framework Directive (WFD).		
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	↓	<b>Bus</b> –The percentage of people travelling by bus has fallen since 2009/2010. This trend is replicated across Scotland.		
↑	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.		
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 due to the additional resources provided to implement statutory requirements.		
Population and human health	Health	↔	Cancer – Continues to be the main cause of death for those aged less than 75 years. Death rates are higher than the Scottish average.		
Population and human health	Health	↔	Stroke – Remains a major cause of death for those aged less than 75 years. The standard mortality ratio in South Lanarkshire is slightly higher than the Scottish average.		
Population and human health	Alcohol related deaths	↔	The number of alcohol related deaths has slightly increased in recent years.		
Climate change	Transport emissions	↔	Fuel consumption and kilometres travelled have both fallen although at a slower rate than other sectors. Vehicles are becoming more energy efficient and less polluting contributing to a 7% reduction in transport emissions since 2005.		
Transport	Walking and cycling	↔	Data from the Scottish Household Survey indicate a reduction in the percentage of people walking and cycling. The Council is implementing its Cycling Strategy and its Core Path Plan to promote active travel.		
↑	Improving	↔	No change	↓	Deteriorating

## Changes from 2011 SOE Report

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

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