NatureScot
Scotland's Nature Agency

# Title: New Statement of Intent with the Green Action Trust

**Date: 24 August 2022**

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| **Purpose:** | Information |
| **How does this link with our corporate priorities** | The Green Action Trust is a long-standing partner of NatureScot with lead responsibility within the Environment and Economy Leaders Group in Scottish Government for the Central Scotland Green Network. The development of this statement provides the basis for better and more efficient working arrangements between our organisations thereby supporting the delivery of our corporate objectives to protect, restore and value nature. Its implementation will also allow us during this corporate plan period to develop the more strategic and enabling role in urban and peri-urban areas we aspire to. |
| **Summary:** | NatureScot and the [Green Action Trust](https://greenactiontrust.org/) (GAT) have signed a high level statement of intent that sets out the key topics which we will work together on, including:   * nature restoration projects * open space, green and nature networks * Water Resilient Places * NHS Greenspace and biodiversity * Wee Forests and related urban woodland initiatives * data, knowledge and information exchange * communications   In developing the statement, we have set out more clearly our respective roles (NatureScot – strategic; fund manager; advisor; GAT – project development and delivery). We expect these roles and topics to evolve over the lifetime of the statement. |
| **Actions:** | Implementation of the statement will depend on regular dialogue between our organisations to take forward the key areas of work set out in Annex A of the statement. An annual CEO meeting will be used keep the statement under review. |
| **Recommendations:** | Board are asked to welcome the development of this statement and to support its implementation |
| **Report Author(s):** | Pete Rawcliffe, Head of People and Places |
| **Sponsor:** | Francesca Osowska – CEO |
| **Appendices**: | Annex 1 – Statement of Intent |

**Annex 1 – Statement of Intent**

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**Working together for a Nature positive Scotland**

**A statement of intent between Green Action Trust and NatureScot**

**Purpose**

This statement provides the basis for collaborative working between our organisations and identifies the key areas of our work where we believe that closer co-operation will allow us to realise our shared vision for a nature positive, fair and net zero Scotland.

**Context**

**The Green Action Trust (GAT)** is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registration Number SC015341. Its ambition is to enable and deliver an environment which: adapts to our future climate; enhances and restores nature and biodiversity; fosters healthy lifestyles and wellbeing; and supports a sustainable economy. We will achieve this by influencing our partners, and by working collaboratively to deliver projects and services that build equitable, resilient communities and a greener country.

**NatureScot (Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH))** is Scotland’s nature agency. It is a non-departmental public body, established under the Natural Heritage (Scotland) Act 1991 responsible for advising Scottish Ministers on all matters relating to the conservation and enhancement of the natural heritage, and for fostering its enjoyment, understanding and sustainable use. Its remit covers biodiversity, landscape, access rights, and the sustainable management of deer in Scotland.

Both organisations have a common interest in achieving a nature positive, fair and net zero Scotland. We believe that:

* our environment makes a vital contribution to our economic wellbeing, our health and our quality of life;
* climate change and biodiversity loss are linked and positive action at scale and pace is needed to protect and restore our environment so that it delivers all that it can for the people who live and work in Scotland;
* they need to work with and empower communities, land managers, businesses, and the public sector to deliver the scale of changes needed

We have a long history of working collaboratively on the planning and management of blue-green infrastructure, paths and greenspace networks. We share a common endeavour to transform central Scotland through the implement of the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN), Europe’s largest green network project for people and nature. We also have a shared commitment to positively impact across the whole of Scotland.

**Aims**

The Aims of this statement are as follows:

1. To **increase understanding and dialogue** between our organisations
2. To identify the joint priorities for:
   1. **developing and implementing** key environmental projects, programmes, services and initiatives
   2. **maximising the inward investment** for key environmental projects, programmes, services and initiatives
   3. **engaging** with others including all appropriate stakeholders, partners and communities of interest
3. To **share data, research and relevant information**, as appropriate
4. To promote the importance we place on **delivering the CSGN** in our corporate planning and external communications

**Key areas of Joint working**

To take these aims forward, during the period between now (date of signing) and the end of the financial year 2025-2026, key areas of joint working, which will take place within the Central Scotland Green Network area, and elsewhere, will include:

Nature restoration projects

Open space, green and nature networks

Water Resilient Places

NHS Greenspace and biodiversity

Wee Forests and related urban woodland initiatives

Data, Knowledge and Information exchange

Communications

Further details on each of these eight areas is contained in Annex A.

**Review**

In those very rare cases where there is disagreement between our organisations, we will work to find a resolution through discussion and the application of the spirit and principles of this statement.

Progress on the joint areas of work set out in Annex A will be kept under quarterly review by lead officials in both organisations and though an annual meeting between respective Chief Executive Officers.

The statement will be formally reviewed during the 2025- 2026 financial year to inform discussion on NatureScot’s next corporate plan.

 Signature of NatureScot's CEO - Francesca Osowska

3rd August 2022

**Annex A - Key areas of joint working to 2025-2026**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area/Theme** | | **NatureScot** | **Green Action Trust** | | |
| **Nature restoration projects** | Develop a strategic approach to nature restoration in the CSGN area (with reference to Glasgow City Region model).  Identify and deliver a pipeline of quality projects for public and private funding streams  Develop a portfolio of VDL restoration projects to demonstrate the benefits of nature-based solutions. | | | | CSGN  Focus |
| Manage relevant SG public funding  streams. | | | With relevant partners, develop and help  deliver high quality applications for habitat  restoration projects for Scottish and  UK funding. |
| **Open space, green and nature networks** | Provide strategic leadership and support to the CSGN Partner Group and Local Authorities to increase commitment to delivery of the national development by all relevant bodies  Agree a joint Development Planning Protocol that sets out our respective contributions to development planning in the CSGN Area.(following clarification of how our respective organisations fit into the new LDP system).  Prepare joint “standing guidance” or similar to local authorities to support implementation of CSGN through development planning | | | | CSGN  Only |
| Support the development of efficient approaches to network delivery which maximises outcomes for people and nature in CSGN and elsewhere in Scotland | | | | CSGN  focus |
| Develop guidance and tools to support implementation of open space, green and nature networks | | | Support local authorities, land owners/managers and other partners in delivering projects that strengthen green networks and nature networks and use open space to deliver positive effects for biodiversity. |
| Develop a coordinated and efficient approach for inputting to open space strategies by local authorities across Scotland over next 12 months (following finalisation of open space strategy regulations and guidance by Scottish Government). | | | | National |
| **Water resilient places** | Improve management of water for biodiversity and climate resilience | | | | National |
| Provide advice and guidance to support implementation of successful master plan approaches | | | Planning and delivery of 10,000 raingardens Project |
| **NHS greenspace and biodiversity** | Improve the planning and management of greenspace and biodiversity on the NHS estate | | | | National |
| Support implementation of the greenspace and biodiversity workstream of the NHS Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy | | | Local Delivery Partner with area Health Boards |
| **Wee Forests and related urban woodland initiatives** | Grow the number and impact of Wee Forests and related urban woodland initiatives to increase nature and climate literacy | | | | National |
| Develop arrangements for next phase of programme delivery and funding of Wee Forests. | | | Local Delivery Partner for Wee Forests with local authorities, communities and businesses |
| **Data, Knowledge and Information Exchange** | Information exchange, sharing good practice, exploring training opportunities between our organisations. | | | | National |
| **Communications** | Communications and promotion of each others work / projects / the CSGN | | | | National |