Alive with Nature Plan

Consultation Report

Stirling Council
September 2021

Plan	Alive with Nature Plan
Responsible Authority	Stirling Council
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Date	19th September 2021

1. Introduction

In May 2019, the UK became the first national government to declare a climate and environmental emergency, days after a similar declaration came from Scotland. Stirling Council recognised this and declared a Climate and Nature Emergency in October 2019.

While we recognised the twin emergencies in late 2019 we didn't stand still. We have been working closely with partners and key stakeholders to develop the draft Alive with Nature Plan. It has taken time but it has enabled us to agree a range of key priorities and identify a way forward.

2. Consultation

SEPA, NatureScot and Green Action Trust (formerly Central Scotland Green Network Trust) have worked closely with Stirling Council on the development of the Alive with Nature Plan since 2019.

In Dec 2019 a workshop was held at Stirling Court Hotel. The workshop was attended by a wide range of key stakeholders representing public and third sector organisations.

Stakeholders attending the workshop and providing subsequent comment and input via email include: SEPA, NatureScot, Green Action Trust, Scottish Forestry, Forest & Land Scotland, Keep Scotland Beautiful, University of Stirling, Scottish Land & Estates and Forth Environment Link.

3. Public Consultation

Public consultation was carried out on the draft AWN Plan between 23rd June and 5th September 2021 on the Council's public engagement platform (https://engage.stirling.gov.uk/en-GB/).

The initial phase of public consultation ran from the 23rd June until the 19th August. It consisted of a brief survey that asked a number of closed questions (questions 1-8 & 11) focussing on the content of the draft Plan. Questions 9, 10 and 12 were more open and allowed respondents to provide comments as free text.

A total of 62 anonymous responses were received to the first phase of the consultation. However initial comments received from respondents showed that this consultation was considered to be a little restrictive as it did not allow respondents to comment on the detail of the draft Plan.

The restrictions of this first phase of the consultation were noted and a second phase of consultation was added that enabled more free text to be inserted and for comments to be viewed by the public. This second phase ran from the 20th August until the 5th September and received 21 comments from 23 individual participants. In addition the Council received two consultation responses through direct email.

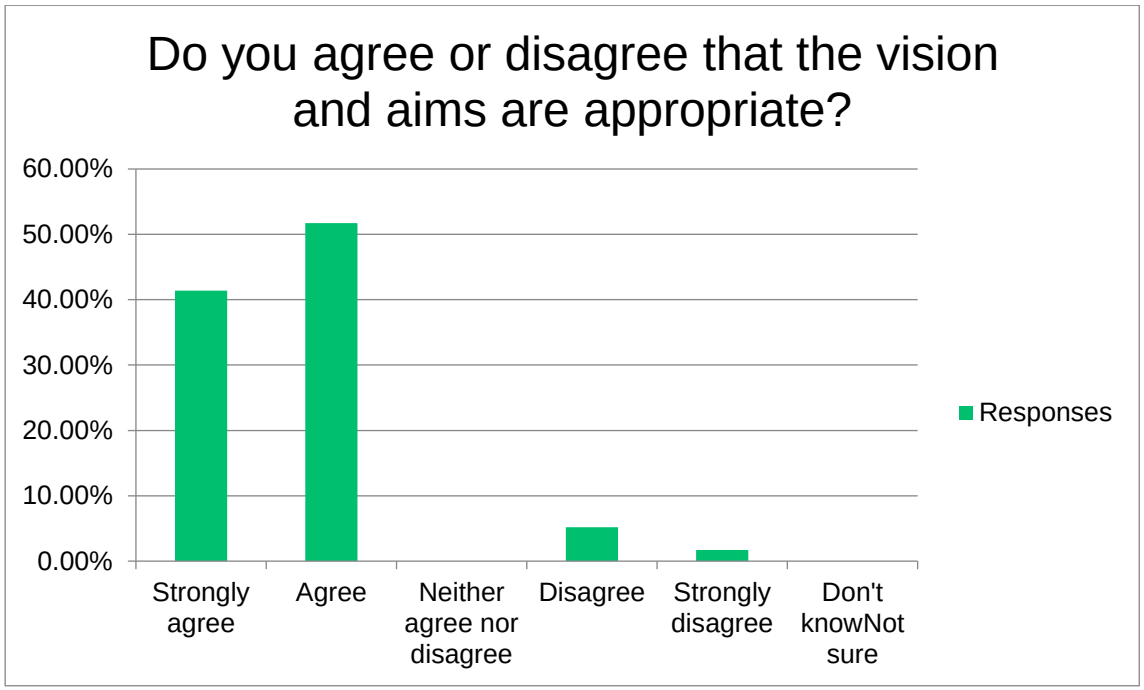
The following tables detail the written comments and representations received on the draft AWN Plan and the Council's responses to those comments.

Consultation Phase 1 (62 responses)

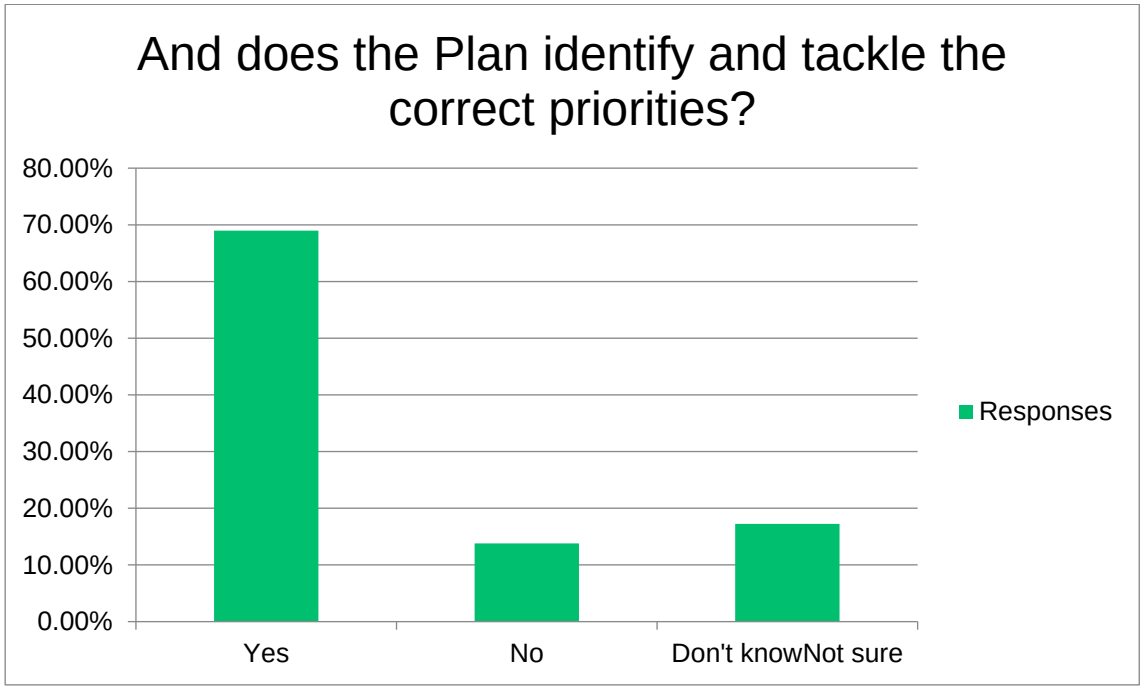
The initial phase of public consultation consisted of a brief survey that asked a number of closed questions (questions 1-8 & 11) focussing on the content of the draft Plan. Questions 9, 10 and 12 were more open and allowed respondents to provide comments as free text.

The following tables and charts detail the responses and written comments received during this phase.

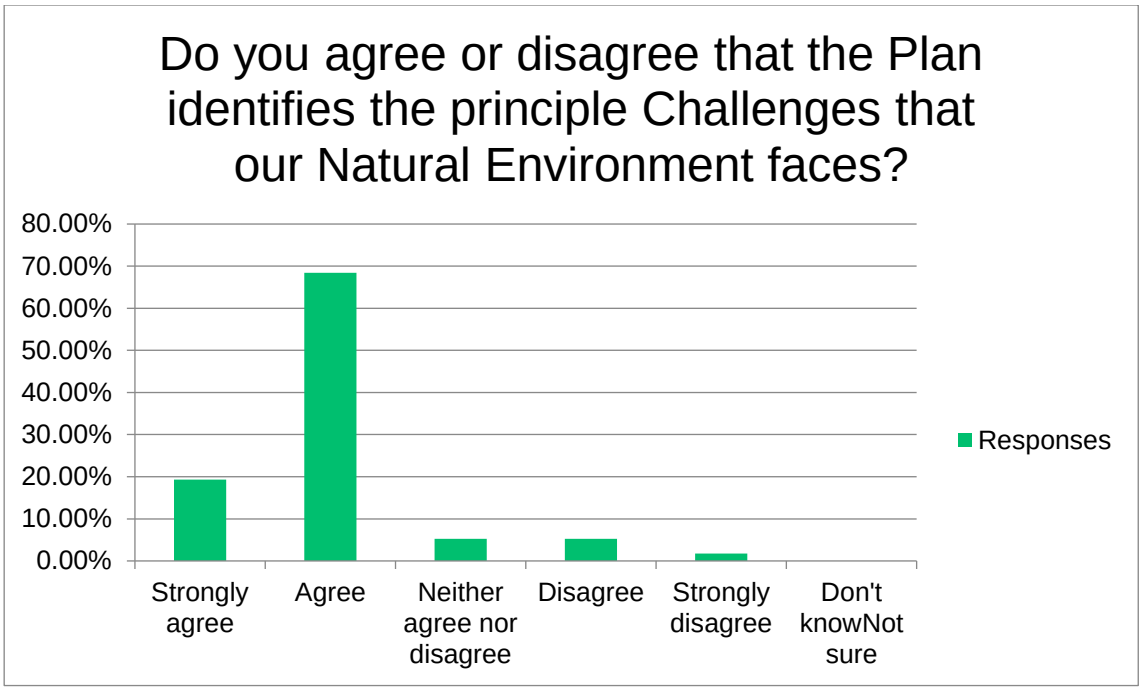
Q1. Do you agree or disagree that the vision and aims are appropriate?



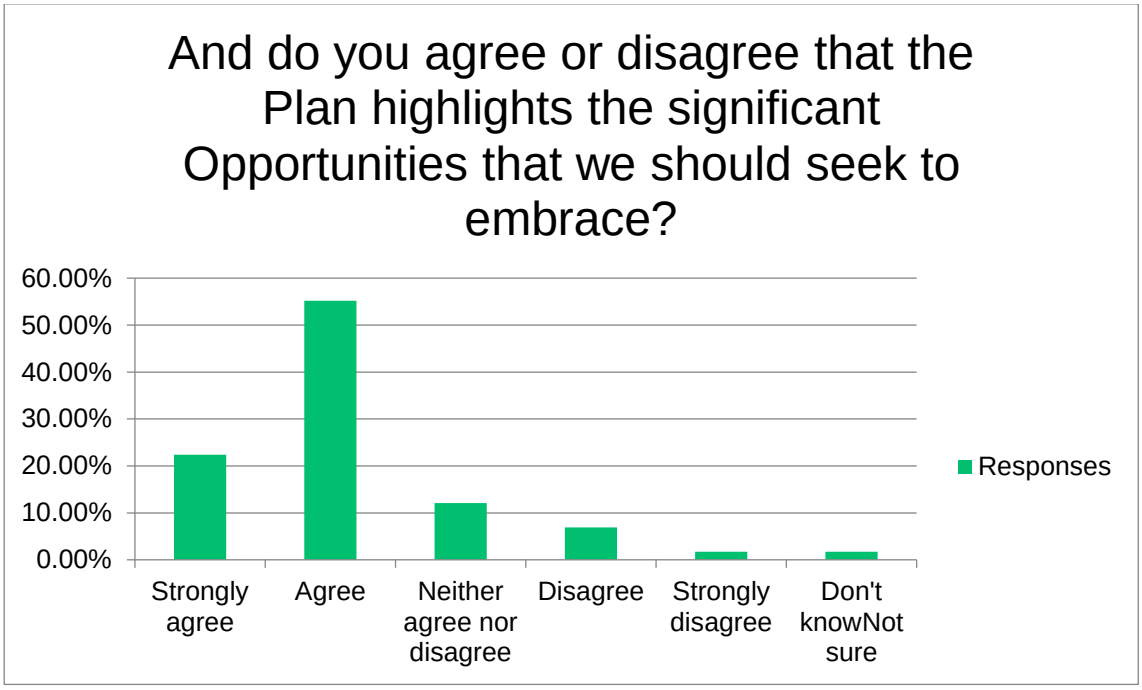
Q2. And does the Plan identify and tackle the correct priorities?



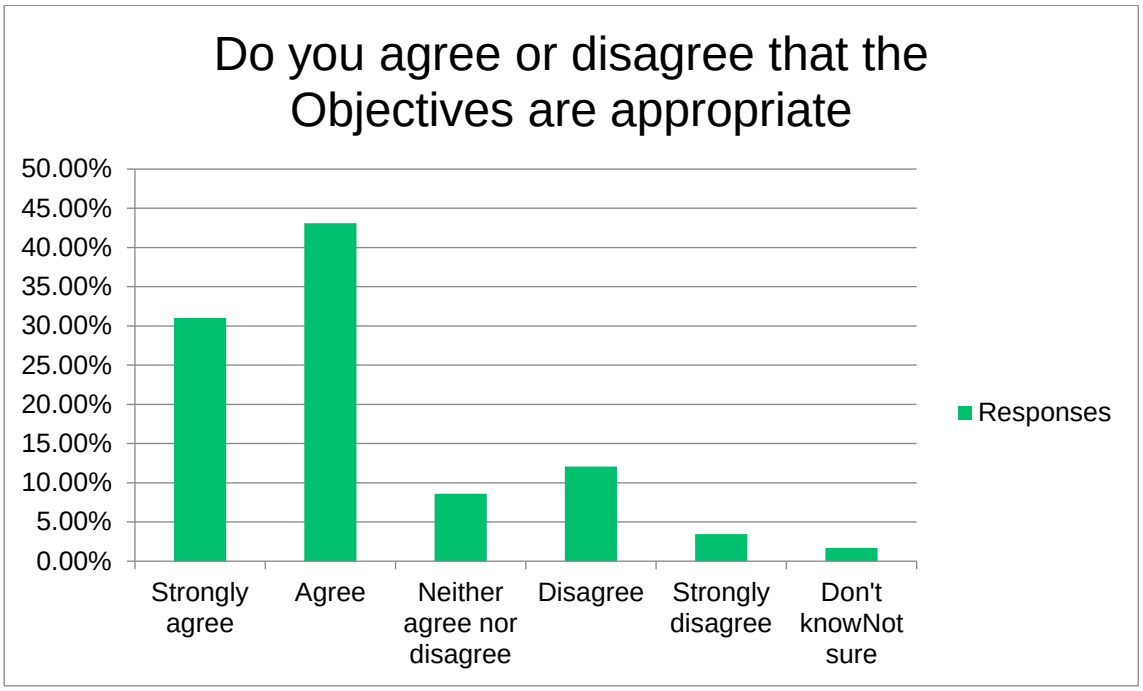
Q3. Do you agree or disagree that the Plan identifies the principle Challenges that our Natural Environment faces?



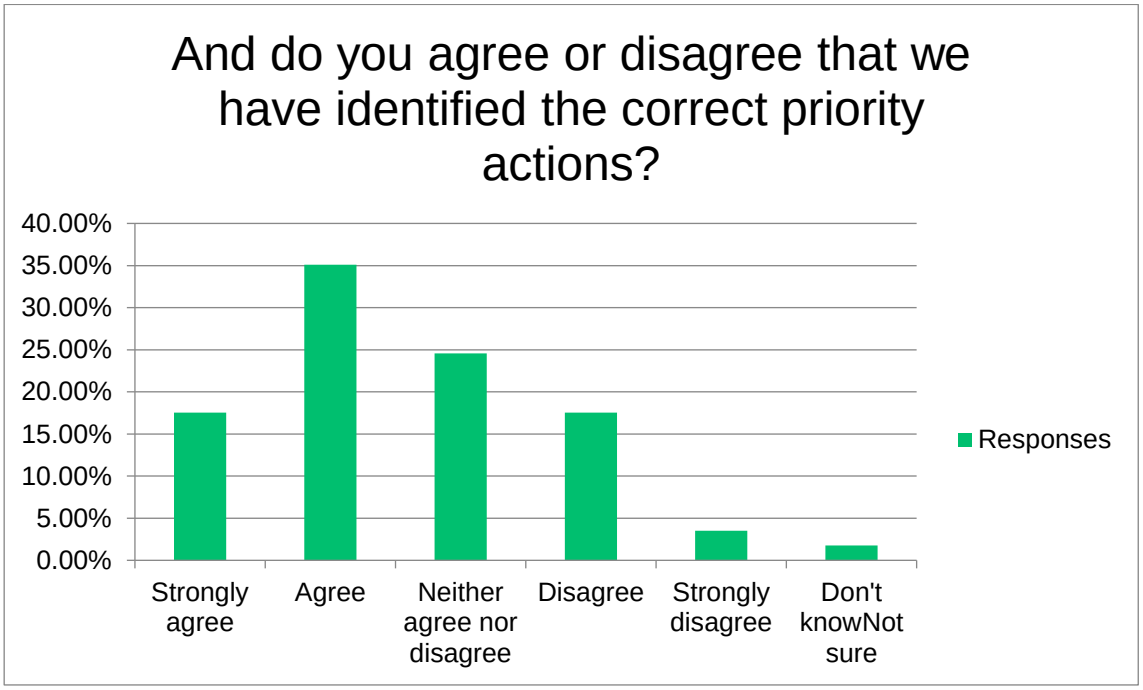
Q4. And do you agree or disagree that the Plan highlights the significant Opportunities that we should seek to embrace?



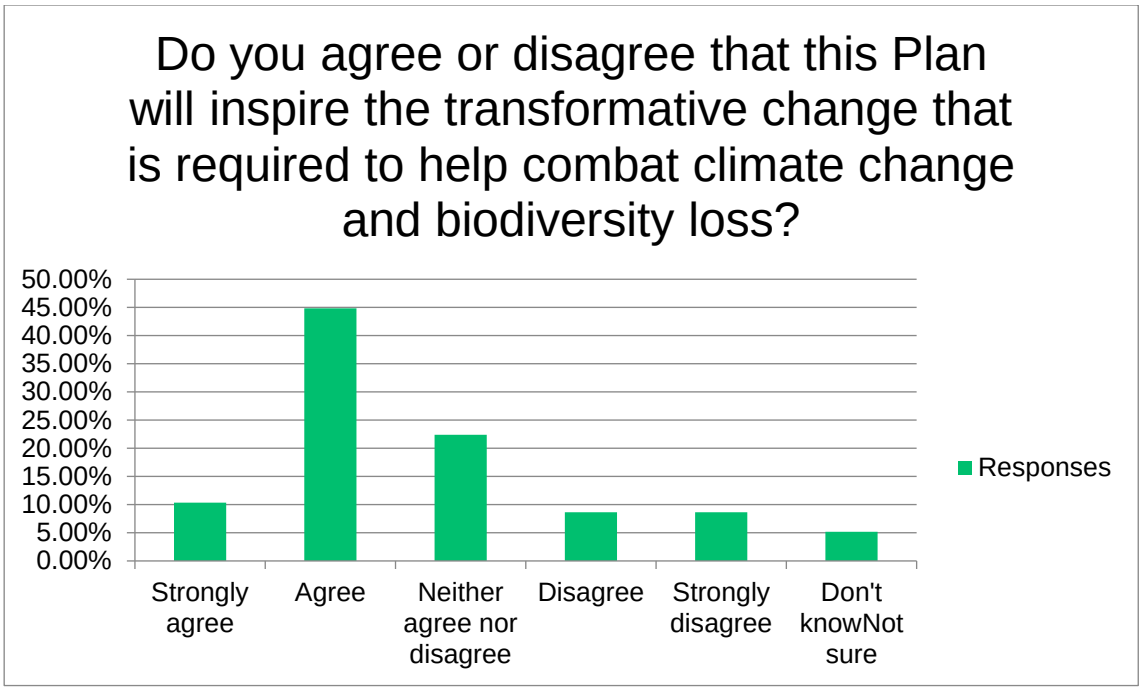
Q5. Do you agree or disagree that the Objectives are appropriate?



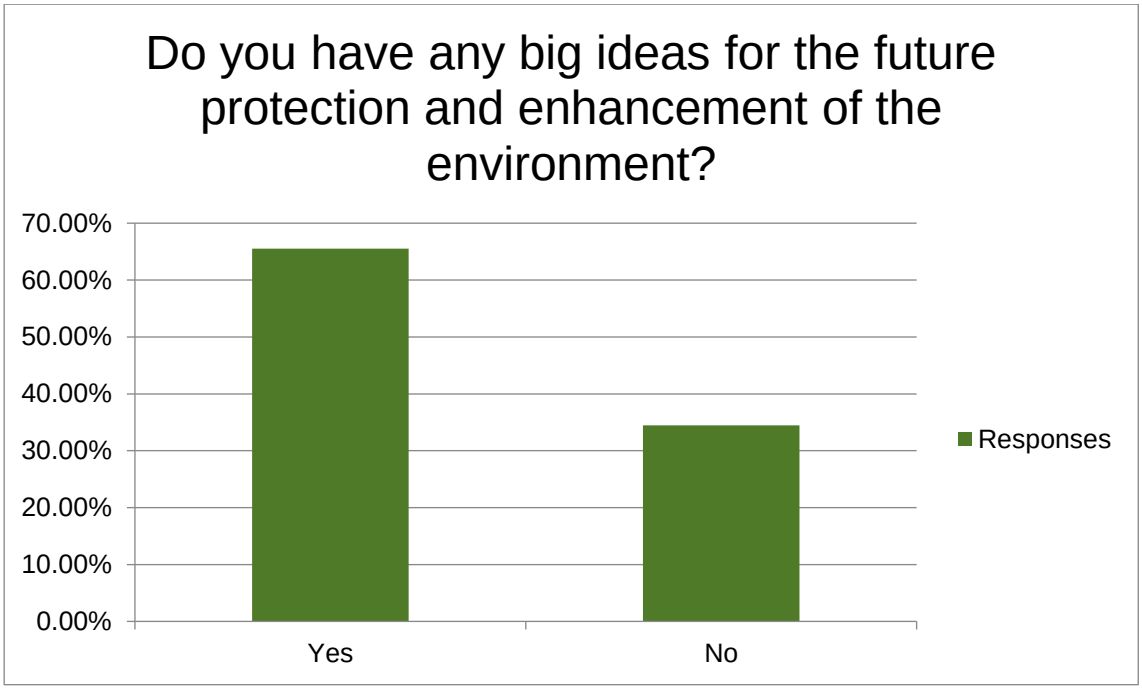
Q6. And do you agree or disagree that we have identified the correct priority actions?



Q7. Do you agree or disagree that this Plan will inspire the transformative change that is required to help combat climate change and biodiversity loss?



Q8. Do you have any big ideas for the future protection and enhancement of the environment?



Q9. Please briefly describe your big ideas for the future protection and enhancement of the environment?

The responses to this question have been grouped into broad categories and the results are included in the table below.

	Idea 1	Idea 2	Idea 3
Education & Engagement	8	4	5
Transport & Active Travel	7	6	1
Enhancement of Habitats & Positive Land Use Change (includes tree planting)	11	7	5
Sustainable Choices & Sustainable Development	2	6	6
Other	8	3	2
	36	26	19

Specific ideas included:

Education & Engagement

- More emphasis on initiatives coming from communities … perhaps an annual assembly in which communities report their activities, share ideas and develop projects.
- Provide improved opportunities for everyone to engage and enjoy our natural environment.
- More emphasis on education and behaviour change.

Transport & Active Travel

- Reduce car use by increasing public transport
- Prioritise active travel across the entire council area

Enhancement of Habitats & Positive Land Use Change

- Connect spaces of interest with ecological corridors.
- Restoring damaged peatland to create carbon sinks.
- Rewilding of rural areas and greening of our urban environments.
- Ensure much of the tree planting consists of native species.

Sustainable Choices & Sustainable Development

- Stop the consumption of single-use items.
- Encourage nature friendly tourism and sustainable agricultural practices.
- Protect our natural environment from development.

Other

- The Council should sign up to the Tree Cities of the World programme.
- Take less time to deliver the actions within the Plan.

Q10. What do you consider to be the main environmental priorities for the Stirling area?

The responses to this question have been grouped into broad categories and the results are included in the table below.

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Education & Engagement	4	7	11
Transport & Active Travel	11	3	3
Enhancement of Habitats & Positive Land Use Change (includes tree planting)	16	17	13
Sustainable Choices & Sustainable Development	3	4	4
Carbon Capture	3	2	1
Adapting to Climate Change	2	1	0
Manage Invasive Non-Native Species	3	0	1
Conservation of Biodiversity	2	5	0
Flood Alleviation	1	3	0
Other	5	3	5
	50	45	38

Q12. And finally, would you like to provide detailed feedback on any aspects of the draft Plan or have any further comments?

This final question included an unlimited, free text box and enabled respondents to submit any final thoughts or detailed feedback on any elements of the draft Plan. The responses to this question have been included in this table.

No.	Date of Response	Comments made	Stirling Council response and amendment
1.1	25th June	Without setting a budget and appointing an individual within the council to take responsibility for the plan it will fail.	By developing this Plan Stirling Council has recognised that we are in the midst of climate and nature emergencies. By adopting this Plan the Council is able to set a budget for this work. However this Plan also recognises that resources are not limitless and the Council will work with partners to secure the resources needed to deliver change. The Plan states that 'Stirling Council will be the lead authority to deliver this Plan, working closely with key partners on the Alive with Nature Steering Group to track progress. Progress towards meeting our targets will be reported annually to the Council's Environment and Housing Committee.' Monitoring of progress rests with the Council's biodiversity officer.
1.2	3rd July	Very difficult to answer any of these questions in the way they are phrased, and with only the options allowed. Nearly always I agreed with some of the aims, objectives, priorities, etc but not at all with other aims, objectives, priorities within each section. And for example, in question 11, it does not inspire me to get involved, because I already spend a large amount of my life contributing to exactly your aims in a variety of ways, all on a voluntary basis, so I had to answer no - I can do no more than I do already. Better questions, or a better range of options with which to answer would have helped. There is much more good in the document than my answers maybe indicate, however. At least do these things you say, but really more needs to be done more quickly, as we are already far too late starting. But at least we are starting.	The restrictions of this first phase of the consultation were noted and a second phase of consultation was added that enabled more free text to be inserted and for comments to be viewed by the public. The Council has aligned with the Scottish Government's targets in the first instance, but aims to better them wherever possible. Our level of ambition will be kept under constant review to keep pushing targets and action further.
1.3	3rd July	Stirling council needs to lead the way to the changes and I feel that the plan does not go far enough especially with the land management. What about creating hedgerows and not cutting them in bird breeding season, better management of cemeteries which can be a haven for wildlife and many a tree and plant species. More interesting planting in beds and providing bug hotels/bird boxes/bat boxes etc. Not letting companies destroy wildflower meadows, and encouraging business to do what they can to the land they own/buildings to be more nature friendly. I feel this is a good start, but could plan for so much more.	Through this Plan and the recently adopted Climate & Nature Emergency Plan Stirling Council is committed to delivering changes on its land and to its working practices. The Council is also committed to working with key stakeholders, including landowners, to deliver the landscape scale change needed to effectively combat the twin climate and nature emergencies.

1.4	4th July	The Plan doesn't inspire me - it is good but not sufficient, doesn't tackle the hardest issues, and is definitely not inspirational. If anything, it feels slightly self congratulatory. I fear for the triumph of individual human greed over our collective long term health. I worry that the people place their trust in scientists and technologists to engineer our way out of this mess - behavioural change is at the root of any chance of survival. Education is the key. Inspirational leadership is the key. Benevolent dictatorship is the key. I have no concerns about nature and the planet - they will survive. I simply fear that mankind will not be around for much longer. But this does not mean that we should not try as hard as we can to delay this or even turn this around.	Noted. Noted. The draft Alive with Nature Plan recognises that education and engagement is essential if we are to deliver the widespread change needed to combat the climate and nature emergencies. The Plan contains objectives and actions related to education related to education.
1.5	19th July	I think we need to do more and sooner, making changes particularly in planning sooner. It is very important we act now before it is too late in this climate emergency	Stirling Council area is covered by 2 x Planning Authorities (Stirling Council Planning Authority and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Planning Authority). Currently Stirling Council Planning Officers are working on updates to Supplementary Guidance within the Local Development Plan to ensure the onus is on developers to ensure developments are as sustainable as possible. Emerging national planning policy and guidance advocates the rebalancing of the planning system so that climate change is a guiding principle for all plans and decisions.
1.6	19th July	I would like to see some interim timescales - many of the objectives have deadlines of 2045 - 24 years from now all this will be too late (and long forgotten I imagine). Rather than share meaningless completion dates, what will we have achieved in the next 5 years/10 years to move us towards the 2045 goals? For example giving children access to their natural environment as part of their education should be a priority, it's the next generation that we'll be relying on to continue this legacy. (And surely that can't take 24 years - heck I went to school here in the 80s and 90s and we were forever out and about orienteering or canoeing!)	The Council has aligned with the Scottish Government's targets in the first instance, but aims to better them wherever possible. Our level of ambition will be kept under constant review to keep pushing targets and action further. Noted. This target has been brought forward to 2035.
1.7	20th July	It is crucial that housebuilding takes place on brown field sites, not greenbelt. We must protect the green spaces that we have for now and the future. We must keep our rivers clean, cut emisions too. It's great that the Plan is considering the benefits to schools with these changes. However, it's equally important to consider how the elderly can also benefit from the proposals i.e. make these sites accessible. Also provide green spaces close to towns, villages, hamlets where elderly people can go easily.	Currently Stirling Council Planning Officers are working on updates to Supplementary Guidance within the Local Development Plan to ensure the onus is on developers to ensure developments are as sustainable as possible. This will include a recognition of the ecological value of potential development areas. Some brownfield sites are of huge biodiversity value. Agreed. The Plan commits the Council to ensuring that all residential properties within 500m of an accessible semi natural area or green corridor.

1.8	20th July	Gargunnock is already involved in path building, tree planting and creating wildlife areas. A linked cycle network seems to be being blocked by landowners and others which is causing frustration. Planning rules need to be changed to include solar panels, heat pump heating and high grade insulation as mandatory in all new build housing. Passive house building should be encouraged, providing low energy bills for occupiers.	Noted. Stirling Council area is covered by 2 x Planning Authorities (Stirling Council Planning Authority and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Planning Authority). Currently Stirling Council Planning Officers are working on updates to Supplementary Guidance within the Local Development Plan to ensure the onus is on developers to ensure developments are as low carbon as possible, with regards to energy efficiency of new builds, as well as low carbon generation for properties. The National Park Planning Authority have also amended their Local Development Plan to ensure renewable installations are looked at favourably on a case by case basis. This applies to both new build and retrofitting of renewables
1.9	21st July	Yes the absence of coordination and partnership with other relevant parties.	The Plan states that 'Stirling Council will be the lead authority to deliver this Plan, working closely with key partners on the Alive with Nature Steering Group to track progress. Progress towards meeting our targets will be reported annually to the Council's Environment and Housing Committee.'
1.10	22nd July	Repeat point about only native trees being used in planting - these have greatest biodiversity benefits. Target for Derelict and Vacant Land to be developed - VDL can be some of the best habitat for insects (see Buglife reports) and this should be kept in mind. Many are already great for wildlife and perhaps just need better interpretation or access.	The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. Where possible these will be native species but there are situations where non-native species are more appropriate. Agreed. The ecological value of previously developed sites will be maintained and enhanced where practical.
1.11	25th July	It's overall a good plan but the timescales need to be seriously shortened with smart goals for each year through to 2030 Given the nature of the area much more emphasis needs to be placed on changing farming practices, particularly with regard to run off and river water quality Some commitment to rewilding would have been welcome	The Council has aligned with the Scottish Government's targets in the first instance, but aims to better them wherever possible. Our level of ambition will be kept under constant review to keep pushing targets and action further. Through this Plan Stirling Council is committed to working with key stakeholders, including landowners, to deliver the landscape scale change needed to effectively combat the twin climate and nature emergencies. Rewilding will be considered as part of these discussions.

1.12	27th July	It would be helpful to have clarification as to why the aim is to have 86% of water bodies high quality rather than 100%. Also, why are non-native invasive species only to be dealt with by 2025? I couldn't say that I have 'big ideas' of my own, as I have no expertise in the areas concerned, but I would be glad to see projects to do with rewilding, reintroducing beavers, such as at Banff Wildland in Perthshire: https://bamff.land/ It would also be helpful if there were more details of the bodies involved in the different projects. For example, I would want to know that Stirling Community Food were involved in the Sustainable Food project, and also Start Up Stirling. I think it's really important that those without 'agency' are able to benefit and also to contribute, as a means of empowerment, to sustainability in their community. I would recommend: https://tayportgarden.org/ as a model inspirational project. Similarly, I would hope that the Council were involving bodies such as the Scottish Rewilding Alliance in these plans: https://www.rewild.scot/	SEPA target that recognises the actions that need to be taken to bring individual water bodies to high quality. Some water bodies have significant constraints in place that mean that high quality status is not achievable. Hence the target cannot be 100%. Noted. The list of partners involved in developing this draft Plan is extensive and not all are listed within the document. It is our intention to work with as wide a range of partners as possible on the delivery of this Plan. The draft Plan does not contain any food focussed projects but does reference the Stirling Food Growing Strategy & Alive with Food. The Council will seek to work with this body and with other relevant stakeholders.
1.13	27th July	Very unclear how the tree planting target meets 100% of sequestering residual carbon to achieve net zero. It would be helpful if this could be justified\explained. Forgive me for being a little sceptical but if it were that "easy" then problem solved. I doubt very much that that would solve the problem by itself. I'd like to think that the plan is sophisticated enough to include consideration of the potential release of carbon from soils due to afforestation (e.g. planting up peatland may result in in drying and becoming a source of CO2) . Plus a recognition within the plan that native species will enhanced biodiversity as well as being helpful to reducing CO2, and that the plan won't inadvertently result in the planting of inappropriate tree species (i.e. non-native) to allow targets to be met. Plus number of sites where wetland restoration is delivered is not a good metric. Number of km2 of wetland restoration would be better and be a firmer goal. Number of sites is rather meaningless - a site has no measure of size or extent. Active travel routes are a very good idea. What's the difference between a path and an active travel route?	The figure of 1 million trees is based on a basic calculation using an average figure for the amount of carbon sequestered by broadleaved tree species that are native to Scotland. The amount of carbon sequestered by 1 million trees will enable us to achieve our net zero target by absorbing the residual carbon that we expect to emit. We are currently working with partners to develop a more accurate method for measuring the amount of carbon sequestered by our natural environment, not just our trees and woodlands. This methodology, when finalised, and our carbon calculations for our natural environment will be made publicly available. The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. Where possible these will be native species but there are situations where non-native species are more appropriate. The target refers to the number of peatland rather than wetland sites. Whilst I agree that area would be a more meaningful target than the number of sites, at this stage it is not possible to set an accurate target area. Active Travel means walking or cycling for everyday journeys. On some paths cycling is not permitted.
1.14	Jul 28	Minor suggestion. In terms of new trees. Planting of edible fruit trees in the city areas creates a connection. This has worked really well in some parts of London	Agreed. The text of the Plan has been adjusted to reflect this.

1.15	Jul 28	In order for targets to be met cohesion in communities is required. Change is necessary, we all agree, however, not at the expense of children's health and well being. Maintain/cut grassed play areas to tackle obesity in children and keep residents/council tax payers happy. Concentrate on turning areas with no recreational use into pollination habitats etc. Engage with the local secondary schools, colleges and universities. Our young people need to be part of this solution to climate change within our communities.	Through this Plan the Council is aiming to manage 50% of its land for biodiversity and climate change. A number of areas will not be considered as it is essentially that they are maintained for other purposes this includes play areas, active cemeteries, etc. The draft Alive with Nature Plan recognises that education and engagement is essential if we are to deliver the widespread change needed to combat the climate and nature emergencies. The Plan contains objectives and actions related to education.
1.16	29th July	Firstly, the questions on this survey don't provide scope for great answers, but I do appreciate the objectives and urgency of this project, there is no time to spare! I'd like to see the methodological assumptions used in the target of 100% residual carbon to be captured by 2045. It seems quite unlikely that by only planting trees (which take time to reasonably sequester carbon), this will be enough to negate the effects of a growing population. No mention of the type of trees and the type of habitats, and for what, you seek to create, although I suspect that should follow later. Bold aspiration but details of how it's to be achieved don't feel adequate enough. Behaviour change and education across all levels of the community, and your organisation is important. What sort of ongoing training will be given to local authority staff to ensure these actions really do filter into the heart of decision making? The planning dept needs to take a bigger role and actually enforce things. I live on a road where scrupulous developers have demolished trees with protection orders (no doubt for a backhander!) and neighbouring new builds have not restored the verges they were supposed to. Why is this happening? What is actually being done to planning processes to align with this project, particularly with response to future development? Community involvement is so important. It would be great to see small bits of local land handed over to community groups for wildlife gardens/growing space instead of relying on substandard landscapers and their terrible use of bedding plants! Small spaces can be huge havens for wildlife, and we should be encouraging this as much as possible. There are wider social benefits here too. There will be an unbelievable amount of little patches in and around communities already, I think you'd be surprised what could happen if you just offered the use up. Looking forward to reading more on the plan.	The restrictions of this first phase of the consultation were noted and a second phase of consultation was added that enabled more free text to be inserted and for comments to be viewed by the public. We are currently working with partners to develop a more accurate method for measuring the amount of carbon sequestered by our natural environment, not just our trees and woodlands. This methodology, when finalised, and our carbon calculations for our natural environment will be made publicly available. The draft Alive with Nature Plan, along with our Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, recognises that education is essential if we are to deliver the widespread change needed to combat the climate and nature emergencies. Carbon literacy training is already underway within the Council and more training is planned. No details have been provided on the location of these activities consequently it is not possible to make detailed comments. The Planning Service's Enforcement Team investigate planning enforcement matters and prioritise enquiries that have the most significant impact upon the public. The Council has produced a Planning Enforcement Charter which outlines the role of the Enforcement team within the planning system. Through this Plan the Council is aiming to manage 50% of its land for biodiversity and climate change. The majority of areas will be within settlements. Stirling Council is happy to speak to groups who have an interest in taking responsibility for areas of land. We have a number of communities and groups who currently manage areas of Council owned land.

1.17	29th July	Community engagement will only work if the council's communications is clear. If/when people leave their post, new employees should be fully informed of community projects, otherwise the council will lose the goodwill of the public extremely quickly.	Noted.
1.18	1st August	The plan looks good but there's been so many others that look good but haven't been followed through on so it'll be interesting to see if this remains the plan for the timescales detailed in the plan	The Plan states that 'Stirling Council will be the lead authority to deliver this Plan, working closely with key partners on the Alive with Nature Steering Group to track progress. Progress towards meeting our targets will be reported annually to the Council's Environment and Housing Committee.'
1.19	1st August	Your plan just isn't ambitious enough. I'm sure lots of smart people have spent many hours on this but it doesn't go far enough in my opinion.	The Council has aligned with the Scottish Government's targets in the first instance, but aims to better them wherever possible. Our level of ambition will be kept under constant review to keep pushing targets and action further.
1.20	2nd August	The plan speaks of taking 'households' views into account and yet takes no account that needs and solutions may be different for each member of the household depending on state of health and age etc. The response time was short and conclusions seem to have been reached in advance.	Noted. However the Plan does not make reference to households. This phase of the consultation was open for 8 weeks. No conclusions have been reached at this stage.
1.21	4th August	I like the objectives and the actions as far as they go. I think other factors in the climate crisis have been ignored. I think the plan needs to be even more ambitious. Arguably, because Stirling Council area has a lot of Carbon sequestration potential, we need to aim to be more than net zero (ie absorb more carbon than we emit), Scotland as a whole is to achieve net zero. I recognise that there needs to be significant funding nationally for the 'green recovery' for the Council's objectives to be met (let alone more ambitious targets). Engaging communities is very important, but you can't rely on this alone - there has to be expert input and support from SC or other bodies.	Noted. The Council has aligned with the Scottish Government's targets in the first instance, but aims to better them wherever possible. Our level of ambition will be kept under constant review to keep pushing targets and action further. Stirling Council is committed to leading on the delivery of this Plan and will provide expert support and guidance were possible.
1.22	5th August	There is no evidence cited that would show that the actions proposed will help "us halt biodiversity loss, contribute to the achievement of a zero-carbon economy and create healthier, wealthier and happier people and places." You need to prove that the plan will work	We are currently working with partners to develop an accurate method for assessing the state of our natural environment and the amount of carbon it sequesters. This methodology, when finalised, and our carbon calculations for our natural environment will be made publicly available.
1.23	5th August	Riverside Community Council (RCC) is an environmentally aware Community Council which works closely with a local environmental organisation (Riverside Naturally) and a Stirling-wide environmental organisation (Treelink Stirling). RCC welcomes the publication of this plan. RCC is pleased to note Stirling Council's commitment to the natural world and to viewing it as an asset.	

		RCC has some outstanding questions and comments and would welcome clarification on the following points:	
		• Page 5 starts with 'A Clear Vision' but it is difficult to discern what this is. For example what is meant by 'Nature at the heart of life – Here and Now'? What can a Community Council (CC) do to support this? How does Stirling Council plan to empower communities to contribute?	The Vision 'Nature at the heart of life – Here and Now' was agreed at a stakeholder workshop in December 2019. It is intended to reflect the need to put nature at the centre of all our decision making and to do this immediately if we are to effectively combat the twin climate and mature emergencies. All organisations and individuals are invited to adopt the same stance. Stirling Council intends to work with all interested parties to secure the will and resources needed to deliver this Plan and will put in place the necessary infrastructure (including the landowner forum, community champion forum and community engagement platform).
		• For example, there is an explicit statement that "Delivery of this Plan is dependent on the availability of resources and the establishment of positive partnerships with other organisations and local communities" How will the Council harness the necessary resources and how will it engage with local organisations and communities (such as CCs)?	
		• What is meant by 'Scotland's Greenest Region'? How will this be measured? This seems to imply a competitive element rather than the co-operation which RCC believes is necessary to achieve the aims of the plan.	We are currently working with partners to develop an accurate method for assessing the state of our natural environment. This methodology, when finalised, will enable the quantification of our natural capital as an indicator of 'green-ness' and will be made publicly available.
		• RCC believes that NHS Forth Valley should be a key partner in realising the implementation of this plan. There is no mention of joint work with colleagues in, for example, health promotion and this is a gap which should be addressed.	Noted. NHS Forth Valley is an existing member of the Sustainable Stirling Partnership.
		• RCC believes that Cowane's Trust should be a key partner in realising the implementation of this plan. RCC has encountered some difficulties in establishing the ownership of land within its area. Land owned by Cowane's Trust (such as the riverbank) appears subject to different priorities and, for example, maintenance schedules, than land owned by Stirling Council. Without the support of significant landowners such as Cowane's Trust there will be a piecemeal approach to land management and a negative impact on the plan.	The Plan acknowledges that the support of landowners is crucial to the successful delivery of the landscape scale change needed to effectively combat the twin emergencies. The landowner forum is seen as the first step in establishing the necessary working relationships.
		• The Steering Group appears to comprise organisations which operate at a strategic level. While RCC recognises the importance of engaging such partners it is dismayed that no grass-roots or community organisations (such as CCs) were involved in the drafting of the plan. The key role of community groups is recognised (eg IN1) and they should therefore have been involved from the outset. That they were not is a concerning omission.	A steering group consisting of staff from Stirling Council, NatureScot, SEPA and the Green Action Trust developed this draft Plan. This group will likely change when the delivery and monitoring of the Plan begins. This was not obvious from the document. The text has now been edited to reflect this point.
		• EN2 this appears to be an unambitious target with a very long timescale.	There are 3 elements that make up EN2. The timescales are long but the targets should not be considered to be unambitious.
		• P16 (Community) locally Riverside PS has a large number of pupils and pressure on outside space. In what ways can such schools be involved in creating biodiverse areas within their grounds?	The aim, through this Plan, is to create biodiverse areas within all school grounds. Some will prove more challenging. There is no definition of what a biodiverse area must include and we will work with all schools to see what can be achieved.

		• P16 (Land Use) RCC welcomes the commitment to use vacant and derelict land in better ways. Its experience has been that, for a CC, establishing land ownership and use is tortuously difficult. • P16 RCC welcomes the commitment to controlling INNS and some of its members have undertaken work locally to remove Himalayan Balsam. RCC knows of other groups working in similar ways. Again, the involvement of community groups at an earlier stage would have harnessed this local knowledge, expertise and willingness. • There is a lack of compatibility between plans to enhance spaces for biodiversity and the operational work of various Stirling Council services. What plans exist to change attitudes amongst Council officers so that these plans can be realised? • RCC operates in the town centre. This plan makes little mention of maintaining and increasing green spaces in towns. • There is one mention of pesticides. RCC urges the Council to de-commit from its use of pesticide spray and develop greener and more sustainable ways of managing its land.	Noted. Noted. The Council is currently working with a range of partners to develop the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. Through the Alive with Nature Plan the Council has committed to managing 50% of its land for biodiversity. The Pollinator Action Plan will be out for public consultation soon and will enable communities and residents to propose changes to the management of Council land. The majority of which is within our settlements. Reducing the use of pesticides is also included in the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan.
1.24	5th August	Reducing our emissions is the number one priority in the current climate crisis, and the implementation of projects such as this one is necessary to counteract climate change. In particular, rising temperatures have triggered losses of soil carbon concentration from Stirling's soils, and peatland could play a vital role in mitigating emissions and preserving the carbon sink potential of soils. Thus, promoting investment in peatland restoration is not only beneficial to lower carbon emissions, but it would also represent an opportunity to increase the economic value of Stirling's natural capital.	Agreed. This needs to sit alongside action to plan and prepare for the unavoidable climate related impacts from historical emissions
1.25	6th August	The aims stated here are excellent however there is no evidence that the economic development department have any interest in supporting or proposing anything other than high emission, unsustainable, developments and businesses. How, for example, would building a theme park in Callander square with these aims? It doesn't but that is exactly what this department are proposing!	Awaiting a response from the relevant Council department.
1.26	6th August	Your plans include a lot of very worthwhile things, which I would be delighted to see going ahead. However, they don't inspire me to get involved because a) I already am involved in lots of voluntary (mostly monitoring) work that doesn't leave me with very much spare time and b) I strongly suspect that only a very small fraction of this region's population will engage very actively with your plans. That's why I think that the plans should lean more heavily towards motivation and requirement rather than simply 'enabling'.	Noted. The Plan recognises that the deliver the level of change needed we need to involve as many people as possible. The Plan includes a target to have 50% of residents taking action for biodiversity by 2045. Stirling Council will put in place the necessary infrastructure (including the community champion forum and community engagement platform).

		I think your plans for monitoring, in particular, seem quite weak. 10,000 records for the whole of the Stirling area is not much at all. Just to give you some idea, the monitoring of birds and moths I have carried out in my spare time has generated well over 1000 records of individuals in particular places. And there are hundreds of volunteers in the Stirling area carrying out similar levels of monitoring for these and other taxa. So there is already much more monitoring happening, by the metrics you propose, than you are aiming for. Moreover, the monitoring done by most of these people feeds into well-organised and dedicated monitoring programmes run by organisations such as those I mentioned above, where it is used to evaluate population change and distribution at regional and national levels. 10K records in TWIC and NBN, scattered across thousands of species over the whole of Stirling region, won't amount to much at all. I do think that NBN, in particular, is useful in its ability to pull monitoring from different sources together. And TWIC is in a great position to advocate and encourage monitoring of all different taxa, by introducing new audiences to monitoring. But if Stirling Council is serious about helping to make a positive difference to the monitoring landscape, it should work with the many existing monitoring NGOs to find ways to get more people involved in monitoring that will actually be useful. As well as getting more people interested and involved in traditional monitoring efforts (some, like BTO's Garden Bird Watch, are entry-level offerings open to everyone), there are exciting possibilities for using technology such as audio recorders (see the Southern Scotland Bat Survey pilot, and also BTO's new Acoustic Pipeline) and camera traps (e.g. MammalWeb) to enable volunteers with no particular expertise to collect really useful data on some poorly known groups. The final point I want to make is about tree-planting. It could hugely strengthen the significance of those aspects of your plans involving tree-planting if you provided more detail about the types of trees you are intending to plant, and the intended fates of these trees. The climate and biodiversity benefits of establishing a native oak woodland where the trees are allowed to grow for hundreds of years are incomparably greater than those of planting a similar number of trees in a commercially managed Sitka Spruce plantation. I'm not saying that there is no place in the landscape for exotic conifers planted to make a profit; but if this kind of afforestation accounts for a large proportion of your KPIs then the significance for climate and biodiversity would be greatly undermined.	The targets included within the draft Plan have been developed through discussion with partners and stakeholders. The Council works closely with TWIC and contributes to many national recording schemes. Progress towards the targets will be monitored annually and the targets will be re-evaluated if necessary. The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. Through this Plan we are seeking to maximise carbon sequestration, reduce some of the impacts from our changing climate, and enhance our environment to benefit biodiversity. Where suitable native tree species will be planted but there are situations where non-native species are more appropriate, for example commercial conifer plantations absorb carbon at a greater rate.
1.27	14th August	Riverside Naturally (RN) is an environmental community group - see www.riversidenaturally.org. RN welcomes the publication of this plan and is pleased to see Stirling Council viewing the natural world as an asset. RN has several specific points to raise:	

		• The Steering Group which drafted the plan appears to comprise only large public sector organisations. It is disappointing that no grass-roots or community organisations (such as RN) were involved in the drafting of the plan. The key role of community groups in delivering the plan is recognised and they should therefore have been involved from the outset. • It is difficult to know what is meant by "Scotland's Greenest Region". In any case, we would hope that Stirling Council sees the nature emergency as a shared global issue rather than a competition between local authorities. For example, many solutions lie in landscape scale actions across artificial administrative boundaries. • Similarly, it is difficult to know what action the slogan 'Nature at the heart of life – Here and Now' is designed to promote. Perhaps it would be possible to find a slogan that is a meaningful call to action. • RN suggests that NHS Forth Valley should be a partner in realising the implementation of this plan. Despite the recognition of the health promoting benefits of access to natural places, there is no mention of joint work with colleagues in, for example, health promotion and this is a gap which should be addressed. • RN fully supports the creation of a landowner forum and hopes that one of its priorities will be local food production for local consumption. • RN believes that Cowane's Trust should be a partner in realising the implementation of this plan. Land owned by Cowane's Trust (such as the riverbank) appears subject to different priorities and, for example, maintenance schedules, than land owned by Stirling Council. • RN welcomes the commitment to controlling INNS and has undertaken work locally to remove Himalayan Balsam. RN knows of other groups working in similar ways. Again, the involvement of community groups at an earlier stage would have harnessed this local knowledge, expertise and willingness. • There is a lack of compatibility between plans to enhance spaces for biodiversity and the operational work of various Stirling Council services. What plans and targets are there to change attitudes amongst Council officers so that these plans can be realised? • RN operates in the town centre. There is considerable pressure on green spaces in the centre of Stirling and, for example, trees have been removed to allow CCTV cameras clear vantage points. Green spaces in urban areas should be given some priority to mitigate air pollution and ameliorate extremes of temperature.	A steering group consisting of staff from Stirling Council, NatureScot, SEPA and the Green Action Trust developed this draft Plan. This group will likely change when the delivery and monitoring of the Plan begins. This was not obvious from the document. The text has now been edited to reflect this point. We are currently working with partners to develop an accurate method for assessing the state of our natural environment. This methodology, when finalised, will enable the quantification of our natural capital as an indicator of 'green-ness' and will be made publicly available. The Vision 'Nature at the heart of life – Here and Now' was agreed at a stakeholder workshop in December 2019. It is intended to reflect the need to put nature at the centre of all our decision making and to do this immediately if we are to effectively combat the twin climate and mature emergencies. All organisations and individuals are invited to adopt the same stance. Stirling Council intends to work with all interested parties to secure the will and resources needed to deliver this Plan and will put in place the necessary infrastructure (including the landowner forum, community champion forum and community engagement platform). NHS Forth Valley are existing members of the Sustainable Stirling Partnership. The draft Plan does not contain any food focussed project buts does reference the Stirling Food Growing Strategy & Alive with Food. The Plan acknowledges that the support of landowners is crucial to the successful delivery of the landscape scale change needed to effectively combat the twin emergencies. The landowner forum is seen as the first step in establishing the necessary working relationships. Noted. The Council is currently working with a range of partners to develop the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. Through the Alive with Nature Plan the Council has committed to managing 50% of its land for biodiversity. The Pollinator Action Plan will be out for public consultation soon and will enable communities and residents to propose changes to the management of Council land. The majority of which is within our settlements.

		• RN urges the Council to stop all use of herbicide sprays other than essential use in tackling toxic invasive species. • The plan acknowledges that "Delivery of this Plan is dependent on the availability of resources and the establishment of positive partnerships with other organisations and local communities." It should make it clearer how the Council intends to harness the necessary resources and how it will engage with local organisations and communities. For example, will dedicated staff be available to seek and apply for funding? Will dedicated staff be available to engage with and support community groups?	Reducing the use of pesticides is also included in the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. Stirling Council intends to work with all interested parties to secure the will and resources needed to deliver this Plan and will put in place the necessary infrastructure (including the landowner forum, community champion forum and community engagement platform).
1.28	16th August	As trustees of Treelink Stirling, we write to comment on the Alive with Nature Plan currently put out to public consultation. We welcome the aims set out on the consultation webpage that rightly recognise that investment in natural our natural environment can lead to significant positive health and wellbeing outcomes for all and a reduction in inequality. In this context, we emphasise that delivering on this plan is a matter of urgency, and we ask that the council treats it as such. We support the joined-up thinking demonstrated in the plan that clearly recognises the interdependence of the nature, climate, and health crises that we face – and that investing in our natural environment can provide cost effective solutions to all. We urge the council to ensure that this recognition is effectively integrated right across Stirling Council policies and not viewed in isolation as a purely environmental matter. While this approach is referred to as an objective of the plan (EM1), much of the narrative maintains the focus that nature is something 'separate' rather than a fundamental aspect of our prosperity and wellbeing and many people will continue to take this historical view without clear communication and positive action from the council. There is a fundamental disconnect between the national policies referred to and the council's proposed actions. If those top-level policy objectives are to be met, and the Scottish Government places an obligation of the council to make progress in doing so, local policy objectives must clearly align with those at national level. Furthermore, the delivery of the plan is recognised as dependent on resources yet there is not even an outline plan of how funding will be obtained, or potential efficiencies that might be found through partnership working with relevant local interest groups. The plan rightly refers to the great diversity of habitats within the council region. However, in reference to carbon sequestration, the narrative is dominated by focus on woodland creation and tree planting. The plan should also recognise the exceptional value of peatland restoration for carbon sequestration and that moving grasslands to meadow management can substantially improve their carbon sequestration potential.	The Plan states that 'Stirling Council will be the lead authority to deliver this Plan, working closely with key partners on the Alive with Nature Steering Group to track progress. Progress towards meeting our targets will be reported annually to the Council's Environment and Housing Committee.' Monitoring of progress rests with the Council's biodiversity officer. Noted. There is currently no national budget that would enable local authorities to deliver action to combat these issues. By developing this Plan Stirling Council has recognised that we are in the midst of climate and nature emergencies. By adopting this Plan the Council is able to set a budget for this work. However this Plan also recognises that resources are not limitless and the Council will work with partners to secure the resources needed to deliver change. The Plan recognises the biodiversity and carbon value of our peatlands. The Council is currently working with a range of partners to develop the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. Through the Alive with Nature Plan the Council has committed to managing 50% of its land for biodiversity. The Pollinator Action Plan will be out for public consultation soon and will enable communities and residents to propose changes to the management of Council land.

		The aims and objectives of the plan would benefit from a clearer vision on how we can use biodiversity to improve outcomes for all of Stirling's people, but particularly as one of the essential tools to address the rampant inequality within the region. Plan aims should include specific mention of improvement of environmental quality for the region's least advantaged communities as part of prioritisation in plan delivery and integration of biodiversity outcomes throughout the planning process.	Agreed. The text of the Plan has been edited to include mention of improvement of environmental quality for the region's least advantaged communities.
		The plan rightly refers to these issues amongst challenges to overcome, but much stronger vision is needed that investment in the environment as a key part of tackling the challenges listed is key to success. For example, impact of infrastructure and building development can be reduced by development of significant high-quality habitat within developments rather than mere 'municipal landscaping', while prioritising environmental improvements in some of the more challenged areas will begin to address the 'disconnect' that the document refers to.	Agreed.
		While the plan is laudable in its aspirations, its indicators and actions are scant in detail and risk limited vision. For example, the emphasis on digital recording of biodiversity and recording and monitoring of pledges etc risks diverting attention and resource from the core need to improve biodiversity in the first place. Targets around tree planting lack meaningful detail and must be married with a detailed tree and woodland policy that sets out how when and where such targets will be achieved. This policy does not currently exist beyond a rudimentary draft. The land use actions generally focus on woodland with the risk that other habitat types are substantially overlooked. Furthermore, while the plan itself refers to habitat fragmentation as a major threat, there is no mention in the actions of effective spatial planning approaches to habitat development that can counter this and thereby deliver a big return from a relatively small investment in restoration.	Noted. The Plan acknowledges that monitoring and measuring the benefits to the natural environment derived from actions included in this Plan is challenging. Much of the baseline information for our chosen indicators is not currently available. Establishing these baselines will be early actions in Plan delivery. Once the targets have been agreed the Council is committed to working with landowners, communities and key stakeholders to deliver the action needed. Our Tree and Woodland Policy and the Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forest & Woodland Strategy will be key elements of this.
		Some actions risk running counter to biodiversity goals – eg some 'derelict' land may be of exceptional biodiversity value and bringing it back into 'use' for business requires a careful consideration of value and impact of land-use change. Other actions risk seeming simply numerical indicators that are plucked out of the air and not linked to meaningful change. For example, biodiverse areas in school grounds would be better expressed as area converted to biodiverse habitats as a percentage of area available, while the lack of volunteers is likely not the reason why some communities are under-represented or lacking engagement - fundamentally, there is no vision of what such communities are expected to engage 'in'. The actions around community involvement must be based on a solid understanding of which community groups are already active in this area, what their aims are and meaningful consultation with them. Currently, there is no indication that the council has this essential understanding – which is vitally important for effective actions.	Noted. The ecological value of previously developed sites will be maintained and enhanced where practical. There is no definition for a biodiverse area within a school grounds. Therefore it is not possible to stipulate a target based on an expected area. The intention of this Plan is to set out the vision and high level objectives that we need to achieve to help combat the climate and nature emergencies. Every community, resident, landowner and business will have a part to play and we cannot include detailed actions for every stakeholder. It is our intention to work closely with stakeholders and to put in place the infrastructure needed for them to contribute.

		In summary, we warmly welcome the aspirations of the plan but urge greater focus on clear, specific and meaningful actions for its delivery that are clearly aligned with national policy objectives.	
1.29	18th August	I would love to see more consideration towards urban spaces - eg less grass cutting, less use of pesticides in green spaces and wild nature being embraced more where practical in towns or cities. Maintenance is a key factor to all these endeavours. If green spaces are going to thrive and benefit Stirling for years to come giving these areas time, effort and money will be the real testament to this plan.	The Council is currently working with a range of partners to develop the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. Through the Alive with Nature Plan the Council has committed to managing 50% of its land for biodiversity. The Pollinator Action Plan will be out for public consultation soon and will enable communities and residents to propose changes to the management of Council land. The majority of which is within our settlements.
1.30	19th August	Comments on Key Performance Indicators EN1 - The target of planting1,000,000 trees across Stirlingshire by 2045 for carbon sequestration needs to avoid impact on other priority habitats and species. Needs to be the 'right tree in the right place' and should aim to comprise at least 50% native tree species to deliver for biodiversity. Current wording could lead to planting of non-native trees on carbon-rich soils with a net loss of carbon. EN1 - Setting a target of just 5 peatland sites (up from base of 2) to have peatland restoration by 2035, seems inadequate. It would be useful to see an assessment of the carbon currently in damaged peatlands across Stirlingshire that could be restored to reduce carbon loss and deliver the net zero goal. The current wording is not clear enough as to the level of restoration required. We recommend that it be re-worded to say 'restored to actively-forming peatland'. EN2 - Assessing and potentially designating up to 200 Local Nature Conservation Sites (from a baseline of 18) is welcomed. EN2 - Target for 50% of Stirling Council land managed for Biodiversity is welcomed. CO1 -target to Incorporate biodiversity-rich features into 100% active travel routes is welcomed CO1 -target to Improve habitat connectivity by 50% should bring significant benefits for biodiversity. CO2 - target for Inclusion of biodiverse areas in 100% school grounds and business parks is welcomed. CO2- target to have 100% of school and pre-school children having regular access to nature is welcomed.	Agreed. The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. We are currently working with partners to develop a more accurate method for measuring the amount of carbon sequestered by our natural environment, not just our trees and woodlands. This methodology, when finalised, and our carbon calculations for our natural environment will be made publicly available. Agreed. The text of the Plan has been edited to reflect this point. Noted. Noted. Noted. Noted. Noted. Noted.

		EM1 –target to have 100% of all relevant committee decisions accompanied by detailed information on how each decision supports the aims of the Stirling Council Climate & Nature Emergency Plan is welcomed. EM2 – Increasing tree coverage in and around settlements to 20% and pledging to plant another 180,000 trees in and around settlements should be amended to state this would be native tree species. This would ensure that biodiversity is considered along with carbon. Planting should not result in the loss of existing biodiversity-rich habitats surrounding settlements. - The enhancement of 3 vacant and derelict sites to benefit nature and green infrastructure should ensure that existing biodiversity on these sites is properly assessed and existing biodiversity-supporting features retained. IN1 – A target of 500,000 new biological records and 50% of residents taking action for nature by 2045 is welcomed. IN2 – Encouraging the participation of 1000 residents per year in activities that contribute to the delivery of positive action for nature is welcomed. Comments on High Priority Actions We support the majority of High Priority Actions discussed in the Alive for Nature plan for delivery in the next 2-5 years, however under the Climate Change actions- Tree planting targets should aim for at least 50% native tree species to ensure that carbon sequestration also delivers for biodiversity. We note that there are no peatland restoration-related targets in the High Priority Actions? The Scottish Government has committed in the Climate Change Plan update (2018-2032) and the current Programme for Government to restoring 250,000 hectares of degraded peatland by 2030, with an annual target of 20,000 hectares. Assessing the extent and status of all peatlands and carbon-rich soils within Stirlingshire should be a high priority action. This would help identify and prioritise sites with restoration potential to deliver maximum carbon sequestration.	Noted. The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. Native tree species will be planted where they suit the conditions but there are situations where non-native species are more appropriate. Agreed. The ecological value of previously developed sites will be maintained and enhanced where practical. Noted. Noted. The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. Through this Plan we are seeking to maximise carbon sequestration, reduce the impacts of climate change, and enhance our environment to benefit biodiversity. Where suitable native tree species will be planted but there are situations where non-native species are more appropriate, for example commercial conifer plantations absorb carbon at a greater rate. Noted. A high priority action relating to peatland restoration has been added to the Plan.
1.31	19th August	I would like to get more involved in delivering this plan. Although the plan could be more detailed and mention more specific actions and locations. Stirling Council should support more the department and officers involved in this report as I can't believe this is the best they can do. Still lack of details for actions and vague timelines. More illustrations and maps could help engage with more people and make it more clear as there are mentions to many local and nature spaces but it is difficult to know the location and get an idea integrated in the council area.	Following the completion of the consultation period the Council and partners will look to deliver the Plan. This will be the stage when more detail can be added to the proposals. Noted.

		Along with the Climate Emergency this plan should be on the top priority for the Council to deliver and more important, engage with the local communities. People needs to be on board with the ideas and objectives described in the report. I would like urge Stirling Council to commit to affiliating with the United Nations Tree Cities of the World programme. 'City' here refers to a local authority area so in Stirling's case it would include the rural and urban parts of the authority. In practical terms, this would mean that the Council would commit to meeting the programme's principles. There is no much mention of the 'blue' infrastructure and Stirling area has much potential for it with its many rivers and lochs. More river restoration and the creation of wetlands should be top priority to reduce flood risk, following Natural Flood Management strategies. Finally, I would suggest to improve a bit more these consultations. Community needs to be at the heart of these plans and much more effort needs to be put on these plans. This new online engagement tool is positive but also the wider community needs to be engaged on the traditional channels. A public and open forum should be also set up to help Stirling Council deliver these plans and make public participation real.	Stirling Council intends to work with all interested parties to secure the will and resources needed to deliver this Plan and will put in place the necessary infrastructure (including the community champion forum and community engagement platform). Stirling Council has agreed to consider to consider affiliation to the Tree Cities of the World programme once the consultation on this Plan and the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan have been completed. Blue infrastructure is referenced in the Plan but not in the targets or actions. CO1 has been edited to include mention of blue infrastructure. The Council moved to an online engagement platform due the restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic. See comment above regarding community involvement.

Consultation Phase 2 (21 responses)

The second phase of public consultation enabled more free text to be inserted and for comments to be viewed by the public. This second phase ran from the 20th August until the 5th September.

The following table includes the responses received during this phase.

No.	Respondent & Date of Response	Comments made	Stirling Council response and amendment
2.1	Alicia McGrandles 20th August	Baseline figures You can't set targets of % improvement if you don't have a baseline. How would you know if your target was reached? Disappointing to see target dates of 2045.	The Plan acknowledges that monitoring and measuring the benefits to the natural environment derived from actions included in this Plan is challenging. Much of the baseline information for our chosen indicators is not currently available. Establishing these baselines will be early actions in Plan delivery. The Council has aligned with the Scottish Government's targets in the first instance, but aims to better them wherever possible. Our level of ambition will be kept under constant review to keep pushing targets and action further.
2.2	Neil Kitching 20 August	Invasive species The Council needs to place far more emphasis on tackling the scourge of invasive species. At present, it appears in a couple of short paragraphs and one action. Invasive species are one of the main threats to our biodiversity and they require coordinated and long term action to control. Not endless more 'monitoring and mapping' - simply action to control them. Communities can help. We need a public education campaign too. Rhododendrons are rampant across many areas (Gillies Hill), Himalayan balsam (River Forth), Japanese knotweed, grey squirrels and the notorious giant hogweed (railway lines, River Forth and the tip) - as well as many more. We shouldn't bury our heads in the sand and ignore this threat.	Agreed. However the scale of the issue is huge and therefore requires further detailed planning beyond the scope of the Alive with Nature Plan. The Plan does contain a high priority action to: 'Work with partners and volunteers to map the locations of invasive non-native species across the Stirling Council area and develop an INNS control action plan' by 2025.
2.2.1	Alan Hutton 20th August	Strongly agree.	Noted.
2.2.2	Janet Harbidge 29th August	Well said. Couldn't agree more. Tackling invasive species must be prioritised.	Noted.

2.3	Aaron O' Brien 20 August 2021	What's the purpose of 'Alive with Nature'? I see the described purpose, but the goals and objectives just describe one possibly too-large too-vague survey. Climate Change literally flooded my house, meanwhile our pedestrian paths and cycle lanes are drowned with the noise of traffic. Perhaps the Aw/N should reduce its scope, and enhance only one or two really impactful issues. Planting trees no more reduces Climate Change than band-aids on a gunshot wound - however maintaining greenfield sites in the Stirling River watershed would work to reduce flooding (note: there is major development planned along the banks of a major tributary at bridge of Allan - is this worth the further flooding in Stirling centre?) Also --stop excessively cutting grass in the green spaces around Old Stirling Bridge, wild space reduced run-off and actually supports wildlife. What I'm saying is, we must absolutely protect and assist in every way those environments which reduce run-off and flooding. And tall vegetation, such as thick native hedges planted on let-it-grow-wild roads verges, would reduce noise pollution and make already existing pedestrian routes far more comfortable and approachable.	Stirling Council has recognised that we are in the midst of climate and nature emergencies. There is no single or simple solution to the issues faced by our residents and our natural environment. This Plan recognising that tree planting is just one of many activities that will need to take place to help combat the issues presented by the climate and nature emergencies. The Council is currently working with a range of partners to develop the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. Through the Alive with Nature Plan the Council has committed to managing 50% of its land for biodiversity. The Pollinator Action Plan will be out for public consultation soon and will enable communities and residents to propose changes to the management of Council land. Flood protection and flood alleviation are important issues beyond the scope of this Plan and are addressed in local Flood Risk Management Plans. The Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan also recognises the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change and will be developing an Adaptation Strategy over the next year.
2.3.1	Tony Rogers 20th August	A thoughtful, and experienced comment. Attempts to reduce climate change are worthy but reducing local damage caused by previous expansions etc , done in ignorance (not intended to be pejorative, but descriptive) should be a priority. I write particularly of housing estates (needed, agreed) built on flood plains in the area of Cornton and other examples. I do not suggest raising the housing estates, but we should reduce the speed of run-off further back in the Forth watershed region. Less easy, I agree, but more effective. If done, it would increase peat deposition and have a climate change rate reduction in its own right as well.	Noted. Flooding considerations are already incorporated into the Local Development Plan and will be updated in each Plan review. Planning applications are also considered by our Flooding officers. Whilst this Plan will seek to influence land management to secure benefits for biodiversity and climate change adaptation, detailed proposals for flood management or alleviation is beyond the scope of this Plan and are addressed in local Flood Risk Management Plans.
2.4	Robert Moyes 20th August	Built Environment and Active Travel There is scope to have the built environment play a big role via gardens and the like. Loss of gardens to driveways should be resisted. No mention of the long promoted path alongside the River Forth east towards Fallin. There is reference to 3 new Active travel routes but no mention of the quality of the best route in the City along the River to the north of Raploch which links the Centre with the College etc in a very environmentally way and which has scope for much improvement with tree planting etc.	The refresh of the Local Transport Strategy and Active Travel Action Plans will align even more closely with the objectives of the recent National Transport Strategy as well as addressing climate change concerns and the longer term effects on travel of the COVID pandemic. This will include a review of the plan for Towns, Villages and Rural Areas. Whilst this Plan will seek to influence the design and management of active travel routes to secure benefits for biodiversity and climate change adaptation, detailed proposals for new or improved routes is beyond the scope of this Plan.

2.5	David Mitchell 20 August	Retention of existing assets The plan does not set out how the other council policies (and this) will seek to protect existing natural assets?	By developing this Plan Stirling Council has recognised that we are in the midst of climate and nature emergencies. By adopting this Plan the Council is able to prioritise this work and ensure that its other plans and policies seek to protect our existing natural assets. The Plan does contain a high priority action to: 'Undertake a policy gap analysis to identify areas where policy needs to be developed or amended' by 2022.
2.6	Alison Brown 20th August	Timescales I don't understand some of the targets, they read as if they have been picked out of the air rather than worked out on an objective basis. Or am I reading this all wrong? For example, to have all children engaging with nature as part of education could be done this year. Does it really say 2045?? Also 'three' new active travel routes? In the whole area? When active travel is a top priority not only for net zero reasons but also as an immediate way to engage people with nature? Why three? Why not 33 or 333?	The selection of targets for any plan involves an element of subjectivity and expert judgement. Your comment on the target relating to schools children is noted. This target has been brought forward to 2035. The Plan includes an initial target to have '3 new active travel routes incorporate green infrastructure (piloting nature-rich active travel routes) by 2024 and all 'Active travel routes that have incorporated nature-rich features (inclusion of native planting and green infrastructure)' by 2035.
2.7	Una MacFadyen 22nd August	Start now by clearing plastic/ metal rubbish from 'green' areas within the city There are many beautiful patches of natural habitat within the city of Stirling area that are choked with rubbish and overgrown with invasive weeds and potential hazards to animals e.g. ragwort. Just clearing these would encourage the local population to value and use these areas more responsibly. Where this has been done e.g. at riverside, the area is more popular and healthy. Likewise incentivising takeaways for use compostable wrapping would reduce the discarded plastic that adds to the environmental damage in our area.	Stirling Council Street Cleansing team recognise litter is a local and national issue. The team regularly service litter bins, carry out litter picking in public parks, village streets, verges and the city centre to maintain a cleaner environment for residents and visitors. Staff within Stirling Council are working with partners to tackle this issue.
2.7.1	Una MacFadyen 24th August	just wondering if free litter picking kits could be added to the resources offered from local libraries to encourage citizens to help keep our city hazard free.	This suggestion has been noted and will be discussed with the relevant Council staff.
2.7.2	Nicole Minter 26th August	Stirling seems particularly blighted by rubbish in the green areas and unfortunately a lot is ending up in the River Forth!. We have to encourage people not to drop litter and not to throw things from their vehicles. I believe some councils are trying out a 'Litter Cam', can we see what is happening with that.	Stirling Council Street Cleansing team recognise litter is a local and national issue. The team regularly service litter bins, carry out litter picking in public parks, village streets, verges and the city centre to maintain a cleaner environment for residents and visitors. The Council does not utilise 'Litter Cam' but do utilise the CCTV cameras for enforcement where possible.

2.8	Susan Mitchell 24th August	There is a climate emergency so every road in Stirlingshire needs a cycle lane There is a climate emergency so every road in Stirling Council's area needs a cycle lane. by 2031. Yet your plan merely says, "The [Alive with Nature] document also designates the Central Scotland Green Network and the National Walking and Cycling Network as national developments" This is completely meaningless. You can designate all you like but you have no plans and no targets. The "Alive with Nature " document may as well be a "dead without Nature" document if you don't do something massive in the next ten years. Now, if it is impractical to manage to put a cycle lane on every road then tell us what proportion of roads will have cycle lanes. Is it going to be 1 in 2, 1 in 5 , or 1 in 10? Stop using meaningless "designations "and tell us how this major move from the motorised vehicle to active travel is really going to be accomplished in the 10 years we have left to make a difference to climate change, how much it is going to cost and where the money is coming from.	Stirling Council is looking at all the options we can utlise to reduce the need to use cars and to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys. This will include a refresh of the Local Transport Strategy and looking at the interdependencies of planning and transport. In October 2021 the Council will set out programmes to take forward a new Local Transport Strategy and Local Development Plan which will explore the detail of issues such as this. The Plan includes an initial target to have ‘3 new active travel routes incorporate green infrastructure (piloting nature-rich active travel routes) by 2024 and all ‘Active travel routes that have incorporated nature-rich features (inclusion of native planting and green infrastructure)’ by 2035.
2.8.1	Wendy Faulkner 24th August	I share this sentiment, but I have read the Active Travel Action Plan, which addresses plans for both existing and proposed cycleways. It's not enough but it is a start. As this contributor says, we really need more specifics re checkable and urgent targets with credible implementation plans re funding etc.	The refresh of the Local Transport Strategy and Active Travel Action Plans will align even more closely with the objectives of the recent National Transport Strategy as well as addressing climate change concerns and the longer term effects on travel of the COVID pandemic.
2.8.2	Lorna Stevenson 28th August	I usually skirt the town centre on my route to work but was in a rush the other day so had to cycle from the train station out to Springkerse. It is SO unclear what the safe route is and which paths are dual use which puts both pedestrians and cyclists at risk. Next time I’ll double back via forthside!	Noted.
2.8.3	Kathleen Common 28th August	Agree much better cycle routes are required including creating designated new ones where necessary. New roads for cars are absolutely not required, we should not be encouraging more cars to drive on the roads by creating them. Consideration should be made to change plans for ‘viewforth link road’ to a designated cycle route which passes through greenspace and mature trees, aiding the flow of cycle traffic while avoiding busier streets/bus routes	Noted.
2.9	Wendy Faulkner 25th August	Need for a comprehensive and 'joined up' approach to the CNEs *Alive with Nature* addresses part of what’s in the Council’s *CNE Plan 2021-2045* – principally improving carbon absorption, the quality of the natural environment and people’s engagement with it. I like the vision for Stirling to have “a thriving natural environment enjoyed by all”. And I	Noted.

		think the framing of specific objectives under four themes – to enhance, connect, embed and involve – is useful. However, whilst some of the policies needed to reduce emissions in the shire are addressed in other SC documents (notably, the *Active Travel Action Plan* and *Food Growing Strategy*), those cited do not appear to address other things we could and should be doing to reduce emissions – eg, building the public transport network and service levels needed to really reduce car use, supporting local businesses and communities to audit and reduce their carbon footprint. ***It would be good to hear more about what else SC in doing to reduce the county's carbon footprint?*** I have struggled to find out what Stirling Council is actually doing around the CNE partly because of the inter-related policy strands and the various partner jurisdictions (the National Park, Forth Valley). ***Is there a danger that policy in this area is becoming too 'siloed' when we need 'joined up thinking' if our efforts on the CNEs are to be effective?***	Scotland's 2009 Climate Change Act places duties on the Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate change, and to act sustainably in everything it does. Since 2015, the Council has also been required to submit an Annual Report that outlines the work it has carried out to comply with the Climate Change Duties. Information on the carbon emissions of Stirling Council and the Council area are available as part of the Council's Sustainable Stirling Annual Report. Through this Plan Stirling Council is committed to working with partners and key stakeholders to ensure that we achieve joined up thinking. The development of this Plan has already enabled a wide range of stakeholders to agree priorities and targets.
2.10	Wendy Faulkner 27th August	How to build and enable the needed community engagement? The fourth set of Alive with Nature objectives seeks to involve stakeholders, including communities and volunteers, to monitor, drive and deliver change. One suspects that this emphasis on community engagement is motivated in part by an anticipation of limited funding. Nonetheless, it is clear that the scale of the emergencies we face will require effort and change by all groups and sectors in our communities. Moreover, local knowledge and insight into economic, environmental and social history and conditions (eg, re flooding) can provide crucial inputs into developing appropriate solutions. The challenge is how to enable this level and breadth of engagement. The following thoughts are offered in a constructive spirit, hopefully to open a conversation: · In order to get significant and impact-ful community engagement, there is a crying need to raise environmental awareness, of both the CNE issues and possible solutions. The point of doing this is to inspire and motivate citizens to get involved in whatever actions make sense to people locally. It is to build a movement of people coming together to make a difference. · How to inform and motivate citizens is arguably the greatest challenge wrt to community engagement around the CNEs. It will require creativity as well as targeted outreach (to local schools, housing, businesses, youth groups, etc). Thankfully, there is also a growing body	Noted. A commitment has been made to Council Committee to develop a Community Engagement Plan to support delivery of the Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan and supporting documents. Agreed. This Plan recognises the need to raise awareness of the issues and the Council is committed to establishing the infrastructure needed to enable communities to make a difference. Agreed.

		of experience to learn from and draw on as communities across the country and beyond wrestle with the challenge. · One possible approach to inspiring engagement is suggested by recent experience in Fintry, where the community has become informed and animated about nature (in general) through work on the red squirrel. Why not use red squirrels a mascot for the whole 'Alive with Nature' effort – a red squirrel logo on Council road signs and anywhere that relevant actions are being taken?! Because people have strong positive associations with the species, this could work symbolically to build 'buy in' for the CNE plan. (Why not: everyone will have a red squirrel within 500m of their door?!) · Existing community bodies undoubtedly have a role to play. For instance, Community Councils might be mandated to survey residents for inputs on CNE actions and to monitor progress around targets for CNE actions. Similarly, Community Development Trusts could be proactive and strategic in developing a more circular, green economy in their localities. More 'bottom up' local initiatives should clearly be supported where these exist. · However good the level of local community engagement, there will continue to be a need for significant investment and support from governmental, third sector and business organisations. For many of the changes required, it will not work to simply hand over responsibility (or trees!) to communities. Some level of funding will likely be needed as well as relevant expertise (eg, specific practical guidance on what it means to plant 'the right trees in the right place' in the context of different localities).	Noted. Informing residents of the work that is being delivered is important. We have been trialling small scale signage as part of the test sites linked to the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan (which will be out for public consultation soon). Your suggestion has been noted and will be discussed with Council colleagues and partners. Agreed. Agreed.
2.11	Veronica Korkut 29th August	Maintain the exisiting trees Trees in Broomridge are way too tall for a residential area. Don't plant any more trees until you fully grasp and accept the ongoing liability to maintain them.	Awaiting a response from the relevant Council department.
2.12	Dorothy Breckenridge 30th August	Active travel route Stirling-C/barron-Gargunnock-Kippen-Arnprior-Buchlyvie Fill in the missing links to enable an active travel route from Aberfoyle to Buchlyvie to Arnprior to Kippen to Gargunnock to Cambusbarron to Stirling. Missing about 2-4k route, a couple of wee bridges and some route maintenance.	The refresh of the Local Transport Strategy and Active Travel Action Plans will align even more closely with the objectives of the recent National Transport Strategy as well as addressing climate change concerns and the longer term effects on travel of the COVID pandemic.

2.13	Tom Furniss 30th August	Stop spraying grass verges I welcome Stirling Council's Alive With Nature plan. But the Council needs to look to its own routine practices, some of which constitute the kind of environmental vandalism that this document condemns. I'm referring to the routine spraying of weedkiller on the edges of paths and alongside fences and hedges in school grounds, parks and verges, which destroys wildflowers (so-called 'weeds') and wildlife habitats (especially by hedges) and deprives pollinators of food sources. Weedkiller also destroys soil organisms, gets into water systems, and can affect animal and human health. This is especially pernicious in school grounds. Such spraying goes against some of the key aims of the Council's plan - - the objective to ensure 'Biodiverse areas exist within all school grounds and business parks' (p.14) and the highest priority action to 'Deliver changes to land management, include grass and verge maintenance' (p.15).	Through the Alive with Nature Plan the Council has committed to managing 50% of its land for biodiversity The Council is currently working with a range of partners to develop the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan.. The Pollinator Action Plan will be out for public consultation soon and will enable communities and residents to propose changes to the management of Council land. The majority of which is within our settlements. Reducing the use of pesticides is also included in the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan.

Other consultation responses

In addition the Council received two consultation responses through direct email. These responses were very detailed and a summary of the comments is provided here.

No.	Date of Response	Summary of comments made	Stirling Council response and amendment
3.1	2nd August	• It is extremely hard not to agree with the first option offered for the questions asked in the survey. There is however a world of difference between the vision and the delivery of that vision. To bridge that gap there needs to be bold and consistent action. • To get the public on board with the proposals of this important and positive document, and to carry them forward with it, there needs to be an attractive, informative and educational policy to go with it drawing the public in. This is missing. • The Council should have a target for the number of hectares of flower meadows which should be established, in addition to improving road verges similar to the number of trees that should be planted. • The small areas of wild flowers that have been planted along some road verges, (as has been done on the Glasgow Road at Milton Terrace), are to be welcomed but as far as increasing bio-diversity do	Agreed. The draft Alive with Nature Plan recognises that education and engagement is essential if we are to deliver the widespread change needed to combat the climate and nature emergencies. The Plan contains objectives and actions related to education related to education. The Plan includes a commitment to manage 50% of the Council's open space for biodiversity. The changes made in each area will be agreed through consultation with the communities. Wildflower meadows are one of several options and so it is not possible to place a target on the area of wildflowers meadows created.

		very little as they are far too small. What is required are some meadow size areas, several hectares in size being established. • In addition to having targets for tree planting you should also have targets for the following:- • The kilometres of hedge improvements per year over the next 5 years. • The kilometres of new hedges to planted each year of the next 5-10 years. • The kilometres of significant verge improvements each year over the next 5-10 years. • Tree Planting: The targets of 80,00 and 160,000 trees seems high unless you include tress planted for commercial purposes. Commercial tree plantations are usually one species and are not good for encouraging bio-diversity. Carbon sequestration is only good if the wood is used for building material or making items for long term use. • Native trees require a range of different habitats and conditions for good growth. A variety of trees need to be planted in any one area so that there is a much richer bio-diversity. • It is not just the planting of trees that is required, they have to be planted in the right places and at the right densities they also require a maintenance programme. • As well as the planning system encouraging zero carbon infrastructure and developments, planning should always look at ways of increasing bio-diversity. • Roadside verges, in all planning applications, should be taken more seriously. • All planning applications should include a question along the lines of 'What is to be included in the application to improve the bio-diversity of the neighbourhood?' • I have mentioned allowing hedges to grow, it would also be helpful if herbicides sprays were not used along the base of hedges and around trees. • It is essential to know what is present, and indeed what was present but now absent, in our area when considering any planning for bio-	The omission of hedgerows is an oversight. The planting of hedgerows is included within the tree planting target. The text of the draft Plan has been amended to include mention of hedgerows. The Council is currently working with a range of partners to develop the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. As part of this the Council will commit to managing our road verges in a more biodiversity friendly way where possible. The tree planting targets, including the overall 1,000,000 trees target will include trees planted for commercial purposes. The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. Where possible these will be native species but there are situations where non-native species are more appropriate. Stirling Council area is covered by 2 x Planning Authorities (Stirling Council Planning Authority and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Planning Authority). Currently Stirling Council Planning Officers are working on updates to Supplementary Guidance within the Local Development Plan to ensure the onus is on developers to ensure developments are as sustainable as possible. Emerging national planning policy and guidance advocates the rebalancing of the planning system so that climate change is a guiding principle for all plans and decisions. Reducing the use of pesticides is also included in the Stirling Pollinator Action Plan. The Council has a service level agreement with The Wildlife Information Centre, our local biological records centre, to ensure that all data collected in handled in the most effective manner. p

		diversity. They also all need to be in one place. The current systems are piecemeal and very inaccurate. • The Council should designate a number of areas which are surveyed on a regular basis, every 3 or 4 years to determine any changes in bio-diversity that are taking place. • 1,000 volunteers These will need to be well resourced and supported from within the Stirling Council, perhaps with the assistance of other groups. (RSPB, SWT, Treelink and On the verge being examples). • The Stirling Council Area is in the unfortunate situation in that it seems to have an overabundance of plants that fit into the invasive non-native species category. It is not that the council does not know these plants exist, members of the public have brought them to the council's attention, but it seems that all those with powers to do something about them, Scottish Government, Nature Scotland, and Stirling Council very seem reluctant to act, especially in relation to giant hogweed.	Agreed. Agreed. The scale of the issue is huge and therefore requires further detailed planning beyond the scope of the Alive with Nature Plan. The Plan does contain a high priority action to: 'Work with partners and volunteers to map the locations of invasive non-native species across the Stirling Council area and develop an INNS control action plan' by 2025.
3.2	28th August	Having read the complete document, here are some comments for consideration. • The document gives the impression that the group have full control over the land in the Stirlingshire Region. • A primary focus should be on educating landowners large and small, on the benefit of carbon-neutral practices and of encouraging wildlife. • The Report implies the policy "will work to protect and restore the ecosystems" and "these actions will help us halt biodiversity loss" This is an exaggeration and an inaccurate statement to make. • Excessive flooding has impacted multiple areas in Stirlingshire. The approval of building on known flood plains could be avoided thus preventing flooding in low-lying land. Farming and forestry practices of quick run-off of rainwater has been known for a number of years to have a negative impact on areas likely to flood. • It is generally accepted that partnership approach is essential, but so far, some of the primary options mooted seem to be written by people who neither work on the land nor understand it. Other knowledgeable, informed contributors like the NFU, local farmers and land owners must be consulted on the Plan. • Planning and housebuilding is referenced, our green spaces are slowly being used-up for housing, yet we must preserve nature and wildlife. Planning policy like the local LDP must adapt to suit our long-term goals.	The majority of land is in non-Council ownership. Plan recognises that working with landowners is essential. Agreed. The Plan includes a commitment to establishing a landowner forum for this purpose. Protecting and restoring our ecosystems is an important action but much more also needs to be done. It is one of many steps included within the Plan. Flood protection and flood alleviation are important issues beyond the scope of this Plan and are addressed in local Flood Risk Management Plans. The Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan also recognises the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change and will be developing an Adaptation Strategy over the next year. Consultation on this Plan was open to the public and promoted through the local press and the Council's media channels. The consultation information was also distributed to a wide range of partners, including NFUS, to share with their members. Stirling Council area is covered by 2 x Planning Authorities (Stirling Council Planning Authority and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Planning Authority). Currently Stirling Council Planning Officers

		• The important volcanic location of Craigforth is mentioned, but not the imminent redevelopment of the whole. What will be said about the construction, pollution, loss of pristine land, and woods which will be sacrificed in the name of economic benefits? • "Our landscapes, habitats and wildlife are all being negatively impacted by climate change, land use changes, pollution, and habitat fragmentation." I strongly disagree with this statement. Too little credit and value is given to the hundreds of farms in Stirlingshire which create food for the population. Our landscape is a working environment for the benefit of us all in producing food and maintaining the wildlife which exists. • Implementation and Monitoring – The Report doesn't mention what types of trees have been planted as some may not be suitable. The opportunity should be taken to plant a wide mix of tree species which will build a woodland's resilience to climate change and therefore its chance of flourishing. • It is concerning that hedge planting is not referenced, given what hawthorn and blackthorn offer in shelter and food to wild animals. Has the future management, e.g., pruning etc, been taken into consideration for the future? • Challenges to overcome – Industrial and agricultural pressure…….Where is the evidence, we should be focussing on Stirlingshire as this is what we can influence! Does the land use policy comment relate to international (was EU), national or local policy? • Opportunities to embrace - the "Green Recovery" is just jargon words which veils and diminishes what is really needed. It is good that the Plan calls for quick action, but full funding is not guaranteed to support such a Plan as there are too many unknowns. • Strategic and Legal Context – This Plan is top heavy with 27 other Policies to debate over. A simpler approach would be more likely to succeed. • Our Plan of Action – Again, the indication is that the Stirlingshire countryside is in some form of crisis, when it is not. • Our Objective – Again, how can EN1 and EN2 be fully achieved when much of the land does not fall within public ownership? It would be more honest to state what percentage lies within the council's authority.	are working on updates to Supplementary Guidance within the Local Development Plan to ensure the onus is on developers to ensure developments are as sustainable as possible. Emerging national planning policy and guidance advocates the rebalancing of the planning system so that climate change is a guiding principle for all plans and decisions. Noted. This statement is taken from the recent international, scientific reports on the impacts of climate change and the biodiversity crisis. The same impacts are referenced in the 2019 State of Nature Report for Scotland. The text of the draft Plan has been adjusted to reflect the Council's commitment to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. Where possible these will be native species but there are situations where non-native species are more appropriate. The omission of hedgerows is an oversight. The planting of hedgerows is included within the tree planting target. The text of the draft Plan has been amended to include mention of hedgerows. As mentioned above, the pressures that exist within the Stirling Council area are the same as those that are impacting Scotland and internationally. The land use policy relates to all levels and the commitment to developing a local land use strategy should help to overcome this issue. By developing this Plan Stirling Council has recognised that we are in the midst of climate and nature emergencies. By adopting this Plan the Council is able to set a budget for this work. However this Plan also recognises that resources are not limitless and the Council will work with partners to secure the resources needed to deliver change. Noted. Noted. See comment above relating to local pressures. The majority of land is in non-Council ownership. The Plan acknowledges that the support of landowners is crucial to the successful delivery of the landscape scale change needed to effectively combat the twin emergencies. The landowner forum is seen as the first step in establishing the necessary working relationships.

		• Connecting People with Nature (Connect) – Trees and plants yes, wild animals, not a chance. It really is naive to think this.	Noted.
		• Nature at the Heart of Life (Embed) - EM2, there is no reason why one cannot enjoy the environment or pursue health, wealth and happiness now!	Noted.
		• Engaging with Nature (Involve) – IN2 – The stakeholders will have an idea of what is possible, not so sure if the communities will unless advised of the facts impartially.	Noted.
		• Key Performance Indicators – As said in the text, it is a challenging to address KPI's and a few of the targets are far from comprehensive, or objective.	Agreed.
		• Chart on P14 – There are some residential properties which will never be accessible to a green area, so how can the target be 100%? ,	The aim, through this Plan, is to ensure that everyone has access to a natural green space. In some instances this may prove to be more challenging. We will do our best to achieve our 100% target.
		• If climate change is likely, why plant trees "in and around settlements" when the likelihood is that it could cause damage to property and loss of human life in future if weather patterns become more extreme.	Trees in and around settlements provide a wide range of benefits that can help reduce some of the impacts of climate change including cooling, interception of rainfall and reducing air pollution.
		• Highest priority actions – What kind of trees, where and how long do they take to mature? When can they start absorbing co2 and when is the optimum point in their life?	The Council is committed to planting the 'Right Tree in the Right Place'. We are currently working with partners to develop a more accurate method for measuring the amount of carbon sequestered by our natural environment, not just our trees and woodlands. This methodology, when finalised, and our carbon calculations for our natural environment will be made publicly available.
		• "nature-rich active travel routes" are contentious as people and nature are not compatible, unless you build hides so that people are not visible. Nature Conservation sites will need to be protected and developed, so that they become an area of shelter, food source and safe location for wildlife.	
		• Action – I strongly agree with the points in Land Use, but Education needs to be added to ensure that the key messages of land use reach people not directly in control of the council, to achieve the target of 100%.	The draft Alive with Nature Plan recognises that education and engagement is essential if we are to deliver the widespread change needed to combat the climate and nature emergencies. The Plan contains objectives and actions related to education related to education. The Plan also includes a commitment for Stirling Council to put in place the necessary infrastructure (including the community champion forum and community engagement platform) to enable the sharing of expertise and support.
		• Community – I agree that local ownership is an effective means. Perhaps it is also important to share knowledge and success with others to stop the same mistakes being made.	
		• Research & Development – Work with as many 'neutral' partners and specialists where appropriate as possible.	Noted.
		• The document does not mention inclusivity of society, and how we must all individually help reduce climate change as we all own a bit of it.	The Plan does recognise that everyone has to play their part.