



Green  
Action  
Trust

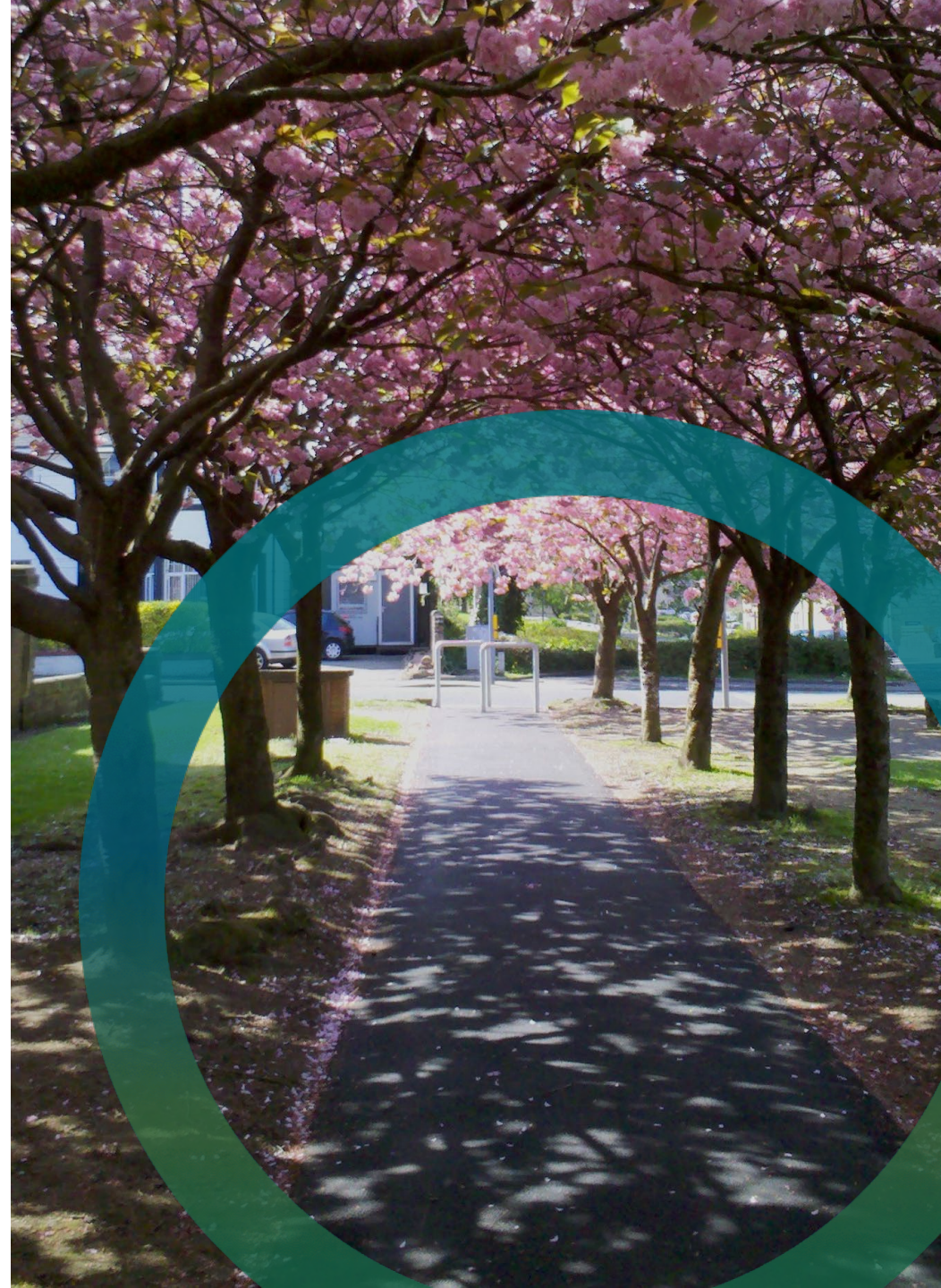
# OUR PLAN 2024-2025

POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL REGENERATION



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## FOREWORD FROM OUR CHAIR

Over the past four decades, we have built up an impressive track record of environmental regeneration and earned the trust of the public sector as a reliable delivery partner, creating numerous green spaces across the country.

Whilst we are proud of this legacy, we want to achieve much more. In recent months, we have made significant changes within the Trust, including recruitment of a new Chief Executive, specialist team members and Trustees, alongside an organisational restructure. This level of change has given us an opportunity to step back, restate our ambitions, and focus on making even greater impact on Scotland's environmental health and wellbeing with our partners in the years ahead.

While the world we operate in continues to be dynamic, with political and environmental change a certainty, we are in a great position to offer solutions to the problems that our country, partners and clients face.

The context of 30x30, National Planning Framework 4 and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, means that we have an ambition, and a responsibility, to accelerate our efforts towards achieving our vision of a Scotland where people, nature and the environment thrive, side by side.

We have ambitions to create more connected green spaces and undertake larger projects at landscape scale. We will achieve this by deepening the valued partnerships we already have in the public sector and expanding our collaborations both in the public and private sectors.

I believe we have the people, expertise, and partnerships that will enable us to rise to these challenges and deliver positive change.



Michael Roe  
Chair, Green Action Trust



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

This document describes the Green Action Trust's plan for the financial year 2024-25. It is structured in a way that steps through our core purpose and the major environmental drivers and risks that lie behind our operations, before outlining our priorities, key actions and financial strategy. The second half of the document details the key plans to deliver our objectives within specified areas of our operations, under the categories of programme development and project/service delivery.

## About us

Our vision is of a Scotland where people, nature and the environment thrive, side by side. To achieve this, we deliver environmental regeneration projects and programmes across Scotland, notably the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN), working with a wide range of partners to address climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental inequality.

As a charity, we rely on funding streams that allow us to develop initiatives and deliver services that create transformational change for communities and contribute to multiple outcomes in Scotland's National Performance Framework.

## Strategic drivers and risk

Business, regardless of the sector, operates in a dynamic environment which can be challenging fiscally, economically and politically. This is the case for the current business plan cycle, given that over the next 36 months there will be a degree of uncertainty around policy priorities, funding streams and emerging opportunities.

However, we believe that the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, along with a growing need to tackle inequality, mean that there will be opportunities to demonstrate that the Trust can be an enabler of positive change. In writing the business plan, we have focused on the core business of delivering on the most pressing priorities for positive environmental impact. In doing so, we also see that there is an opportunity to do that across multiple funders whose objectives and targets align with the Trust's.

## Our priorities

For 2024-25, we have identified six priorities that will drive our activity throughout the year. These are detailed in section 4. They include a focus on project delivery in our core market – the public sector – and an increased focus on CSGN engagement, delivery and impact reporting.

We are also prioritising building organisational capacity and resilience, following a significant restructure and period of recruitment. Lastly, we will further engage with Scottish Government and support its environmental objectives, alongside planning ahead for future service, market and income stream diversification.

## Financial projection

Financial sustainability is key to ensuring we deliver our charitable purpose and grow our impact. Section 5 outlines our financial strategy and outlook. Our projected turnover of £4.85m in 2024-25 represents an achievable target based on previous performance.

## Programme and project delivery

Sections 6 and 7 go into more detail around our key plans for operational activities that will deliver our financial and environmental impact ambitions. Our major programme work includes implementing the CSGN Action Plan agreed with Scottish Government and further supporting and delivering the aims of the Leven Programme and Clyde Climate Forest.

Finally, we have an extremely busy set of activity plans to deliver projects and develop services and support for partners across our six categories of environmental solutions: urban greenspace; woodland and forestry; vacant and derelict land; surface water management; habitat and biodiversity; and green active travel.

# ABOUT THE GREEN ACTION TRUST

With nearly four decades of delivering environmental regeneration projects across Scotland, we provide bespoke solutions to turn policy into action on climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental inequality.

Working closely with a range of public, private and non-profit partners across Scotland, we develop and deliver projects and programmes that improve the health and wellbeing of people and nature where they are needed most.

Our major programmes include coordinating and delivering the Central Scotland Green Network, one of the most ambitious green infrastructure initiatives in Europe.

Alongside our large-scale partnership work, we provide project development and management services to deliver transformational change that benefits nature and communities at a local level.

We provide environmental solutions in the following areas:



Urban greenspace



Surface water management



Woodland & forestry



Green active travel



Vacant & derelict land



Habitat & biodiversity

## Our Purpose

*We improve Scotland's environments for people and for nature.*

*We use our expertise and strong partnerships to deliver local solutions to global issues.*

*We combat environmental inequality by focusing our efforts where they are needed most.*



# SUPPORTING NATIONAL AND GLOBAL OUTCOMES

## National Performance Framework

Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework (NPF) sets out a vision for the country’s collective wellbeing. The framework aligns closely with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and provides a set of outcomes and indicators that we as an organisation and as an environmental partner, contribute to at a national level.

We achieve this through aligning our work with policies and strategies such as 30x30, National Planning Framework 4, and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

The key NPF outcomes that our workstreams deliver are:

  
Environment

  
Poverty

  
Communities

  
Health

  
Economy

Our commitment is to measure and report the impact of our project and partnership programmes against the national indicators for these outcomes.



## OUR ROLE IN THE CENTRAL SCOTLAND GREEN NETWORK

Covering 10,000 square kilometres and with a 40-year timeframe, the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) is one of the largest and most ambitious green infrastructure programmes in Europe. It includes 19 of Scotland's 32 local authorities, takes in 87% of the country's most deprived areas and offers the potential to improve the lives of 3.5 million people, or 65% of the population.

Through the support of the Scottish Government and over 80 partners, its focus is to address climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental inequality by connecting people to greenspace where it is needed most.

The Green Action Trust has been tasked with coordinating CSGN delivery since its inception. The Trust achieves this through a combination of direct project development/delivery and facilitating action through a wide range of CSGN partners across public, private and voluntary sectors.

Included as a National Development in NPF4, the CSGN is also a major contributor to Scottish Government's targets to address the twin crises of the climate emergency and biodiversity loss, as well as moving towards net zero emissions. It also has a significant role to play in Scotland's National Performance Framework.

The Trust's role in the CSGN has 4 key components, which we will continue to focus on in the year ahead:

- ❖ Raise awareness & understanding of the role of the CSGN in delivering multiple benefits
- ❖ Co-ordination of CSGN partner activities to maximise the effectiveness and multi-functionality of delivery
- ❖ Maintain a supportive environment for CSGN delivery
- ❖ Delivery of DP30 (Delivery Plan 2030) workstream activities



“Such is the scale and ambition of the CSGN that its delivery runs through all our work in central Scotland. Its objectives have a crucial role in our plans, not just for this year, but for the years ahead.”

*Tom Campbell, CEO*



## DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE

In our ongoing efforts to ensure we fully support and develop our people, we recognise the importance of investing in skills and encouraging the personal growth of individuals. This year, as we grow our team, we have reorganised the management and team structure and will support staff as new roles and objectives are established.

We will take a multi-faceted approach to supporting and developing our team, including:



Supporting staff through **organisational change**, including the restructure, new roles and objective setting.



Encouraging **knowledge sharing and collaboration** within the team to aid learning and develop our collective expertise.



Implementing relevant **training programmes** to enhance skill sets and adaptability, whilst seeking to improve professional development and upskilling through CPD and supporting the attainment of professional memberships.



Reviewing and implementing **Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP)** and initiatives to support staff welfare and foster a healthy work/life balance.



Upholding **fair pay policies** (including maintenance of the Living Wage accreditation, and pay gap reviews), to maintain equity within the workplace.





# STRATEGIC DRIVERS

## Global and National Context

The economic, political and social landscape we are living and working in is in constant flux. Global economic instability, pandemic, war, climate impacts and biodiversity collapse are challenging us all and the result is an ever-changing policy landscape in attempts to tackle these systemic issues.

Green Action Trust exists as a small organisation tackling big issues, however our size also means that we can be agile in our response to change and continue to deliver projects and build partnerships that will support and advocate for communities. Over the coming years, we aim to scale this action up regionally, across the CSGN, and nationally to deliver multiple benefits at a strategic level.

## Medium to Long-Term Outlook

The next 5 years look to be just as challenging as climate impact, strains on food production and land use, drought, mass migration, and species loss increase.

Along with the difficult transition to meet emission targets, these factors mean we need to be prioritising action in the right places and be flexible enough to change direction or reprioritise when required.

While the need for action is greater than ever, the funding outlook is uncertain, as evidenced for example by the discontinuation of Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Fund.

We will work across all levels to deliver environmental regeneration projects and will gather evidence to demonstrate the social and economic benefits that our projects deliver. Our staff will be empowered and inspired to work in this challenging sector through continuous development; keeping up to date with changing science, technology and innovative solutions, knowledge sharing through sustainable partnerships and celebrating joint successes.

Our work will be evidence led and will use qualitative and quantitative methods to record and report work carried out in the CSGN and beyond. With the need to make the business more resilient to the changing funding landscape, we will continue to develop new approaches, including blended finance models, building on Nature Scot funded projects (our [FIRNS](#) work in 2023/24).

## Climate Change

There is significant legislation to directly and indirectly tackle climate change. These include direct regulation and legislative targets for reducing emissions, land use reform and flood risk legislation amongst others.

We will be mindful of this legislation, associated policy and guidance to ensure that projects create resilient safe spaces for people. We will work with developers and planners to design and deliver projects that have the ambition of NPF4 at their heart. We will champion nature-based solutions and look at innovative approaches to integrated surface water management.

## Biodiversity Loss

COP15 in Montreal set some significant and ambitious global goals to tackle biodiversity loss. Currently Scotland is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, and the introduction of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy sets out a clear ambition that Scotland is Nature Positive by 2030.

We will pursue and prioritise projects that deliver direct and indirect biodiversity benefits; through on the ground project delivery to inputting and responding to consultations and policy development using our ecology and biodiversity experts. We will work closely with partners and local authorities to implement and deliver Nature Networks and ensure connectivity corridors for nature and for people.

## Environmental Inequality

In 2022 the United Nations recognised that a clean healthy and sustainable environment was a human right. Embodying this at a national level, Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (NPF) includes targets around the themes of poverty, communities, health, economy and the environment.

We will prioritise efforts and projects where environmental inequality and disadvantage are most prominent. This is reflected not only in our geographical focus within the CSGN area, but also in our ambition to scale project delivery to further regions across Scotland. We will measure the impact and success of these projects using the NPF indicators.



# PRIORITIES FOR 2024-25

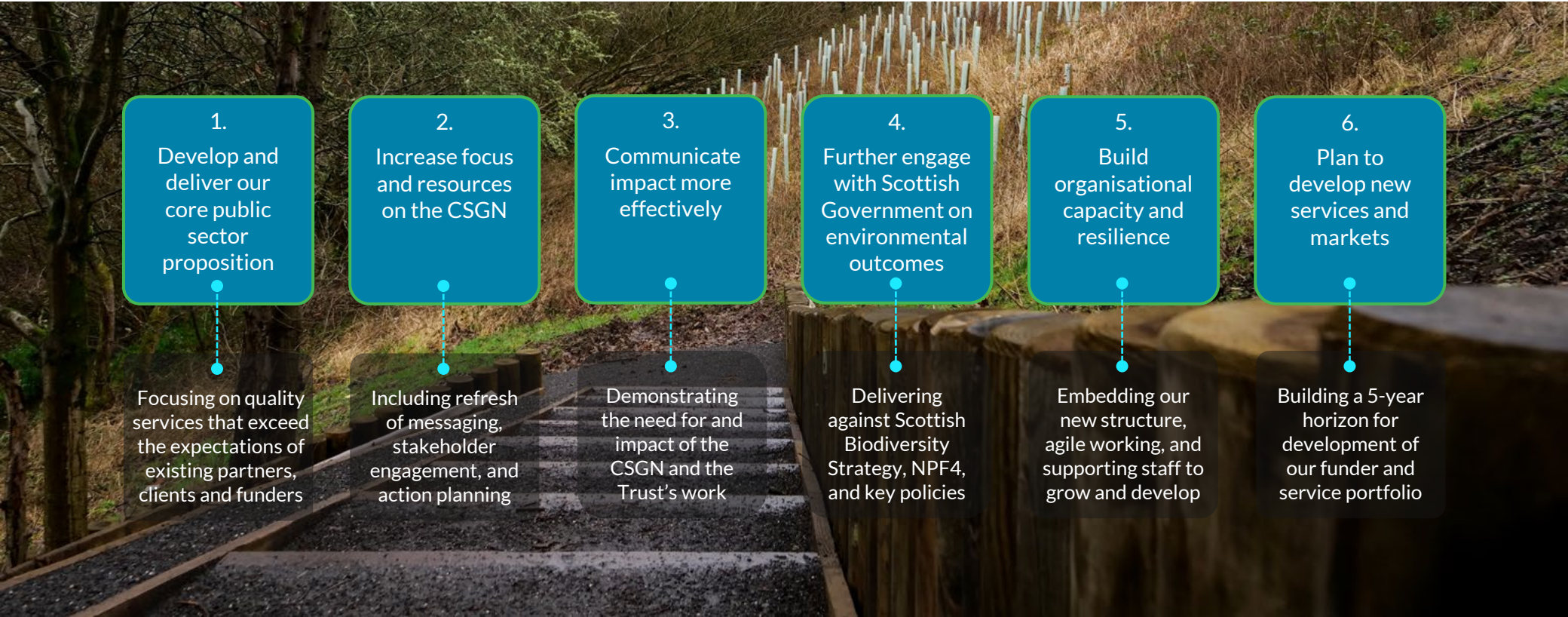
Given the environmental factors at play in our sphere, together with current partner and funder requirements in the public sector, our priorities for this year are clear.

Our priority will be on exceeding expectations with project and programme delivery in the public sector, with a clear focus on taking the CSGN forward.

Our priorities for 2024-25 are:

In addition to delivering projects for existing funders and partners, we also recognise the need to plan for the long-term diversification of our funding base. Therefore, more work will be done this year to explore and plan for future work that can draw on funding outside of our current geography and the public sector.

Operationally, there is also a focus to consolidate our recent organisational restructure and support our team, particularly as we have added significantly to our capacity.



## DELIVERING SUCCESS

This is how we will address these priorities and measure success.

### 1. Develop and deliver our core public sector proposition

- ❖ We will re-engage and support local authorities and our public sector partners to help deliver projects locally and regionally.
- ❖ We will identify areas where local authorities may find resourcing challenging and support them with technical expertise and delivery.
- ❖ We will develop a framework to capture, quantify and report on projects that deliver for the CSGN and key National Performance Indicators.

### 2. Increase focus and resources on the CSGN

- ❖ We will embed CSGN understanding and recognition into all our work programmes, projects and activities.
- ❖ We will demonstrate progress on the mainstreaming of the CSGN through an audit of relevant LA planning documents and reports – specifically noting the number of times the CSGN is cited and drives action.
- ❖ We will hold a national event in 2024 where we will engage with new sectors and use this to drive innovative project development and partnerships.

### 3. Communicate impact more effectively

- ❖ We are committed to reviewing the social, economic and environmental value of our work and of our partners in the CSGN.
- ❖ We will gather data on how projects deliver to the National Performance Framework, UN Sustainable Development Goals and other agendas such as Good Food Nation and reducing health inequalities.
- ❖ We will develop a stakeholder engagement plan for the year ahead and focus messaging and influence where they best deliver priorities.
- ❖ We will update and manage the CSGN and Green Action Trust website and explore other means of communication such as webinars and 'good practice guides'.



## DELIVERING SUCCESS (continued)

4. Further engage with Scottish Government on environmental outcomes

- ❖ We will continue to support the development and implementation of relevant strategies and policies in line with our mission and aims.
- ❖ We will keep track of our responses to consultations and report on all relevant lobbying activities.
- ❖ We will ensure relevant and effective reporting to the Scottish Government to ensure confidence in the success of the CSGN and to support or influence policy, prioritisation and decision making.

5. Build organisational capacity and resilience

- ❖ We will build our team to ensure we have technical expertise across all of our priority areas and allow our people to specialise and become go-to experts in their field.
- ❖ We will prioritise scoping out resilient and sustainable routes to give more financial stability to the Trust and develop a mixed finance model that ensures we are agile and more resilient to political and economic externalities.

6. Plan to develop new services and markets

- ❖ We will continue to research and develop opportunities for alternative funding, e.g. building on our work on the [FIRNS green finance initiative](#) for the CSGN.
- ❖ We will identify opportunities to engage with potential partners and clients beyond our traditional local authority and public sector central Scotland base.
- ❖ We will prepare a rolling 3-year timeline to show how new markets and geographies will be developed in tandem with our existing customer and service portfolio.

# FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND PROJECTIONS

## Overview

Green Action Trust is committed to ensuring financial sustainability and growth to enhance our activities and impact. Our current strategy centres on diversifying funding streams, including grants, donations, earned income from services, and strategic partnerships. We plan our budget annually, aligning it with our strategic goals, and maintain adequate reserves to safeguard against funding shortfalls.

Careful management of our balance sheet and recent sale of previous office buildings have strengthened our financial position, supporting our financial resilience and ability to enhance our service delivery.

## 3-Year Outlook

The political and economic situation in Scotland is dynamic and with UK and Scottish elections coming in the next two years, there is a degree of uncertainty over future policy direction and priorities. It is therefore important that the organisation is flexible and able to respond to a changing operating context. Our recent restructure and recruitment of new skills and capacity puts us in a position to be agile in our approach to securing work and delivering impact over this period.

Given this context, the financial plan over the next three-year period is one of stabilisation, operating a break-even model and maintaining the current level of turnover.

In 2024-25, a break-even position is the target, based on achieving a turnover of £4.85m.





# PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Partnership working lies at the heart of everything Green Action Trust delivers, and we have been working in this way for many years to identify and shape opportunities to deliver on shared, strategic objectives. By working collaboratively to create meaningful partnerships we can deliver more and at scale.

In 2024-25 we will:

- ❖ Continue to support our existing major partnership programmes, which include:
  - Central Scotland Green Network
  - Leven Programme
  - Clyde Climate Forest
- ❖ Develop a pilot programme of work around the emerging Nature Networks policy agenda
- ❖ Identify new opportunities for partnership working, especially where it supports CSGN outcomes
- ❖ Continue to provide advice, guidance and technical input within a range of partnerships we are member to including Inner Forth Futures and Coalfields Communities Landscape Partnership
- ❖ Review and enhance our involvement in emergent and existing partnerships to increase impact and ensure best use of staff resources
- ❖ Ensure the new Programme Management team is embedded into the Trust's revitalised structure

The following pages in this section outline our work and this year's plans for three of our major programmes.



# CENTRAL SCOTLAND GREEN NETWORK

## Overview

We are responsible for driving the delivery of the CSGN, one of the largest and most ambitious green infrastructure programmes in Europe. It is designed to support, link up and build on existing partnerships and programmes with the objective of improving the social, physical, cultural, and environmental wellbeing of central Scotland.

This year we have recognised a need to increase focus on delivering and measuring impact. We are also committing more resources to further develop partner engagement, project delivery and impact reporting.

## Key plans for 2024-25

The 2024/25 CSGN Action Plan identifies a number of priority areas for development in the year ahead. These will be delivered by the wider partnership, coordinated and monitored by the Trust:

- ❖ Updating the CSGN's communications strategy and messaging, including the production of an impact report
- ❖ Focused engagement with partners, in particular local authorities to support project development and delivery in a challenging funding and capacity landscape
- ❖ Supporting and delivering projects and programmes that contribute to achieving Scottish Biodiversity Strategy targets, including tying into mechanisms such as 30x30 and Nature Networks
- ❖ Developing and implementing mechanisms to continue tackling inequality and maximising greening of vacant and derelict land (VDL) in the context of the removal of the VDL Investment Programme funding stream
- ❖ Driving, monitoring and reporting on DP30 delivery



Central Scotland Green Network



**National  
Performance  
Framework**

The CSGN contributes to multiple NPF outcome categories:



Environment



Poverty



Communities



Health



Economy





# Clyde Climate Forest

CANOPY · CONNECTIVITY · CARBON



The CCF contributes to multiple NPF outcome categories:



Environment



Poverty



Communities



Health



Economy

## CLYDE CLIMATE FOREST

### Overview

The Clyde Climate Forest (CCF) is a partnership initiative with a target of planting 18 million trees over the next decade across the Glasgow City Region. The Green Action Trust is a lead delivery partner in the initiative, hosting both the Director and Development Manager roles. We work closely with our delivery partners and the 8 Local Authorities to deliver tree planting and community engagement.

Trees, woodlands, and forests provide a nature-based solution to the twin challenges of a changing climate and ecological collapse. The CCF has specific objectives based on the three 'C's': Canopy, Connectivity, and Carbon. The CCF also contributes to the CSGN.

### Key plans for 2024-25

- ❖ Ensure delivery of the final three local authority assessments for the Glasgow City Region
- ❖ Working with partners and Local Authorities, continue to identify tree planting opportunities in our 16 Target Neighbourhoods
- ❖ Investigate and establish more opportunities for Connectivity sites including expanding the opportunities for riparian corridors
- ❖ Expand the CCF Executive Team to increase volunteer and community engagement
- ❖ Develop and implement a strategy to engage with more local businesses
- ❖ Develop partnership opportunities
- ❖ Work with partners to obtain funding for the CCF Executive Team for the next financial year



# THE LEVEN PROGRAMME

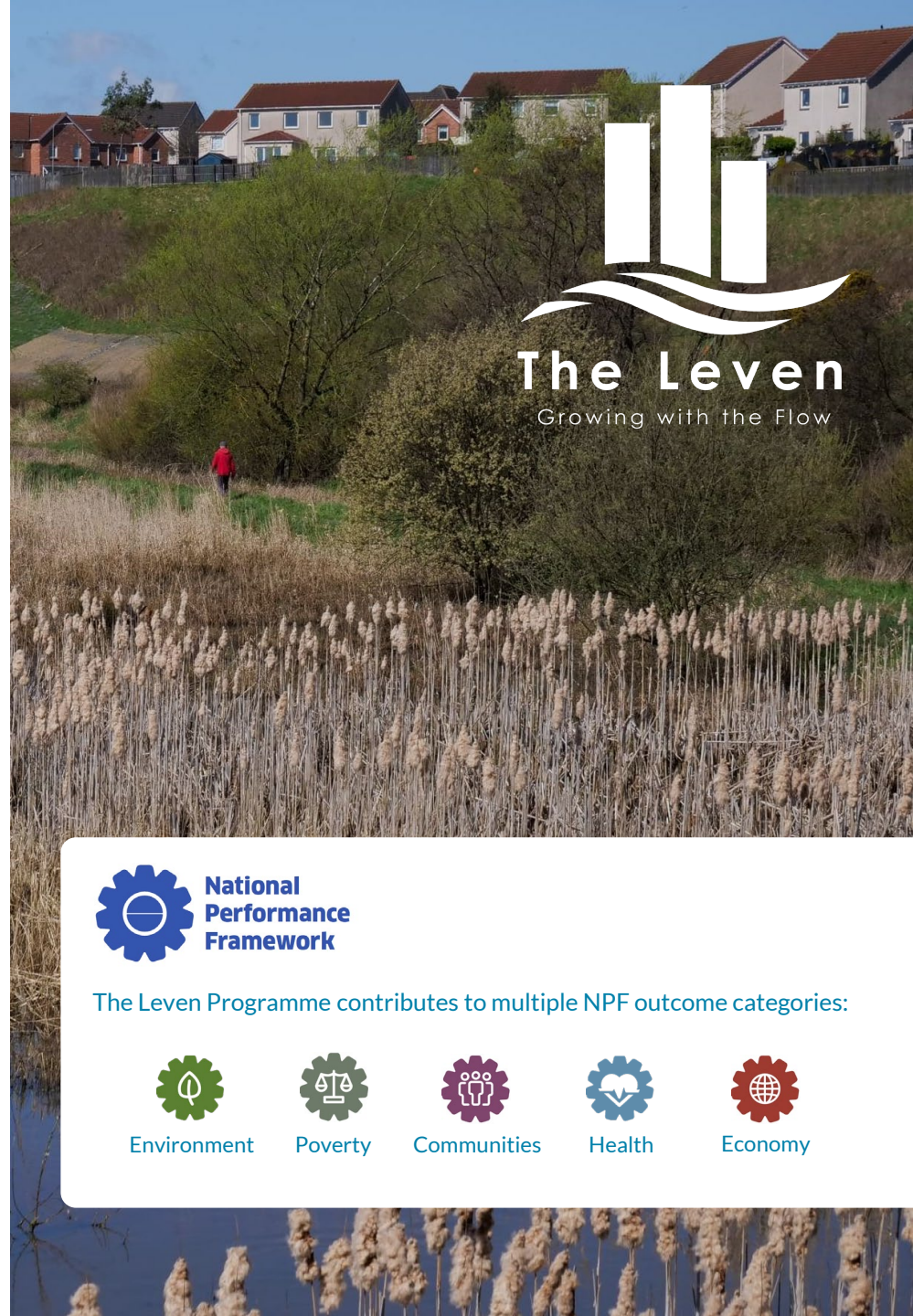
## Overview

The Leven Programme is a partnership initiative formed in 2018 to bring together public bodies, businesses and community representatives who want to make a positive difference to the River Leven and its surrounding areas. Located within the CSGN area, it aims to breathe life back into the river's catchment area through delivery of a number of large-scale projects.

As an active partner, Green Action Trust will continue to support the development of the whole programme. Whilst we will identify ways to drive forward new work and secure linked funding elsewhere in the catchment, the Trust has a core focus on the interlinked work in Levenmouth where we are supporting the realisation of multiple benefits linked to the opening of the new Levenmouth Rail Link.

## Key plans for 2024-25

- ❖ Successfully complete the final year of the Sustrans funded Levenmouth Connectivity Project by completing the agreed design phases of the River Park Routes and delivering work aligned to the Engagement and Behaviour Change workplan.
- ❖ Complete the River Park Programme's development phase, submitting detailed delivery phase plans to core funder National Lottery Heritage Fund and match funders, to secure c.£5m funding to deliver the suite of projects in future years.
- ❖ Identify new opportunities for the Trust through the Leven Programme's developing work areas, including climate adaptation and expanding the Nature Network.
- ❖ Embed the Trust's role in the Leven Programme within our new Programme Management Team.



The Leven Programme contributes to multiple NPF outcome categories:



Environment



Poverty



Communities



Health



Economy

# PROJECT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Alongside our large-scale programmes, we provide end-to-end project solutions and individual specialist services to help clients and partners across Scotland achieve their environmental objectives.

The following pages in this section outline this year's plans at a delivery level under each of our interconnected environmental solutions:



Urban greenspace



Woodland & forestry



Vacant & derelict land



Surface water management



Green active travel



Habitat & biodiversity





# URBAN GREENSPACE

## Overview

Enhancing green, nature-rich spaces in our urban areas has been proven to be a crucial element to healthier urban living. In well-designed spaces, this human benefit can be achieved through the integration of elements such as biodiversity, surface water management, active travel links and general amenity.

In line with the CSGN's objectives, we aim to deliver high quality, multi-functional, climate resilient spaces across all scales of landscape. This year we will build on our expertise across the environmental spectrum to work effectively with stakeholders including local authorities, community groups, and housing associations.

## Key plans for 2024-25

We have greenspace projects in development across the country and will further develop our work in this area in the following ways:

- ❖ Support delivery of the CSGN action plan objectives for green infrastructure, including at least two exemplar partner projects.
- ❖ Promote the Nature Restoration Fund with local authorities as a potential funding source for the creation and delivery of more multi-functional spaces across the urban environment.
- ❖ Deliver multiple outcomes on environmental projects within the urban environment with parties such as SEPA.
- ❖ Work with local authorities to link their Nature Networks to other environmental and funding opportunities by providing a spatial and habitat mapping service to enhance their offering.
- ❖ Seek further opportunities with other environmental stakeholders to develop meaningful places, e.g. as part of 30x30, Community Wealth Building, Growing Spaces, and 20-minute Neighbourhoods.



Our Urban Greenspace projects deliver outcomes for:



Environment



Poverty



Communities



Health



Economy



## WOODLAND & FORESTRY

### Overview

Woodlands and forests play a vital role in fighting both the climate and biodiversity emergencies. As we look to deliver on CSGN commitments to carbon sequestration and biodiversity, providing new woodlands and improving and managing our existing forests are key drivers for our Forestry Team.

Our Forestry Team has undergone some changes during the latter half of last year. We have a new Head of Forestry and two new foresters. Although the team is new, we are enthusiastic and committed to improving and expanding woodlands and forests, while communicating the multiple benefits of trees and woodlands to partners and communities.

### Key plans for 2024-25

- ❖ Work with local authorities and the Clyde Climate Forest team to identify and help deliver woodland and tree planting across the Glasgow City Region.
- ❖ Work with landowners and local authorities to expand woodlands and forests across the Central Scotland Green Network.
- ❖ Continue to deliver maintenance of existing forest and woodland sites.
- ❖ Engage with new organisations and build on existing relationships to find opportunities to increase woodland cover on public and private land.
- ❖ Embrace opportunities to promote the Trust's woodland and forestry work.
- ❖ Embed our new Forestry Team within the Trust and support them with the resources needed to deliver on our commitments.



Our Woodland & Forestry projects deliver outcomes for:



Environment



Communities



Economy



## VACANT AND DERELICT LAND

### Overview

Greening vacant and derelict land (VDL) continues to be both a challenge and an opportunity. Sites are disproportionately associated with disadvantaged areas of post-industrial Scotland, and as a CSGN priority, the Trust continues to identify opportunities where projects can bring benefits to communities and local biodiversity.

This year will see some major development work come to fruition, notably the Cadder Woods project in north Glasgow and work to further develop VDL sites in the local authority areas of Glasgow, Falkirk and Inverclyde, among others.

### Key plans for 2024-25

- ❖ Ensure VDL projects deliver the policy outcome of NPF4 in their contribution to nature recovery
- ❖ Work with Scottish Government and the Scottish Land Commission to encourage the re-allocation of dedicated resources for VDL greening
- ❖ Deliver a high impact £900k project at Cadder Woods, supporting active travel, biodiversity and wider community benefit with the ambition that the site secures Local Nature Reserve status
- ❖ Work with local authority partners to identify priority VDL sites for future remediation through a range of funding streams and/or a re-launched Scottish Government fund
- ❖ Continue to support the Ravenscraig partnership in establishing green infrastructure opportunities within the wider regeneration programme



**National  
Performance  
Framework**

Our Vacant and Derelict Land projects deliver outcomes for:



Environment



Poverty



Communities



Health



Economy



# SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT

## Overview

The need to adapt to our changing climate is becoming much more important, with warmer and wetter winters, as well as more frequent periods of heavy rainfall, which can overwhelm our historically combined drainage systems. We are responding to this need at a variety of scales, as well as delivering on the CSGN aims of developing natural climate solutions and making liveable places.

We are bringing together partners and stakeholders to work in collaboration on options for river restoration in priority catchment areas, slowing the flow of water to ease downstream flooding issues and improving river corridor biodiversity.

To promote the use of nature-based solutions for surface water management at an urban scale, we continue to lead the 10,000 Raingardens for Scotland initiative, which champions and encourages the use of raingardens as a sustainable drainage solution.

## Key plans for 2024-25

In the year ahead our work in this area will focus on:

- ❖ Building a business case for raingardens and sustainable drainage, aimed at land owners and managers, through the commissioning of our 10,000 Raingardens for Scotland research study.
- ❖ Continuing to develop and lead Water Environment Fund (WEF) projects with partners, delivering on CSGN objectives and repairing urban rivers.
- ❖ As part of the CSGN action plan, developing two further exemplar raingarden projects under the 10,000 Raingardens programme.
- ❖ Highlighting the contribution blue-green spaces can make to placemaking, biodiversity and health and wellbeing, as part of knowledge sharing and promoting best practice to CSGN partners



**National  
Performance  
Framework**

Our Surface Water Management projects deliver outcomes for:



Environment



Communities



Health



Economy

## HABITAT & BIODIVERSITY

### Overview

In the midst of a biodiversity crisis, there has never been a greater need for a focus on restoring Scotland's natural environment. We recognise the importance of functioning ecosystems in an adapting climate, where our native species need a well-connected environment to survive.

The recently published draft Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and delivery plan set out actions to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and our work in this area will align with this plan.

Our project plans will create and improve important habitats including woodlands, hedgerows, peatlands, wetlands and grasslands, contributing to CSGN aims to develop natural climate solutions and make liveable places.

### Key plans for 2024-25

- ❖ Deliver projects for partners that prioritise native species and habitats and contribute to wider ecosystem benefits across the landscape.
- ❖ Develop a pilot programme of work around the emerging Nature Networks policy agenda.
- ❖ Deliver programme and projects that address Scottish Biodiversity Strategy objectives and targets.
- ❖ Respond to NatureScot's planning guidance on biodiversity consultations as policy develops and develop our plans to ensure best practice for biodiversity net gain.
- ❖ Work with our partners to deliver Nature Restoration Funded projects where biodiversity improvement is the main focus.
- ❖ Develop woodland and biodiversity management planning and recommendations with our partners to ensure that all environmental projects integrate benefits for nature.



**National  
Performance  
Framework**

Our Habitat and Biodiversity projects deliver outcomes for:



Environment



Communities



Health



## GREEN ACTIVE TRAVEL

### Overview

Active travel is a critical link in our transportation network, giving communities the choice to travel more sustainably. Active travel helps to create places that are more inclusive and promotes more active lifestyles.

We help local authorities and other developers deliver green active travel routes that provide opportunities for access to greenspace, biodiversity enhancements and community connections. Greening these routes also provides the opportunity to make valuable habitat connections across the CSGN.

The funding landscape for active travel is currently in a state of flux. Funding is likely now to be split between the local authority block grant and the Active Travel Infrastructure Fund administered by Transport Scotland. However the funding is to be channelled, there is an ongoing need for all Scottish local authorities to develop Active Travel Strategies and use the central funding given to them for active travel projects. In the year ahead, the Trust will continue to provide expertise and capacity to deliver these projects.

### Key plans for 2024-25

- ❖ Develop engagement with Roads and Transportation teams within local authorities, where appropriate through umbrella organisations such as SCOTS (The Scottish Collaboration of Transportation Specialists).
- ❖ Promote the work of the CSGN to potential stakeholders such as housebuilders in the context of green active travel infrastructure.
- ❖ Assist local authorities to recognise opportunities to facilitate the delivery of the blue-green routes within their Active Travel Strategies.
- ❖ Promote opportunities to deliver safe, accessible and well-connected neighbourhoods as part of the 20-minute neighbourhood approach to placemaking.



**National  
Performance  
Framework**

Our Green Active Travel projects deliver outcomes for:



Environment



Poverty



Communities

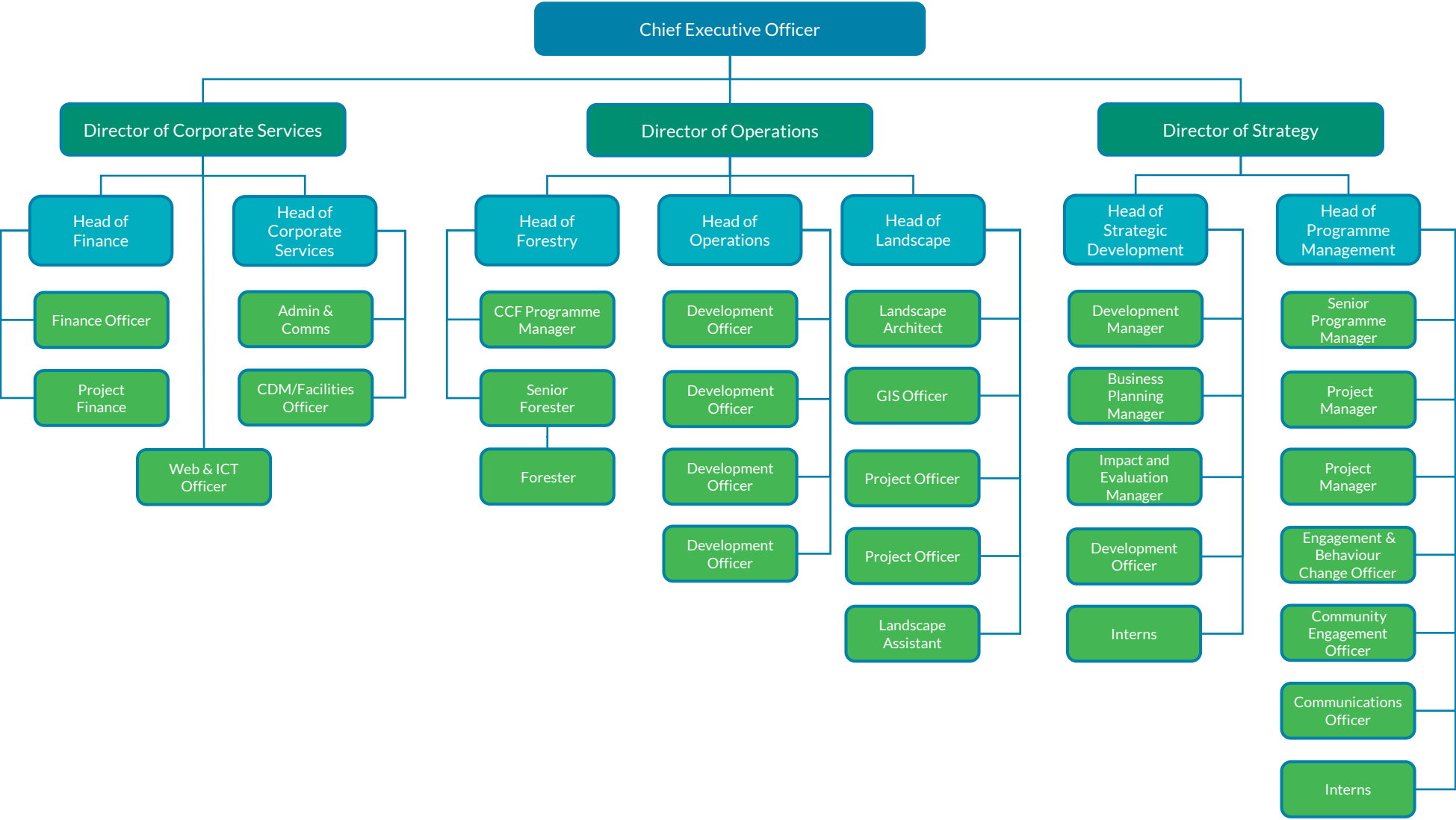


Health



Economy

# APPENDIX: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE







POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL REGENERATION



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