## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>00 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1: Energy and Carbon Management</td>
<td>01 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2: Water Resource Management and Flood Control</td>
<td>02 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3: Waste Management</td>
<td>03 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 4: Transport and Travel</td>
<td>04 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 5: Sustainable Procurement</td>
<td>05 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 6: Buildings, Asset Management and Sustainable Places</td>
<td>06 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 7: Environmental Governance and Compliance</td>
<td>07 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 8: Water, Land &amp; Air Quality Management</td>
<td>08 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 9: Biodiversity Management</td>
<td>09 – 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 10: Environmental awareness &amp; participation</td>
<td>10 – 01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Acknowledgements

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Scottish Canals
Environment Strategy 2015-25

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Caledonian Canal
Introduction

Responding to emerging environmental challenges, reducing our impact and enhancing the environment in its widest sense is integral to what Scottish Canals does now, and for our future success. Our first Environment Strategy seeks to define a clear route to delivering sustainable benefits during the next ten years (2015-25) for our customers, the canal network and the wider environment.
Foreword

“Our strategy is not just about environmental housekeeping. It is much more than that. We see it as a great opportunity for Scottish Canals to deliver multiple benefits for everyone.”

The Strategy sets out how we will directly contribute to Scottish Government’s National Outcomes\(^{(1)}\) to create sustainable places, reduce the environmental impact of resource use and to enjoy, protect and enhance our built and natural environment.

We have reviewed our current performance across ten key environmental themes and considered the benefits that positive environmental management can bring. This has shaped a series of key aims and targets which will form our priorities for the next ten years.

By working with our partners and customers, we are confident that this strategy will build on our previous successes and deliver many tangible environmental, social and economic benefits over the coming years.

Steve Dunlop
CEO, Scottish Canals
Executive summary

1. Responding to emerging environmental challenges, reducing our impact and enhancing the environment is integral to what Scottish Canals does now, and to our future success.

3. The purpose of Scottish Canals’ first Environment Strategy is to directly contribute to the Scottish Government’s National Outcomes\(^{(1)}\) to create sustainable places, reduce the environmental impact of our resource use and to enjoy, protect and enhance our built and natural environment. We will do this by managing our environmental assets beneficially and by reducing the wider environmental impacts of our activities.\(^{(1)}\)

3. The Strategy sets out how we will deliver cost-effective sustainable benefits over the next ten years (2015-25) for our customers, the canal network and the wider environment.

4. The Strategy aligns closely with Scottish Government policies (National Performance Framework\(^{(1)}\) and Making the Most of Scotland’s Canals\(^{(2)}\)), Scottish Canals’ vision ‘Safeguarding our heritage, building our future’ and the Scottish Canals Corporate Plan (2014-17)\(^{(3)}\) and takes account of environmental legislation, policy and guidance.
Executive summary

5. The priorities and content are based on consultation with Scottish Canals staff and external environmental experts, a review of current drivers and environmental performance; and an international standard (ISO 14001) Environmental Management System\(^4\) review of Scottish Canals’ activities and their potential environmental impacts.

6. Seven guiding principles define our approach to environmental management. (See page 00 – 08)

7. The Strategy is divided into ten key environmental themes. Each theme reviews why it is important to Scottish Canals, key drivers, provides baseline performance information and sets out aims and targets for continuous improvement. See the list here.

8. The review of environmental performance in 2013/14 identified the following key areas for improvement including; adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change, energy management, flood control, waste management and increasing environmental awareness and participation. Full details can be found in the Strategy themes.

9. By 2025, through delivery of this strategy, we aim to significantly improve our environmental performance against the 2013/14 baseline. Success will be measured in terms of delivery against the Strategy targets.
Introduction:
Why do we need an Environment Strategy and why now?

Moral and business imperative

The state of our environment is fundamental to everything society needs and does. We are familiar with negative environmental impacts such as pollution but equally we have the opportunity to derive many benefits from it, if we manage our environment well. Environmental ambitions are a key feature of the Scottish Government’s national performance framework(1) and Scottish Canals has the opportunity to directly contribute to these through positive management of the canal network and the wider environment. Scottish Canals’ activities can have both beneficial and detrimental effects on the environment. As a responsible public organisation, we need to take account of the current environmental drivers, such as climate change, and respond to them appropriately.
Why do we need an Environment Strategy and why now?

We also recognise how important environmental issues are to our partners and customers and we wish to share our rationale for environmental management with them.

The environmental arena is very broad, complex and dynamic. By preparing Scottish Canals’ first Environment Strategy, we can identify the key environmental issues which we face, understand our current position and set priorities for the future.

We are not starting from a zero base and have made significant progress in a number of areas over the past 15 years (including pollution and water resource management). We intend to use the Environment Strategy to build on past successes.

Why now? Scottish Canals became a separate organisation in July 2012, having formerly been part of a much larger UK-wide organisation, British Waterways. We published our Heritage Strategy in May 2013\(^{(5)}\) and feel that the time is right to ‘set out our environmental stall’ and to share our plans for the next ten years with our staff, partners and customers.
Scottish Canals’ Purpose

Scottish Canals is a public corporation which is responsible to the Scottish Government for the management and development of five canals as well as the surrounding estate. By using these assets wisely, Scottish Canals’ intention is to enhance the future quality of life for Scotland’s inhabitants and to help create a more successful, sustainable country.\(^{(2)}\)

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Environment Strategy Purpose

To contribute to the long term success of Scottish Canals by:

01 – Understanding...
...the environmental impacts and benefits of our current activities and the potential future environmental risks and opportunities for our business.

02 – Mapping...
...our route to environmentally sustainable canal management by identifying priorities for the next ten years.

03 – Informing...
....influencing and educating the entire business and our customers to improve our environmental performance.
# Guiding Principles

The following principles describe our current and future approach to environmental management of the Scottish Canals network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Principles</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>We strive to <strong>balance</strong> and integrate our environmental approach with the wider business activities and requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>We <strong>understand</strong> the environmental impacts of our activities, based on sound information and work in partnership to reduce these impacts, enhance the environment and contribute to sustainable development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>We <strong>contribute</strong> to the delivery of Scottish Government environmental priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>We <strong>comply</strong> with statutory environmental legislation obligations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>We <strong>raise awareness</strong> and empower staff, partners and customers to make their own contribution to improving the canal and wider environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>We <strong>reinvest</strong> savings/efficiencies and additional incomes derived from the Environment Strategy in further environmental improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>We will <strong>adopt</strong> a continuous improvement approach to environmental management – plan, do, check, act</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Review of current drivers

The Strategy was informed by Scottish Government policies (National Performance Framework(1) and Making the Most of Scotland’s Canals(2)), Scottish Canals’ vision ‘Safeguarding our heritage, building our future’ and the Scottish Canals Corporate Plan (2014-17)(3), Scottish Canals Environmental Policy and takes account of relevant environmental legislation, policy and guidance.

Staff input

Over the last two years, staff from across the business were consulted, via a series of workshops, web-based questionnaires, newsletters and face-to-face meetings and asked to identify key issues and opportunities, and to set priorities.

Expert advice

During the Strategy development expert advice and support was also sought from the following environmental partners and organisations: Historic Scotland, National Trust for Wales, Resource Efficient Scotland Scottish Waterways Trust, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, GEP Environmental and Mabbets.

Review of environmental information and performance

A review of the current activity in 10 key environmental themes was undertaken, to identify areas where improvements could be made. (See page 00 – 11)
How was the Strategy developed?

Key activity and impact review
A comprehensive review of Scottish Canals’ activities and their potential environmental impacts, compliant with the ISO14001 Environmental Management System international standard[^4], was completed in October 2014. (See Theme 7)

Strategic environmental assessment (SEA)
All Scottish public bodies are required to assess, consult and monitor the likely impacts of their plans, programmes and strategies on the environment through a process known as SEA. Following pre-screening of the proposed Environment Strategy content by the key environmental regulators, it was judged that a full SEA was not required.
Scope of strategy: What does the Environment Strategy cover?

The Strategy sets out how Scottish Canals will manage those activities which have an environmental impact on its own estate and beyond, to bring positive benefits during the next ten years. It is set in the context of Scottish Government policies (National Performance Framework(1) and Making the Most of Scotland’s Canals(2)), the overall Scottish Canals vision, Corporate Plan, strategies and policies, and environmental legislation, policy and guidance. Heritage, landscape or planning issues are not included.

The Strategy covers **three strategic areas** and **ten themes** as shown in the ‘temple diagram’ opposite. Within each theme we present an overview, key drivers, baseline information and strategic aims, targets and references. Click on the theme icons to see full details.
What is our baseline?

We assessed the current status of each environmental theme by reviewing business performance in the following key areas in the financial year 2013/14: corporate strategy, theme management, responsibility, data management, communications and training, finance and investment, policy and governance alignment, environmental risk rank. This assessment approach was based on the Scottish Government’s Carbon Management Programme: Carbon Management Plan, Appendix A: Carbon Management Matrix. The overall score is calculated on a default based system where the lowest score defines the final assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Default based traffic light</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Energy and carbon management</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Water resources and flood control</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Waste Management</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Transport and travel</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Sustainable procurement</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Buildings, Asset Management and Sustainable Places</td>
<td>Amber</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Environmental governance and compliance</td>
<td>Amber</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Water, land and air quality management</td>
<td>Amber</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Biodiversity management</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Environmental awareness and participation</td>
<td>Amber</td>
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</table>

Red means: Limited activity in this area and there is significant room for improvement.

Amber means: We are already active in this area but there is room for improvement.
What will 2025 look like?

Our environmental performance will be significantly improved against our 2015 baseline and our canals will be seen as exemplars of sustainable development by our customers and partners.

This strategy sets out a route to ensure that Scottish Canals will be recognised for the ecosystem services it delivers, the valuable contributions it makes to improving the Scottish and global environment and to the wider sustainable development agenda. Success will be measured in terms of delivery against targets as well as public perception.
What will 2025 look like? (selected examples)

**Energy** 50% static energy from our own renewable sources.

**Water resources** Canals contributing to flood risk management.

**Waste** 70% of general waste recycled.

**Transport** All urban towpaths and access routes upgraded.

**Sustainable procurement** Sustainability criteria applied to a higher proportion of relevant purchases and activities.

**Buildings, Asset Management and Sustainable places** New sustainable canal-side places on the network.

**Environmental Governance and Compliance** Good compliance with environmental regulations.

**Water land and air quality management** No significant pollution incidents.

**Biodiversity management** A published biosecurity plan.

**Environmental awareness and participation** More learning and practical involvement.
Budget and Finance

Delivery of the Environment Strategy will be through a combination of:

- Reinvestment of savings derived from environmental projects
- External funding for staff & resources
- Dedicated staff resource (1.5 FTE)
- Partnership working to deliver projects with a shared environmental agenda
- Current commitment in 2015/16 is £30k for projects.

This will be set in the context of our requirement to secure an adequate rate of return whilst balancing this with an acceptable level of risk and having due regard to the economic, social and environmental impacts. (7)

Delivery mechanisms

Each aim in the Environment Strategy has associated targets. An action plan, which identifies who will deliver them and when by will be developed.

Measurement, monitoring and evaluation

We will monitor progress throughout the Strategy period and will report key outcomes online e.g. via an Annual sustainability report and news updates on the Scottish Canals website.

We intend to review the Strategy in 2020 to take account of any significant changes in our business and external influences.
References


