AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK

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Ayrshire Green Network Consultancy Study

for

Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit, Forestry Commission Scotland
and Scottish Natural Heritage

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose of the Study

1.1.1 The three Ayrshire Councils, as local planning authorities, are seeking to facilitate the implementation of the Central Green network in Ayrshire. The Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU) and Project Partners, Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage recognised the need for an initial piece of work to scope out the:

- Options for organisational arrangements to deliver facilitation of the Green Network.
- Extent and form of the existing green network within the study area.
- Initial opportunities for its enhancement.

1.1.2 The study is the first step in the preparation of a strategy for the development and long term management of a high quality Green Network across the three administrative areas of the Ayrshire Councils. The strategy will be designed to maximise social, economic and environmental benefits and secure this element of the Central Scotland Green Network for the long term. Firstly, this study will provide guidance on the options for working arrangements for delivering the six elements of the Central Scotland Green Network identified in the National Planning Framework Action Plan in Ayrshire. Secondly, the study will provide an audit of existing Green Network Assets in Ayrshire (and the links between them) which, by their size, location, condition, or level of use, can be considered strategically important to the economy, environment, well-being and image of the area. The study will also provide guidance on the identification and prioritisation of opportunities to develop and strengthen components of the green network and deliver a step change in the network. The study will identify implementation mechanisms, including current and emerging funding sources, which can be utilised to ensure existing assets are retained and new ones created and maintained over the long term.

1.2 Study Team

1.2.1 Ayrshire JPU commissioned TGP Landscape Architects in January 2011 to carry out the study. TGP team included:

TGP Landscape Architects	Lead Consultant and Landscape Architects
MD2	Green Infrastructure, Planning and Environmental Consultants
Mersey Forest	GIS Specialists

1.3 Study Context

1.3.1 The need for coordinated action to support economic development and regeneration within Central Ayrshire is identified in the National Planning Framework 2 and the approved Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan – Growing A Sustainable Ayrshire. The challenge is to create places that are aspirational and competitive, which are capable of attracting and retaining those households and businesses that are key to the growth of the knowledge economy and the service sector within Ayrshire. All three Councils have identified specific regeneration priorities through their Community Planning processes and have sought to provide co-ordinated funding and action. The Scottish Executive is supporting the Irvine Bay Regeneration Company and will work with partners to pursue regeneration opportunities with regional impact.

1.3.2 A unique blend of geology, habitats and human activity has shaped the landscape character of Ayrshire. The area contains national and internationally protected assets, which bring with them responsibilities for guardianship, but also environmental concerns resulting from development pressure and dereliction. The landscape is also seen as a considerable economic asset and enhancement must be achieved to safeguard landscape and cultural assets.

1.3.3 Improving the urban fabric of Ayrshire's communities is recognised as vital to tackling issues of social exclusion and improving quality of life. The development of high quality greenspace and promotion of active community engagement in its use and management offers particular opportunities to support this process.

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1.4 Study Area

Refer to Figure 1 – Central Scotland Green Network and Figure 2 – Ayrshire and Districts.
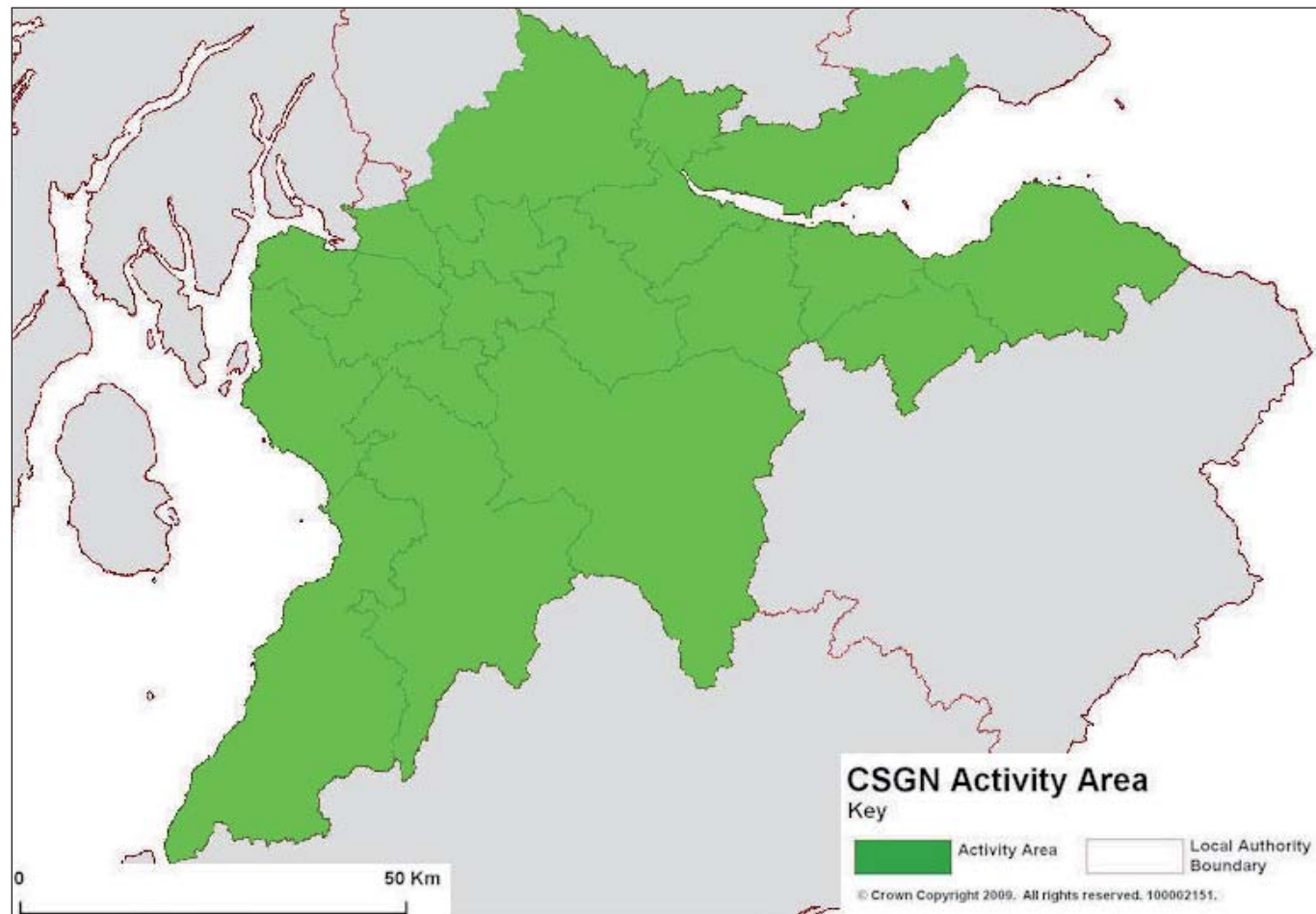
Figure 1 Central Scotland Green Network Location

1.4.1 The Joint Structure Plan Development Framework sets the long term strategic land use framework and recognises that all parts of Ayrshire have a vital contribution to make to the area's future prosperity and quality of life. The framework comprises three interrelated elements including the Core Investment Area, the Investment Corridors and Local Communities (refer to Figure 3 – Study Area). The Core Investment Area focuses on the major towns of Ayr, Kilmarnock and Irvine whilst the Investment Corridors are primarily defined by the main river valleys and main transport routes. The development framework seeks a balance between capitalising on the established potential for growth of the Core area and spreading growth and economic development opportunities at a more local level throughout the Investment Corridors and Local Communities.
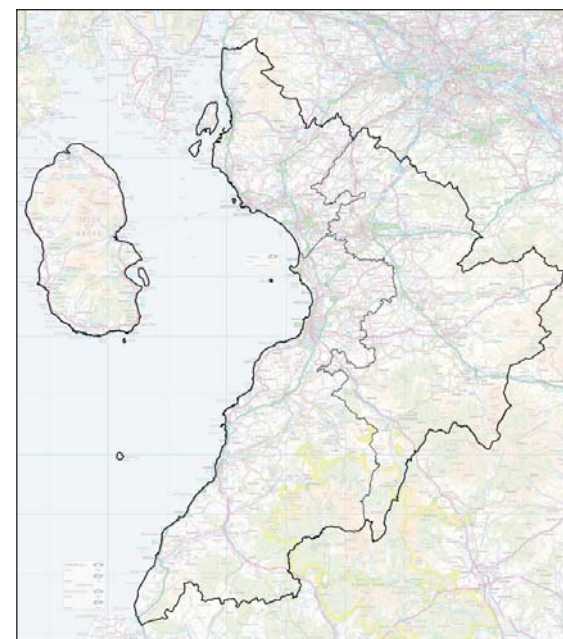
Figure 2 Ayrshire and Districts
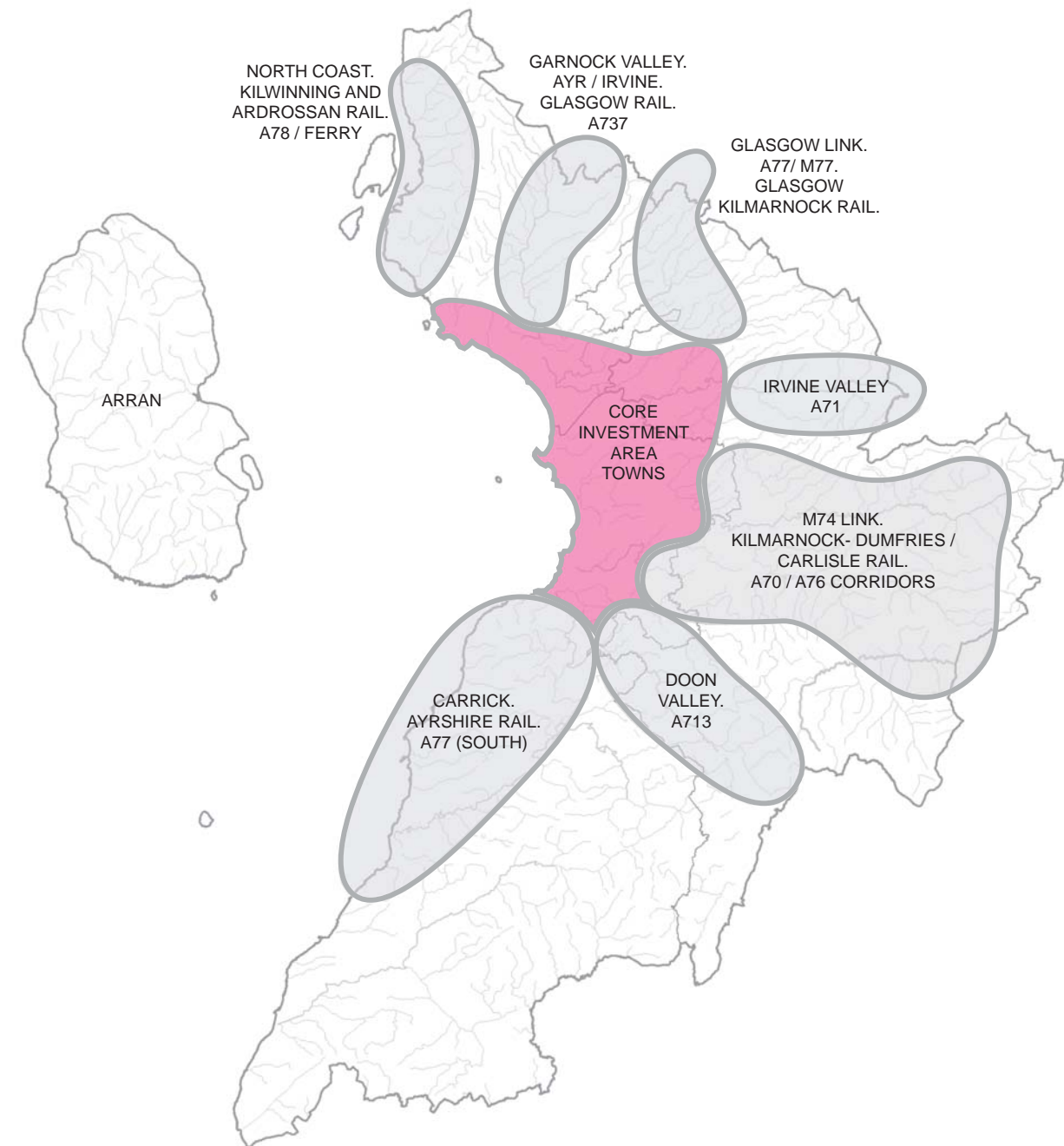
Figure 3 Study Area

1.4.2 Within the Core Investment Area, the Structure Plan promotes the inter-dependence of good transport links, modern infrastructure with residential and business opportunities and an upgraded landscape setting. The Plan does not envisage a physical coalescence of the towns. The Green Network can contribute to the maintenance and improvement of the landscape setting for individual communities, provision of greenspace and active travel routes linking places together to contribute towards the creation of a high quality environment. Within the Investment Corridors, there are opportunities to link green spaces within and between communities to provide opportunities for active travel, create well managed structural landscaping to support economic development and contribute to the development of integrated habitat networks.

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1.4.3 The output of this study will be used to inform the preparation by the Ayrshire Councils and other partners of a full Green Network Strategy which will contribute to the realisation of the Development Framework aims. Future phases of work will seek to identify a comprehensive list of priorities for action and implementation of specific projects to make the enhancements sought under the Green Network Strategy a reality.

1.4.4 The brief calls for graphical illustration of the key assets and opportunities within the Core Area and each Investment Corridor.

1.5 Background to the Central Scotland Green Network Aims and Goals

The concept of a Central Scotland Green network (CSGN) was established through the National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2) which was published in December 2008. The NPF2 'Action Programme' defines the CSGN in the following terms:

'A strategic network of woodland and other habitats, active travel routes, greenspace links, watercourses and waterways, providing enhanced setting for development and other land uses and improved opportunities for outdoor recreation and cultural activity'.

The Government views the Central Scotland Green Network as an opportunity to effect a step change in environmental quality, woodland cover and recreational opportunities within the central belt (refer to Figure 1 – Central Scotland Green Network). The CSGN aims to make Central Scotland 'a more attractive place to live in, do business and visit; help to absorb CO2; enhance biodiversity; and promote active travel and healthier lifestyles'. Consultation on Central Scotland Green Network Draft Vision and Work Plan 2010 – 2015.

The CSGN is an ambitious new greenspace project, the largest of its kind in Europe, which sets out to transform the natural environment of the Central Belt through the following contributions to the NPF Strategy:

- Supporting strong sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Scotland.
- Expanding opportunities for communities and businesses by promoting environmental quality and good connectivity.
- Promoting development which helps to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint and facilitates adaptation to climate change.
- Promoting development which helps to improve health, regenerate communities and enables disadvantaged communities access opportunities.
- Promotes more sustainable patterns of travel, transport and land use.
- Conserves and enhances Scotland's distinctive natural and cultural heritage.

Vision

CSGN's vision for Central Scotland is of a place transformed by the creation of a high quality green network, which will enrich people's lives, promote economic prosperity, allow nature to flourish and help Scotland respond to the challenge of climate change.

CSGN have set 10 goals for 2030:

- To ensure that every home is within 300m of an **attractive, safe, well-maintained green space or accessible countryside.**
- To improve the **green infrastructure** of all our major towns and cities by investing in green and blue space, tree planting and sustainable urban drainage.
- To create a high quality **environment for business,** by enhancing the landscape setting of every small and medium sized town in Central Scotland and reducing vacant and derelict land to an absolute minimum.
- To deliver a threefold increase in the area of land used for **community growing** – allotments, orchards and gardens.
- To deliver at least a **50% increase in woodland cover**, in line with the Scottish Forestry target.
- To plan and deliver an **integrated habitat network** at a landscape scale, with wildlife corridors joining up key sites and habitats, ensuring that every community has access to places where people can experience and enjoy nature and wildlife.
- To deliver a strategic network of high-quality routes for **active travel and recreation** throughout Central Scotland.
- To ensure that the green network is **used by everyone to improve health and well-being** through physical activity and contact with nature, volunteering and learning outdoors.
- To **foster community pride and ownership** in the CSGN and to use the green network as a community resource, providing opportunities for education, volunteering, training, skills development and employment in land-based and low-carbon industries.
- To help **mitigate climate change** through land management practices which help to capture, store and retain carbon such as woodland expansion and the protection of peatland, and through the promotion of active travel.

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2.0 Context of Ayrshire Green Network

2.1   Planning Context

Introduction

An objective of the study is to provide guidance on the options for working arrangements for delivering the six elements of the Central Scotland Green Network identified in the National Planning Framework Action Plan in Ayrshire. An important element of the study therefore, is to review and understand the implications of the planning context at national, strategic and local level in relation to the development and long term management of a high quality green network.

The National Planning Framework for Scotland

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a strategy for the long-term development of Scotland's towns, cities and countryside over the next 20 years, bringing greater certainty for both investors and planning practitioners. The NPF focuses on how development will be achieved through the delivery of key strategic infrastructure needs, including greenspace, to ensure that each part of the country can develop to its full potential. A high quality green network is a key indicator, linking 'quality of place' to 'quality of life', economic growth and prosperity. The NPF strategy is supported by an Action Programme to ensure effective delivery, including how it will be achieved and by whom. An NPF2 Monitoring Report will be published in 2011.

The National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2) was published on June 25 2009 as a requirement of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. It succeeds the first NPF, produced in 2004, and sets the spatial strategy for Scotland's development to 2030 and designates 14 national developments of strategic importance to Scotland. It also requires planning authorities to take NPF2 into account in development plans and development management decisions.

Within NPF2, in addition to contributing to national objectives, Ayrshire is identified as having key strategic objectives:

- Strengthen the role of Ayrshire as Scotland's western gateway, including improved strategic transport corridors and better connectivity.
- Deliver regeneration focussed on the key towns of Ayrshire and former mining towns of East Ayrshire to promote regeneration and economic diversification through investment in the knowledge economy, export-oriented industries and the service sector, and to further develop the cultural, business and activity based tourism.

NPF2 and the Central Scotland Green Network

The Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit and Ayrshire Councils intend to use the outputs of this study as a key contributory element in the realisation of the existing and emerging Development Planning Framework.

In NPF2, The Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) is relevant to paragraphs 98, 105, 202, 228, Mao 10 and Annex - National Development 12. The NPF 2 (Action Programme) Action 22 specifically refers to development of the Central Scotland Green Network, an area based initiative, the extent of which is illustrated below.

The timeline for CSGN's establishment has followed this timeline:

Date	Action
Pre-December 2009	Establishment of a CSGN Partnership or Working Group and finalisation of support arrangements for the group.
Pre-December 2009	Partnership members agreed to include Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish National Heritage and Central Scotland Forestry Trust in concert with the Local Authorities and a wide range of other public sector and voluntary bodies.
2009 onwards	Inclusion of CSGN considerations in main issues reports for relevant development bodies.
Autumn 2010	Publication of vision, aims, goals and work plan.
2010	Identification of spatial priorities for development of the network and development of monitoring and evaluation framework.
2010	Outline report on resourcing the delivery and management of the green network on the ground.
2010	Outline report on the management of the green network.

In terms of future goals, the following apply:

Date	Action
2012 onwards	Inclusion of CSGN policies and maps in relevant development plans, associated programmes and development management decisions.
2012	Contribution of the green network to a range of Government and local authority outcomes recognised in relevant policy documents and forward plans / programmes.
2013	Local actions to be confirmed through supplementary planning guidance and partnership agreements

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The Central Scotland Green Network contributes towards NPF2 in the following ways:

- Supports strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Scotland.
- Expands opportunities for communities and businesses by promoting environmental quality and good connectivity.
- Promotes development which helps to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint and facilitates adaptation to climate change.
- Promotes development which helps to improve health, regenerate communities and enables disadvantaged community's access opportunities.
- Promotes more sustainable patterns of travel, transport and land use.
- Conserves and enhances Scotland's distinctive natural and cultural heritage.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

Within the context of NPF2, more detailed planning guidance is set out in the Scottish planning Policy (SPP), which similarly governs both preparation of planning policy and development management decisions. A large proportion of the SPP document is a summary of the preceding constituent SPPs or NPPGs, although there is a refinement and re-emphasis of policy aimed at developing a more efficient system. Some elements of national policy have changed however and these were the subject of consultation in the latter half of 2009. Principal additions to policy are:

1. A statement of the connection between the functioning of the planning system and pursuit of Sustainable economic Growth; and
2. Statutory guidance on sustainable development as defined by Section 3E of the Planning Act including how the planning system can address issues of climate change.

Scottish Planning Policy and the Central Scotland Green Network

The implications of the SPP for the creation of the CSGN are that inter-connected networks of green space can be accommodated in the production of development plans as an integral part of delivering the objectives of sustainable economic growth in tandem with meeting climate change targets. These aims are not just included in specific policies in the SPP, such as open space and recreation, but are embodied in the wider objectives of the policy as a whole. In turn, the creation of good quality sustainable places on the ground will be facilitated by ensuring that the green network is inextricably linked with the development management system.

The Development Plan for Ayrshire

Refer to Figure 4 – Planning and Environmental Designations

The Development Plan currently comprises the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan (2007) and associated Local Plans for each of the Ayrshire Districts of North, East and South Ayrshire. Together, these documents guide the development and use of land in the whole of the County, including types of development, how much will take place, where development will be positioned and where development will not be permitted.

The 2007 **Structure Plan** was originally intended to provide the strategic land use context and shared vision for the County until 2025. It is accompanied by a non-statutory Action Plan, to guide implementation of the plan. The framework comprises three inter-related elements, as follows:

- The Core Investment Strategy, focusing on the main towns of Ayrshire.
- Investment Corridors, which encompass some of the main river valleys and transport routes.
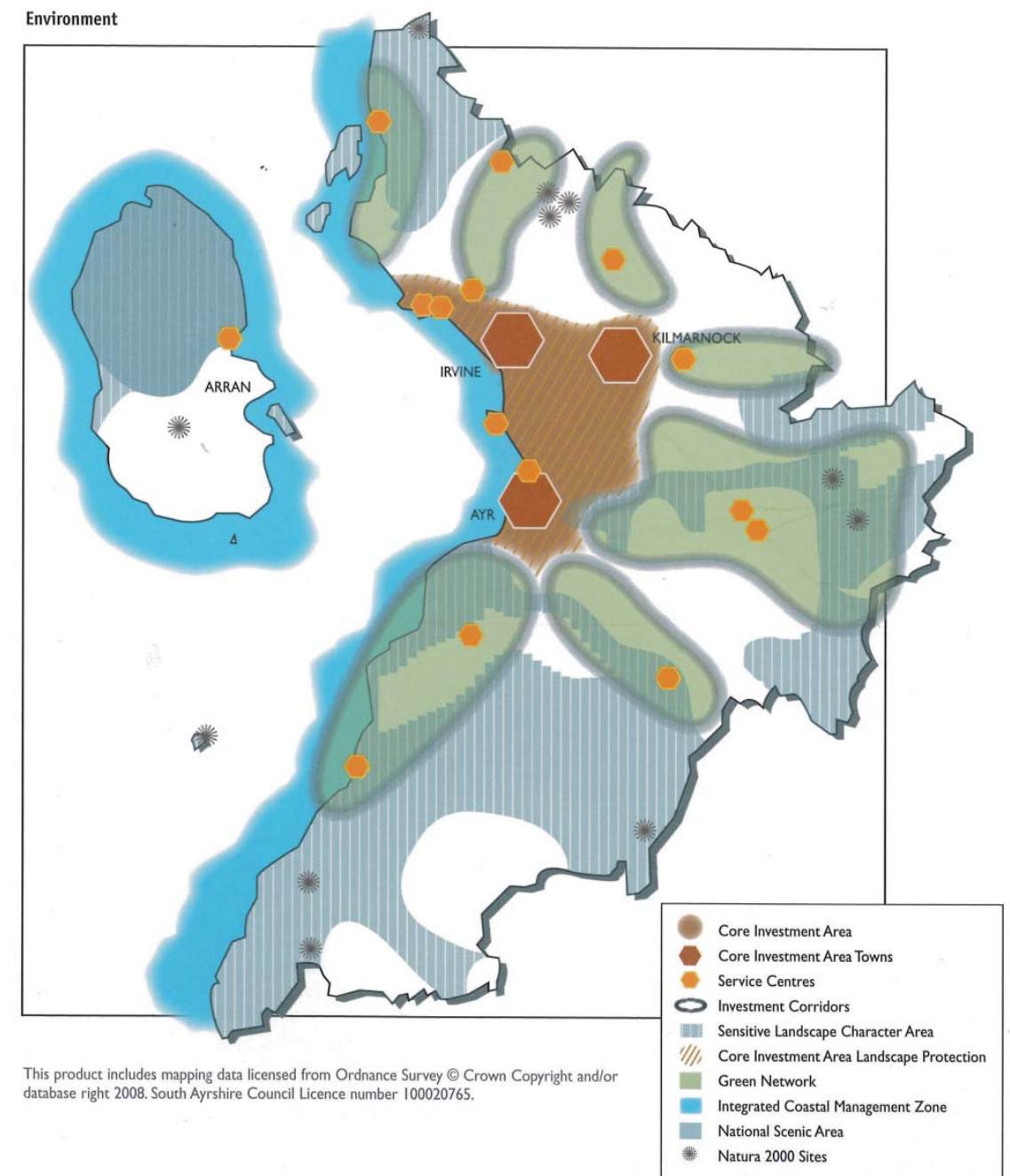- A focus on Local Communities.

Figure 4 Planning and Environmental Designations

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Within the Core Investment Area, the Structure Plan promotes the inter-dependence of good transport links between the separate towns, modern infrastructure and residential and business opportunities within an upgraded green landscape. Within the Investment Corridors, it is intended to link green spaces within and between communities, to provide recreational, multi–purpose travel routes, to help develop integrated habitat networks and to create well managed structural landscaping to support economic development and regeneration. More generally, development of the Green Network aims to contribute to the improvement and maintenance of the landscape setting for local communities in Ayrshire and Arran.

Each of the associated **Local Plans** for the Ayrshire Districts runs in line with the approved Structure Plan and guides the development and other use of land at a more detailed level. These are:

North Ayrshire

- the North Ayrshire Local Plan (2005)
- the Arran Local Plan (2005)

East Ayrshire

- the East Ayrshire Local Plan (2010)
- the East Ayrshire Opencast Subject Plan (2003)

South Ayrshire

- the South Ayrshire Local Plan (2005)

The New Planning System - Local Development Plans

The Planning Etc Act, Scotland (2006) heralded the introduction of a new planning system, which will replace the existing two tier system in due course. 'Local Development Plans' will cover geographical areas commensurate with the administrative areas of the three existing Ayrshire Local Authorities. They are intended to be strategic and local spatial planning documents to reflect each Council's corporate vision in spatial terms. They will contain strategic policies and secure land zoning for specified uses (e.g. land for housing/industry etc.) to provide increased certainty for development and in each plan, statutory supplementary guidance will be referred to that supports the provisions of the LDP. The intention of the new system, according to the 2005 White paper 'Modernising the Planning System', is that LDP's will be;

- Concise, clear, simple and fit for purpose.
- Map based: spatial, place-based, visionary.
- Up-to-date: prepared quickly, updated frequently.
- Early, efficient engagement: particularly with key players.
- Delivery Focussed: realistic, linked to corporate agendas.

The following progress/timetable has been made for each of the Ayrshire Districts:

District	Date	Action
North Ayrshire	2009	Main Issues Report
	2010	Proposed Plan
	2011	Examination
	2012	Adoption
East Ayrshire	2010	Development Plan Scheme
	2011	Issues Report, Monitoring Statement, Engagements and Consultation
	2012	Plan and Action Programme
	2013	Respond to Representations on Proposed Plan, Prepare Responses and Report of Conformity with Participation Statement.
South Ayrshire	2010	Development Plan Scheme
		Planning Forum
		Local Development Plan Project Board
		Call for Sites/Identifying Development Priorities
		Main Issues Report
	By 2013	South Ayrshire proposes to complete its LDP

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2.2   Socio-Demographic Profile

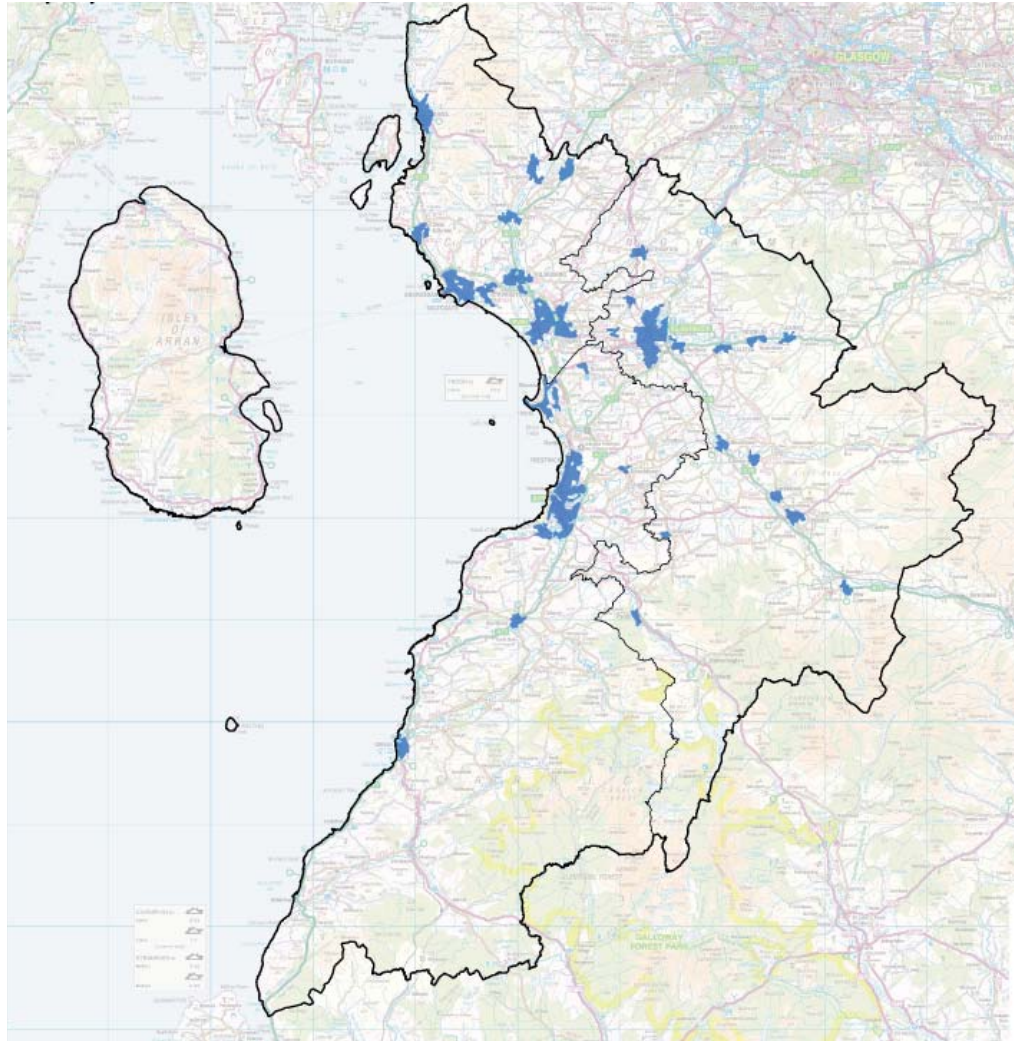Refer to Figure 5 – Settlements with Population greater than 2000

2.2.1   Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan states that 'Ayrshire has a population of 368,000 people, a coastline of 240km and covers some 3,500 sq km. It is an area of great social, economic and environmental diversity. Although best known nationally and internationally for tourism, particularly through its association with Robert Burns and golf, Ayrshire continues to play a significant part in the broader aspects of Scotland's economy and there are strong cultural and economic linkages to the Glasgow City Region'. The Plan recognises that ***'nevertheless the area faces considerable future challenges'.***

2.2.2   Ayrshire JPU's publication Monitor 2010 Framework Indicator for a Sustainable Ayrshire provides a valuable summary of the current situation with regard to the socio-demographic situation with regard to Ayrshire. All of the key points are of relevance to CSGN's **vision for Central Scotland** of a place transformed by the creation of a high quality green network, which will enrich people's lives and, promote economic prosperity...... and include:

Economy

- There has been substantial losses of employment in key sectors of the economy.
- Recent improvements in company survival rates are a positive step in helping to grow indigenous talent and improving business performance. The birth rate of new firms remains low.
- GDP per head is below the Scottish and UK average.
- In the longer term continued growth in retail expenditure is anticipated.
- Passengers using Glasgow Prestwick International Airport has fallen significantly during the recession.

Demographics and Households

- Households have grown despite modest changes in population.
- Population within Ayrshire is forecast to fall and age as a result of natural change and migration.
- Along with the rest of Scotland there has been a significant drop in the volume and value of house sales.

Communities

- There remains a significant disparity between and within communities. 21% of children in North Ayrshire live in 'workless households'.
- The majority of residents within Ayrshire perceive that they have well placed facilities and services.
- The proportion of non car journeys to work has remained static in recent years.
- Recorded crimes are falling.
- Serious and fatal road accident casualties have fallen.
- South Ayrshire is seen by its residents as a particularly good place to live. Ayrshire's fine coastal microclimate is seen as a unique selling point, as is the County's strong sports culture which includes junior football, sailing, cycling, outdoor activities, hill walking etc.
- Though some derelict and urban vacant land has been brought back into use, the total area remains stable (some 409 sites classified as Vacant and Derelict Land are identified in Monitor 2010, with 117 in East Ayrshire, 253 in North Ayrshire and 39 in South Ayrshire).
- The lack of resources to monitor adequately the impact of development on the heritage resource remains an area of concern.
- The number of homes built in the Irvine Bay 'priority regeneration area' has decreased in terms of absolute numbers but has remained steady in proportionate terms. The number of homes built within the Coalfields community area has increased in absolute and proportionate terms.
- A significant proportion of retail expenditure is retained within town centres. The number of retail 'shops' has fallen in town centres.

Well Being

- Average gross disposable income in parts of Ayrshire remains amongst the lowest in Scotland.
- Life expectancy continues to rise.
- Unemployment has risen and is above the Scotland and UK averages.
- Ayrshire has significant levels of the population within the 16 – 19 years age group not in education, training or employment – these are amongst the highest in Scotland.
- The skills within the workforce continue to improve, particularly those with degree qualifications. This will have a positive effect on Ayrshire's economy and on people's ability to take up improved job opportunities through the West of Scotland.

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2.3   Existing Initiatives

The following section details existing initiatives that may contribute to Ayrshire's Green Network and includes strategic and specific initiatives and projects:

2.3.1   Ayrshire JPU's publication Monitor 2010 Framework Indicator for a Sustainable Ayrshire again provides a valuable summary of the current situation with regard to sustainability and the environment, and can be summarised as follows:

Sustainable Use of Resources and Climate Change

- Climate Change is having an impact on Ayrshire. The national target is to reduce emissions by 42% by 2020 and set annual emission targets for 2010 – 22.
- Average domestic gas and electricity consumption has fallen since 2005.
- Ayrshire continues to play a significant role in meeting national renewable targets.
- Coal production from opencast mining has declined.
- There have been significant increases in recycling rates.

Protecting Natural Resources and Enhancing the Environment

- A framework has been set for the protection of habitats and species in Ayrshire. A revised Action Plan is being implemented.
- Significant improvements but water quality remains a concern.
- Air quality is good and continues to improve.
- Farm woodland and farm infrastructure have seen significant increases since 1991. Grazing land has noticeably decreased. Grant aided woodland planting has fallen sharply.
- Over half of Ayrshire's land area is under some form of enhanced landscape protection. The impact of renewable proposals on many valued landscapes remains a concern.
- A framework for Scotland's soils has been published.

2.3.2   The Consultation on Central Scotland Green Network Draft Vision and Work Plan 2010 – 2015 was fully supported by the Ayrshire Councils who recognised the importance and need to integrate the CSGN within development plans. Of major concern is the SRDP application process which is perceived as complex, onerous and resource intensive, with few landowners/managers having the necessary resources to undertake the application process.

The three Ayrshire Councils, through the Joint Structure Plan, incorporate the principle of green networks through the identification of co-ordinated action within the Core Area and along Investment Corridors (refer to Figure 3 – Study Area). Key actions for Ayrshire identified in the consultation response include:

- Expanding the role of East Ayrshire Woodlands to cover all of Ayrshire.
- Ensuring that the CSGN is properly provided for in new Local Development Plans including the proposal to develop the Irvine Forest.
- To seek 'quick wins' such as Glengarnock, in the Investment Corridors and in the Core Area.
- Take forward the proposed (but unsuccessful) INTERREG IVA project 'One Environment One Future' in the Stinchar and Doon valleys and build connectivity between the Green Network and the proposed Biosphere.
- Support intra-connectivity between the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and the wider area e.g. links to and from the Glengarnock/Lochshore Area.
- Explore means to animate SRDP uptake aimed at securing CSGN development and management.
- Formally adopt proposals for the development of the CSGN within Irvine Bay Regeneration Company area.
- Seek to relate CSGN to the priorities identified in the LBAP for coastal habitats and lowland raised bogs.

2.3.3   The Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) Rural Development Contracts – Rural Priorities (RDC-RP) is an integrated funding mechanism which will deliver targeted environmental, social and economic benefits. Rural Priorities are delivered jointly by SGRPID, SNH and FCS. Regional priorities have been established to aid the delivery of five key outcomes of the SRDP:

- Business viability and competitiveness
- Water quality
- Adaptations to mitigate climate change
- Biodiversity and landscapes
- Thriving rural communities.

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A key feature of the SRDP, RDC-RP is a commitment to deliver national objectives through local solutions. The RPAC established for each region is responsible for devising and updating the Regional Priorities in their area. Priorities for Ayrshire, which link closely to the objectives of the CSGN, include:

- **Biodiversity**, Regional Priority Codes AYR08 – 12, refer to http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/RuralPriorities/Ayrshire, AYR 12 increase in the area of connected natural habitats and ecological features is of particular relevance to the CSGN and IHN, including proposals that create and enhance habitat networks to ensure ecological connectivity. Habitat networks include coastal habitats, water courses, woodlands and hedgerows.

- **Landscape Priorities**, Regional Priority Codes AYR 13a to 13f and 14. 13d require actions at a landscape scale which strengthen and/or enhance the landscape character of an area and contribute to a sense of place, and includes 'proposals that achieve the goals of CSGN by helping to deliver an integrated habitat network at a landscape scale, with wildlife corridors joining up key sites and habitats'.

- **Built and Cultural Heritage Priorities** Regional Priority Codes AYR 15a to 15e which include enhancement and conservation of the most significant rural vernacular buildings, maintaining local distinctiveness, contributing to the preservation of skills and employment opportunities, increasing public appreciation and improving viability of existing rural building stock.

- **Water and Soils** AYR16 – 20, including reducing diffuse pollution from rural land uses; improved water quality of surface water and ground water bodies; by 2015 achieving good ecological status of water bodies which are classified as being at a lesser status; sustainable flood management and reduced flood risk and improved protection in areas identified as most at risk from erosion, flooding, acidification and nitrate pollution.

- **Adaptations to Mitigate Climate Change** Regional Priority Codes AYR21 to 24, including improved carbon sequestration through conservation of soil organic matter, reduced emissions of greenhouse gases from land based operations, improved carbon sinks and an efficient and reliable wood fuel supply chain.

- **Public Access** Regional Priority Codes AYR 25 through improved public access provision through the creation, improvement and promotion of paths and other facilities of benefit to the community.

- **Diversification of Rural Enterprise Priorities** Regional Priority Codes AYR 26a to c, 27 to 30.

- **Thriving Rural Communities** Regional Priority Codes AYR31 and 32 including sustainability, viability and well being of Scotland's rural communities.

2.3.4 East Ayrshire Woodlands

East Ayrshire Woodlands (EAW) is active throughout mainland Ayrshire but the major focus for their work has been East Ayrshire. Established in 1997 in response to the opportunities afforded by the Millennium Forest for Scotland initiative, EAW is a co-operative arrangement of public and voluntary sector agencies and organisations with an interest in economic, environmental and social regeneration, with activities strongly linked to securing and expanding native and amenity broadleaf woodland cover. Presently the project employs 8 full time and staff and 1 temporary post.

EAW operates as an arm's length project linked to East Ayrshire Council and is not a Trust or Company Limited by Guarantee but rather more akin to a voluntary association.

East Ayrshire Woodlands seeks to:

- Provide a range of professional services in relation to woodland design and survey, land restoration to woodland and conservation objectives, preparation of management plans, organisation and supervision of contract works. Activity is targeted on both public and private land and access for recreation within woodland is often a key element and is usually the main driver for community engagement.
- Engage and support local communities in the management of woodlands by undertaking participatory appraisal, assisting establishment of community woodland groups, facilitating local networking and organising practical volunteering opportunities.

EAW are active members of the Ayrshire Forest Education Cluster and seek to promote and deliver education opportunities linked to woodlands, interpretation, guided walks and training. EAW's greatest resource demanding activity is the operation of an intermediate labour market programme for adults who have been unemployed and are interested in pursuing a career in forestry or grounds maintenance.

Key outputs over the past 13 years include:

- Involvement in over 750 ha of woodland in Ayrshire spread over 75 sites.
- Sites ranging from 0.5 ha up to 25 ha and influenced by EAW's involvement in the 170 ha plantation near Pinwherry.
- Development or upgrading of some 35km of access routes.
- Over 100 unemployed individuals have progressed into sustainable employment (35% of programme participants or 43% of programme completers).
- Participants achieved approximately 1,000 accredited qualifications between them.

EAW's current programme will:

- Add a further 25 ha to the woodland area.
- Provide SRDP applications for 60ha.
- Plant 2 km of hedgerow.
- Develop proposals for 6.5 km of hedgerow on a former opencast site returning to agricultural use.
- Provide an ILM programme based on 18 places at any one time or 36 places over 12 months.

EAW's project is supported by Future Jobs Fund and LEADER and supports 12 training and employment places, this will end in August and is unlikely to be replaced.

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2.3.5 Irvine Bay Regeneration Company

Refer to Figure 6 – Irvine Bay Potential Green Network Sites

Figure 6 Irvine Bay Potential Green Network Sites

Irvine Bay Regeneration Company's vision for Irvine Bay is to create places where people will thrive, businesses will flourish and communities will grow. The vision is developed through five key themes. These look at:

- i work - creating and spreading wealth
- i live - a good place to live
- i sea - rediscovering the sea
- i play - a good place to spend time
- i bay - changing the image of the Irvine Bay area

Each of these themes connects with a series of proposed projects and with the masterplans for the urban regeneration of each of the towns. The regeneration company believes that *'through re-discovering the coast and our connections to Glasgow, we will see community regeneration. create a vibrant Irvine Bay with a strong economy, a high quality of life and an improved environment'.*

Work is currently underway on the Irvine Bay Green Network project, the partners are Forestry Commission, Greenspace Scotland, RSPB and Irvine Bay Regeneration Company, and the purpose of the study is to identify opportunities to reduce dereliction on a number of underused sites.

The scope of the work includes:

- Consideration of temporary and permanent solutions.
- Development of specific action plans for 5 distinct sites in the Irvine Bay area.
- Development of a green network strategy.
- Review of potential for each site which is different in its make up, ownership and potential development, e.g. one site is SSSI with potential enhancement through access and interpretation.
- Stakeholder engagement is an important aspect.
- Consideration of all possibilities for planting on sites, wildflowers, trees, shrubs, interpretation, management regimes etc.

The strategy and action plans for the Irvine Bay Green Network project are due to be completed by mid March 2011. The regeneration company will then review each of the proposed projects and seek funding. Priority will be given to projects that can be delivered quickly and have a broad base of support. The regeneration company intends to seek grant funding for on the ground planting and delivery starting 2011-12. The green network as a whole will be longer in coming to fruition and will be a composite of several site specific projects. In addition, there are other green / open space projects that the council and others are involved in that are not part of this CSGN funded piece that will make an important contribution to the Green Network.

The five sites in the Irvine Bay area that are being considered are:

West Byerhill – housing development site on the edge of Kilwinning,

Nethermains – an industrial site with quite a number of occupied units but also considerable areas of vacant and derelict land. It is zoned for industrial space, the creation of some parkland and planting is being considered.

Riverside – large business park area in Irvine with some occupied business space on one side, and very expansive area of empty open space, a large inward investment opportunity is being sought.

Beach Park, Irvine – a public park area owned by the council, with boating pond and some recreation facilities.

Bogside – an SSSI on the flood plains at the estuary of the River Irvine and Garnock, a very important area for bird life.

Beach Park, Irvine Bay

2.3.6 Ayrshire Pilgrims Trail

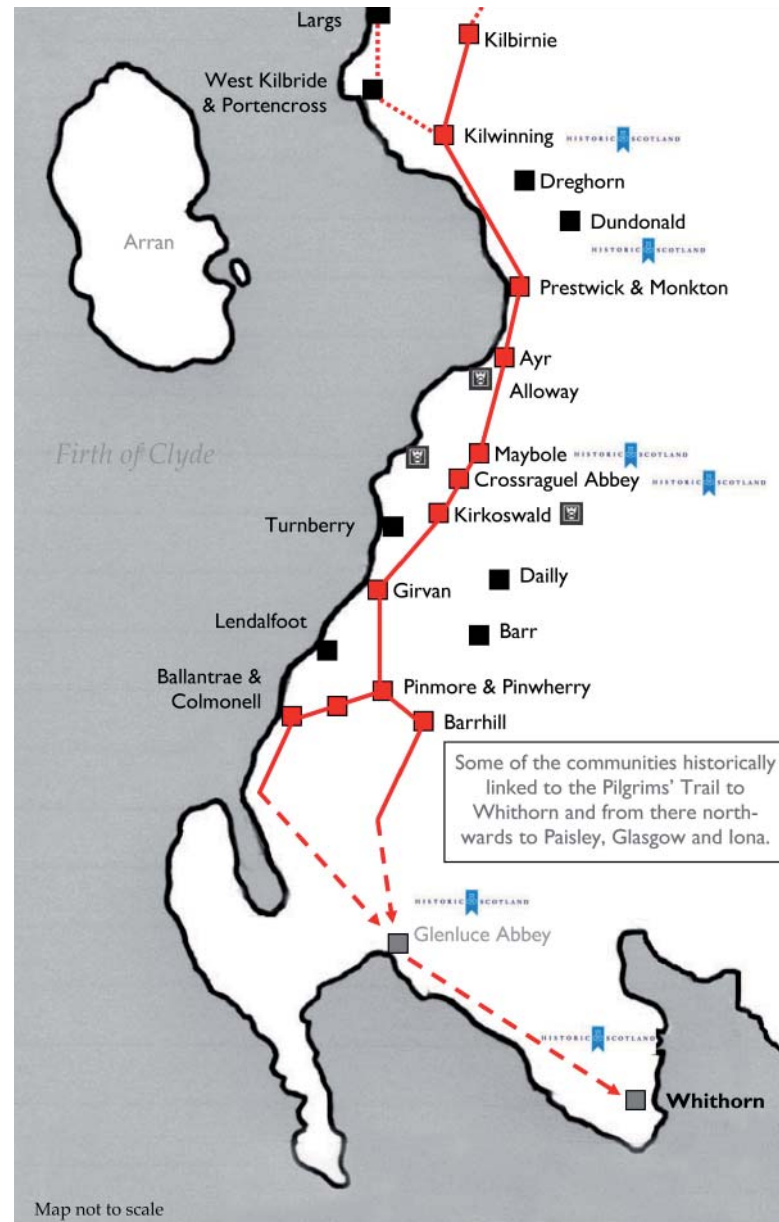Refer to Figure 7 – Ayrshire Pilgrims' Trail

Figure 7 Ayrshire Pilgrims' Trail

Ayrshire Pilgrims' Trail Feasibility Study for Maybole Historical Society, South Ayrshire Council and North Ayrshire Council, Cormack Brown 2010.

The feasibility study identifies a broad trail through Ayrshire following the likely routes taken by pilgrims to the shrine of St Ninian in Whithorn, highlighting the economic potential for rural communities along the route. The route has strong potential to link to the objectives of the Ayrshire Green Network including acting as a catalyst for active travel and green infrastructure.

The consultation associated with the feasibility study has generated a high level of 'buy-in' from communities with stronger interest in the south of the county, two-thirds of the trail is through South Ayrshire. The main elements of Pilgrims' Trail are:

- To seek to utilise existing cycle routes and pathways as far as possible but it will be for people using all forms of transport, although the use of cars will not be encouraged.
- The Trail will form a swathe, at most 20-miles wide, from Lochwinnoch via Dundonald, Alloway, Maybole and Girvan to the Galloway Border.
- It will not be exclusively for Christians.
- People will be encouraged to make overnight stays at different parts of the route to allow visits to places of interest.
- Landscape, flora and fauna will form a very significant part of the Trail experience.

Funding is currently being sought to develop the next stage of the Trail. It is also intended to extend the Trail to Paisley and Glasgow to the north and Whithorn in the south. The Trail will be part of The St Ninian Ways pilgrimage routes to Whithorn with the intention of having this recognised as a European Cultural Route by the European Council's Institute of Cultural Routes in Luxembourg.

A significant opportunity in parallel with the Pilgrims' Trail is to create a new visitor centre at Crossraguel Abbey by Maybole, as well as further development of the land between the Abbey and the tower-house of Baltersan.

2.3.7 The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Project

The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Project is aimed a raising awareness and understanding of the Biosphere amongst communities and other stakeholders while the Biosphere is being progressed through the UNESCO application process. Biospheres are places with world-class environments that are designated by the United Nations to promote and demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature. They are places which value and promote conservation and sustainable development on a regional scale. Biospheres are created to protect the biological and cultural diversity of a region while promoting sustainable economic development. They are places of cooperation, education and research where local communities, environmental groups, and economic interests can work collaboratively on conservation and development issues.

Ayrshire LEADER have approved a Cooperation Project between Ayrshire LEADER and Dumfries and Galloway LEADER Programmes aimed at developing opportunities in the Biosphere. The project scheduled to start in February 2011 and running through to 2013, has a total value of £290,000.

2.3.8   Summary of Current Projects Contributing to the Goals of the CSGN/AGN

Project	Description	Responsible Organisation
Ayrshire Pilgrims Trail	Feasibility study into development of historic pilgrimage route between the South of France and Paisley Abbey. The route passes through Crossraguel Abbey near Maybole and Kilwinning	Maybole Historical Society
Bellsbank Adventure Playground	Reuse of derelict land to form adventure playground, climbing walls and paths. Project is primarily aimed at improving child health and encouraging family activities.	Go Play Naturally
Carrick Way	A new walking route around the Carrick area. The project is at an early stage, there is potential for the route to link up with the Southern Upland Way and to Ayr and Loch Doon.	Ayrshire Walking Festivals Group
Community and Kirk Plantations, Muirkirk	Community purchase of commercial forests to provide safe route to local school and informal recreation areas	Muirkirk Enterprise Group
Craufurdland Estate	Provision of adventure and fitness trails as part of economic regeneration of historic estate. There are ambitions to create footpath links to Kilmarnock.	Craufurdland Communities Activities
Dumfries House, Cumnock	ILM project to provide training opportunities in outdoor skills. Project will result in improved public access and recreation within the estate.	East Ayrshire Woodlands
East Ayrshire Coalfield Environment Initiative	Provision of small grants to community organisations for path maintenance and creation within Muirkirk and New Cumnock area.	RSPB
Garnock Valley Diggers	Creation of outdoor community centre including paths	Garnock Valley Allotments Association
Girvan Community Garden	Community garden project in Girvan which reused a neglected area of land	Make it Happen
Irvine Bay Green Network	Project to prepare a strategy for the regeneration/landscaping of under used industrial and other land to form a green network within the Irvine Bay Area	Irvine Bay Regeneration Company
Outdoor Access North Ayrshire	Forum to advise on access rights and the development of Core paths, assist in the resolution of disputes and produce booklets detailing all paths.	North Ayrshire Council
Organic Growers of Fairlie	Creation of allotments on contaminated land	4 Seasons Growing
Regeneration of Auchinleck House	Preparation of regeneration and management plan for Auchinleck House and Grounds including enhanced public access and footpaths.	East Ayrshire Council Business Development
Scottish Dark Sky Park Observatory	Development of observatory within Craigengillan Estate, Dalmellington	Craigengillan Estate
Skelmorlie Bowling Club Paths	Upgrade of existing paths around bowling club to encourage walking and social interaction	Skelmorlie Bowling Club
South Ayrshire Windfarms Access Tracks	Feasibility study into linking windfarm access routes to form network of hill tracks for walking and cycling, South Carrick	South Ayrshire Council Roads and Transportation

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
2.0 Context of Ayrshire Green Network

2.4   Existing Green Networks

Refer to Figure 8 – Existing Typology for Ayrshire

The existing typology for Ayrshire is illustrated on Figure 8 – Existing Typology for Ayrshire.

The main purpose of typology mapping is to provide a basis for mapping functionality. Generally the GIS analysis has confirmed that most of Ayrshire is covered by two or more functions that contribute to green infrastructure. Ayrshire has a rich and diverse landscape with small areas of conurbation and urban population. In most instances the functions that contribute to the green network closely follow the topography and river corridors.

The green networks form a clear arc centred on Ayr and Irvine Bay and are more of a net or matrix rather than linear corridors. In general the Uplands forming the northern, eastern and southern 'outer' arc of Ayrshire have a higher multifunctionality (a function is something that green infrastructure does that benefits people or other species) than the inner 'core' area, with the lowland farming belt having the least multifunctionality. The green network does not necessary follow the Investment Corridors outlined in the Structure Plan and also indicates that the Core Area contains distinctly separate conurbations i.e. Kilmarnock is a distinct entity and does not coalesce with the coastal towns of Ardrossan, Irvine, Troon and Ayr. However some of the river and road corridors do form distinct green corridors or potential corridors including:

- Garnock Valley, A737 corridor
- Irvine Valley A71 corridor
- A70 (M74 Link)/B743 River Ayr corridor
- A713 Doon Valley

One of the characteristics of Ayrshire is the arc of lowland farmland that encircles the core towns, providing a challenging environment for improvements to biodiversity and river catchment plans but perhaps a major opportunity for Ayrshire.

The detailed typology for the Core Area and Investment Corridors is illustrated in the Action Plans, refer to Figures 37 – 44.

Legend:
- Agricultural land
- Allotment, community garden or urban farm
- Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
- Coastal habitat
- Derelict land
- General amenity space
- Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
- Institutional grounds
- Orchard
- Outdoor sports facility
- Park or public garden
- Private domestic garden
- Water body
- Water course
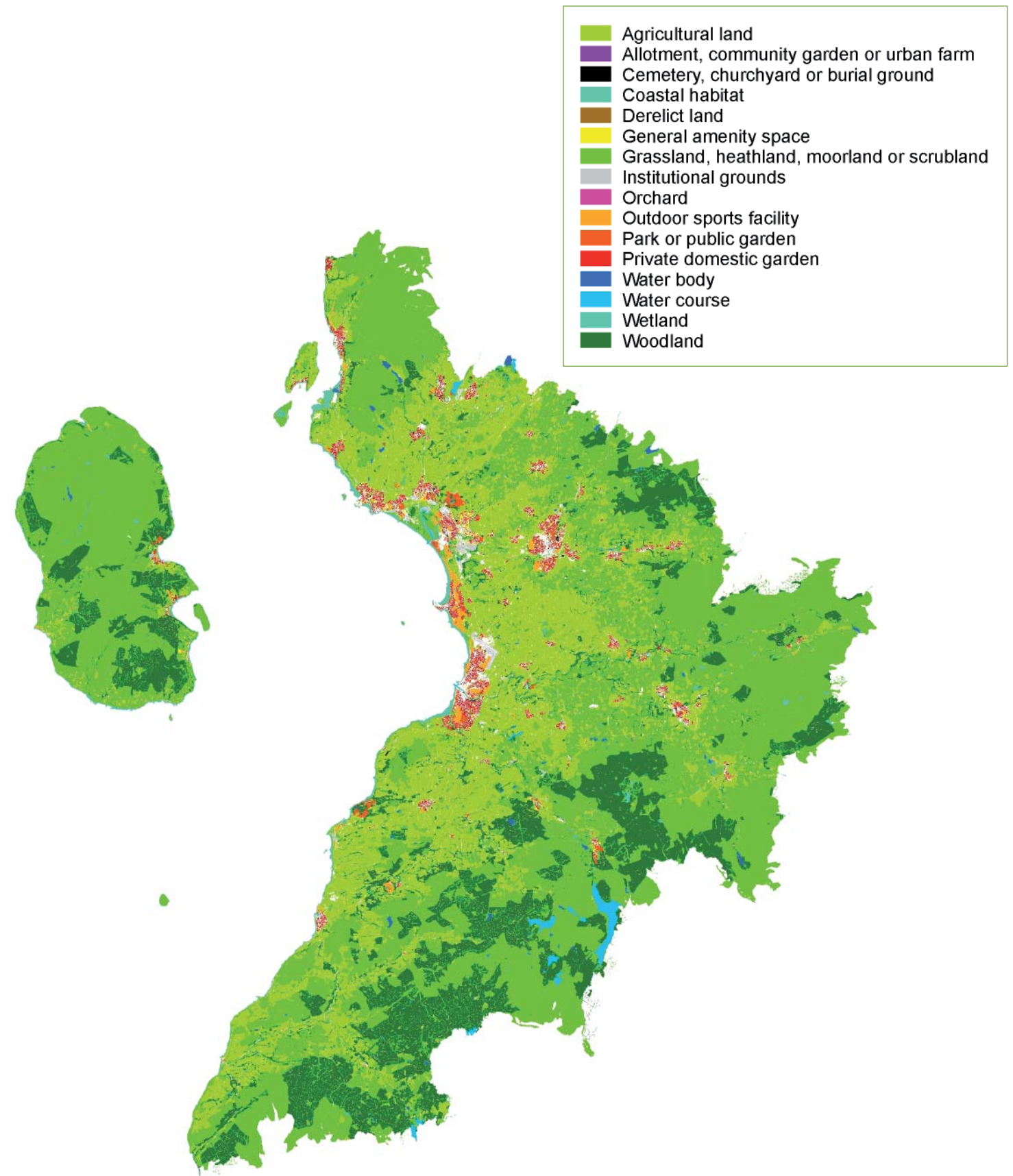- Wetland
- Woodland

Figure 8 Existing Typology for Ayrshire

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK

3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

3.1 Topography

Refer to Figure 9 - Topography

3.1.1 Ayrshire is the largest of Scotland's lowland counties with a low lying central basin, centred on the coast at Ayr and surrounded by a perimeter of hills to the north, east and south. The topography reflects the catchment and drainage areas of the major rivers, which principally drain westwards to the sea, including the Rivers Garnock, Irvine, Ayr, Doon, Girvin and Stinchar.

3.1.2 The Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park is situated in the north of Ayrshire, rising to 522 metres (above ordnance datum) at the Hill of Stake at its highest point. Further hills, the Crosbie Hills, are adjacent to the coast between West Kilbride and Dalry, consequently the River Garnock drains to the south before entering the sea at Irvine Bay. To the east side of Garnock and much of Irvine and Ayr, catchments are relatively low lying with much of the catchment below 100m and little land above 300m.

3.1.3 The Rivers Stinchar, Doon and Girvan all rise in the Galloway Hills to the south west with altitudes over 500 metres in places. The Carrick Hills are a distinctive feature of South Ayrshire, rising to over 500 metres close to Girvan and the sea, and characterised in places by large scale wind farms.

Source: www.ayrshireriverstrust.org/uplands

3.1.4 The topography of Arran reflects the nature of this spectacular island with Goada Bheinn (Goatfell) rising to some 874 metres AOD situated at the northern end. The mountains provide the focus for fine views from the mainland particularly in winter.
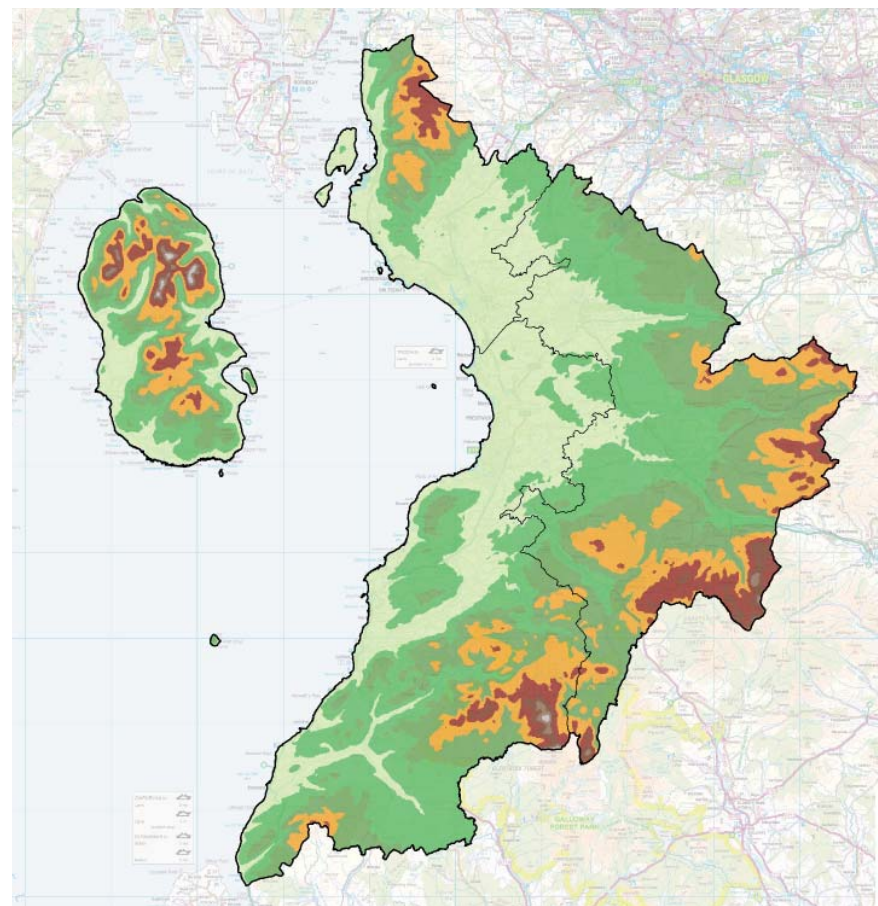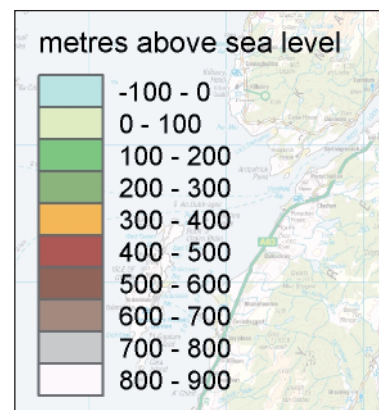
3.2 Landscape and Landscape Character

Refer to Figure 10 – Sensitive Landscape Areas and Figure 11 – Landscape Character Areas

3.2.1 Introduction

The landscape of Ayrshire is a valuable resource, making a significant contribution to the economic, environmental and cultural life of the area. Around 50% of Ayrshire is covered by Landscape Designations, which are listed below;

- National Scenic Area – The northern half of Arran.
- Sensitive Landscape Character Area – Large parts of the south of the County, along with a section to the east of Ayr, adjacent to Largs and covering the north of Arran.

metres above sea level

	-100 - 0
	0 - 100
	100 - 200
	200 - 300
	300 - 400
	400 - 500
	500 - 600
	600 - 700
	700 - 800
	800 - 900

Figure 9 Topography

Figure 10 Sensitive Landscape Areas

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

Because much of Ayrshire is valued for its scenic and environmental qualities, landscape character is a key element in promoting development as well as providing an attractive setting for existing communities and new investment. Landscapes are constantly evolving due to changes in agricultural practices, renewable energy developments, improvements to infrastructure, recreational activities and climate, which all impact on landscape character and appearance. This makes it essential that positive landscape management is carried out throughout Ayrshire to achieve improved landscape quality as well as landscape protection.

Figure 11 Landscape Character Areas

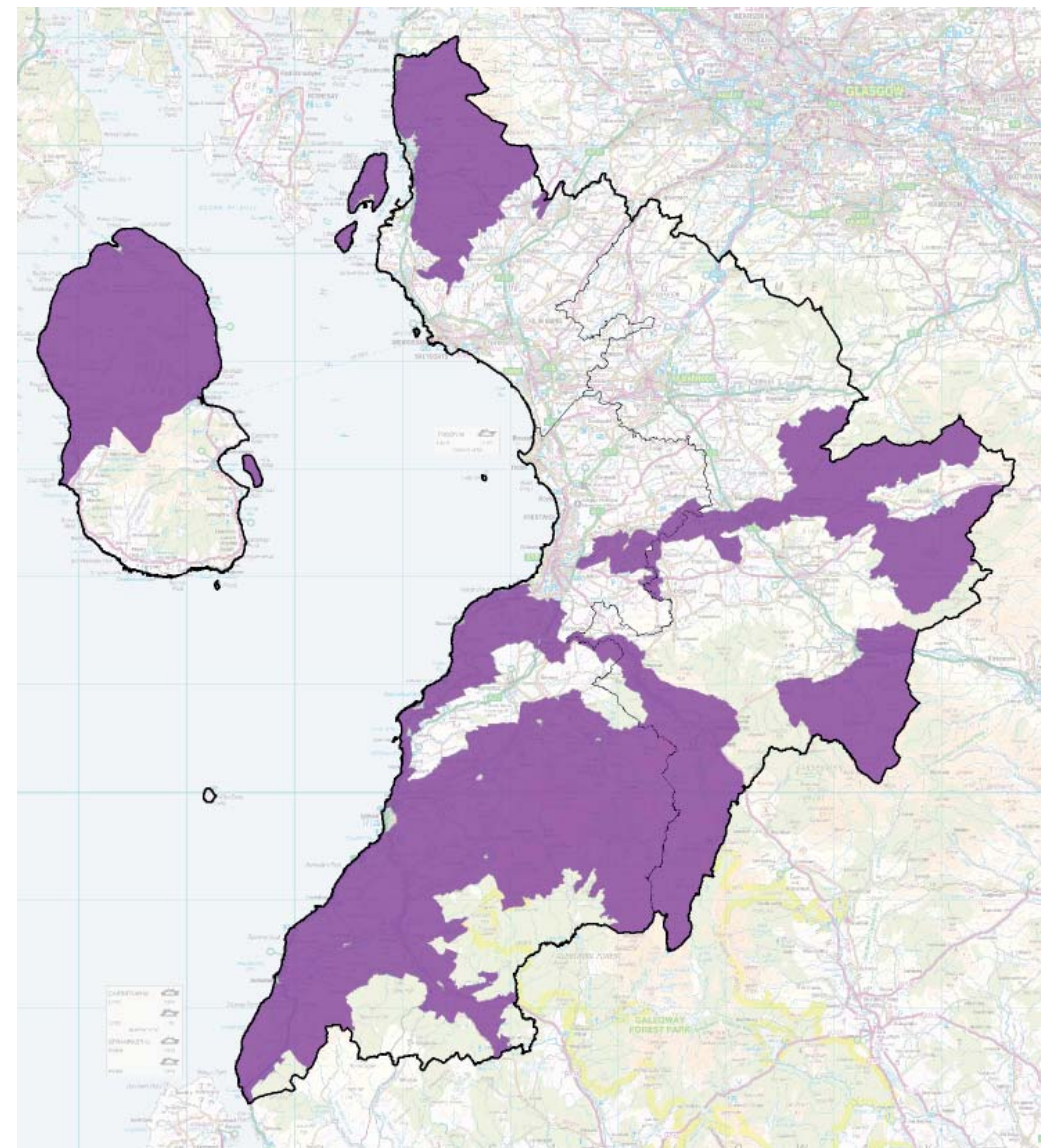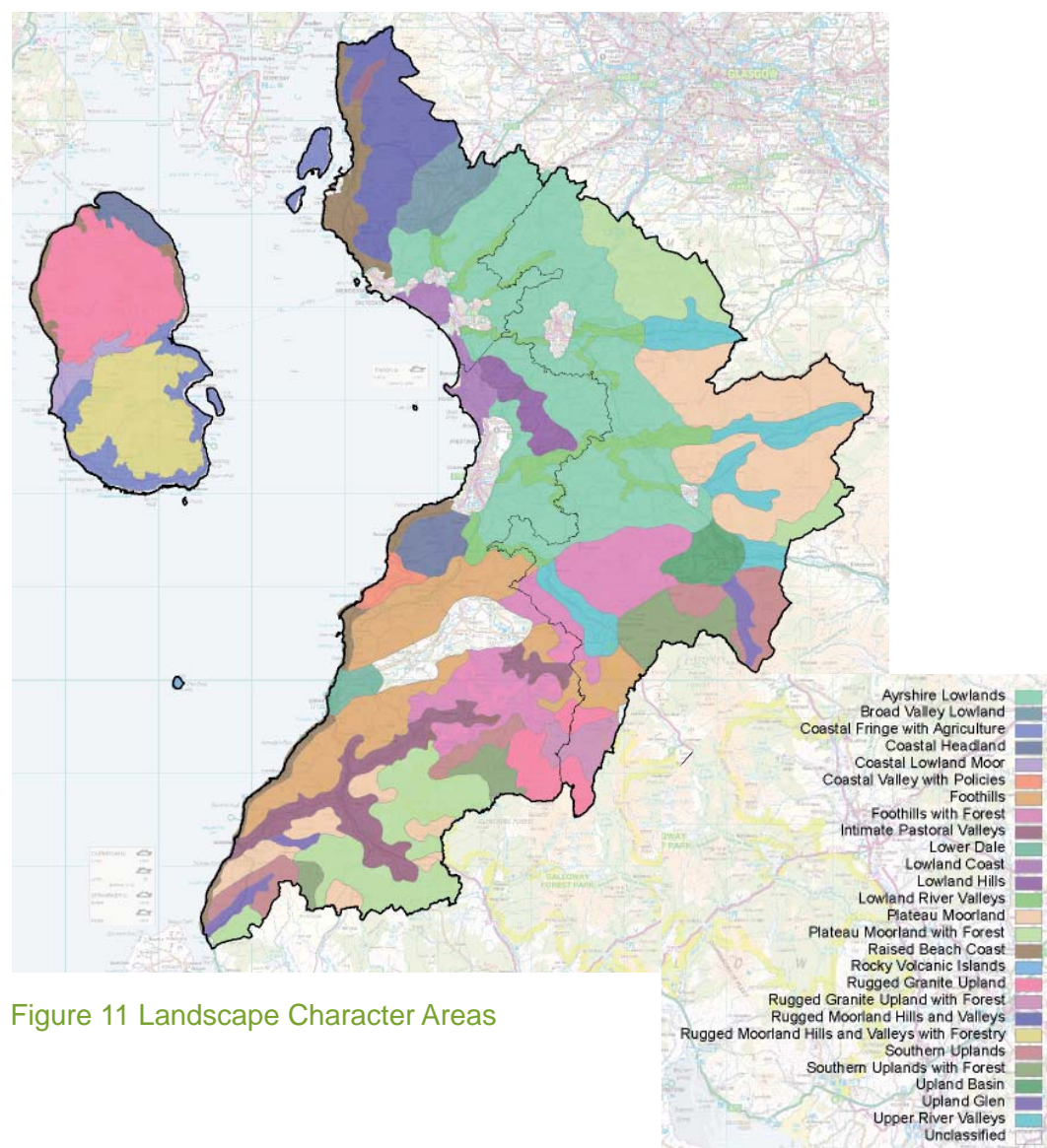Site visits were undertaken in February and March 2011 to assess each investment corridor and the core area. Notes were made at strategic points within these areas and were compared with the findings of the 1998 "Ayrshire Landscape Assessment No. 111" carried out by Land Use Consultants. These were found to be comparable for the most part and it is this combination of the two studies that has been used to form the basis for the following descriptions.

3.2.2   **Core Area**

The core area sits within a single regional character area, this being the "Ayrshire Basin" character area. This is characterised as an extensive semi-circular lowland area which is focused on the town of Ayr. It has a distinct land use and settlement pattern, which sees "heavily populated" areas "with a dense network of settlements and roads", sit next to more rural areas where the main land use is dairy farming, which have a surviving framework of hedges and hedgerow trees. The area is also "cut by a series of narrow river valleys which have become incised as the land has risen relative to the sea".

The landscape classifications for this area are divided into five areas: the "Large Towns", "Lowland Coast", "Ayrshire Lowlands", "Lowland River Valleys" and "Lowland Hills". The "Ayrshire Lowland" and "Lowland River Valley" landscape classifications are described elsewhere in this section.

The "Large Towns" landscape classification can be defined by the built up areas of Saltcoats / Ardrossan, Kilwinning, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Troon and Ayr. As the classification suggests, these are the major towns within the core area.

The "Lowland Coast" landscape classification is characterised by a series of rounded bays, divided by outcrops of igneous rock and backed by areas of sand dunes. The character area can also be defined by a number of golf courses which have some nature conservation importance, e.g.: Western Gailes Golf Club is designated a SSSI. The growth of coastal settlements along this stretch of coast has meant that much of the coastal lowland has been lost.

The "Lowland Hills" landscape classification can be defined by a series of low hills in the heart of the "Ayrshire Lowlands", which "rise almost imperceptibly from the surrounding pasturelands, culminating in a series of bluffy summits inland from Troon". Land cover is dominated by "pastures enclosed with hedges (many with gorse) and post and wire fences. The bluffy summits and the steeper slopes tend to be covered in gorse". The "Lowland Hills" would have provided ideal defensible locations in the surrounding lowlands, and indeed some of the hills have evidence of forts and Dundonald Castle in particular is an important historic site within this landscape classification area.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

North Coast Investment Corridor

The north coast investment corridor is part of the regional character area "The Inner Firth of Clyde", which is "characterised by medium distant views across semi-sheltered water to steeply rising shorelines, often backed by wooded slopes". Within this area "many of the coastal fringes are settled".

The landscape classification is given as "Raised Beach Coast", which is characterised as "where areas of higher ground reach the coast and where the raised beach is visible as a level shelf backed by a steep, sometimes craggy escarpment, representing the former cliff line". Although this is known as "Raised Beach" the landscape character type actually comprises "the former beach, cliff and areas above". Wooded hinterland is a characteristic of this corridor.

3.2.4   Garnock Valley Investment Corridor

The Garnock Valley investment corridor is part of the regional character area "Ayrshire Basin", which is characterised as an extensive semi-circular lowland area focused on the town of Ayr. The character area has a distinct land use and settlement pattern, which sees "heavily populated" areas "with a dense network of settlements and roads", sitting next to more rural areas where the main land use is dairy farming, which have a surviving framework of hedges and hedgerow trees. The area is also "cut by a series of narrow river valleys which have become incised as the land has risen relative to the sea". This particular investment corridor is located in the more rural part of the "Ayrshire Basin", with a gently rolling landform, broken by a network of hedges and field boundaries.

The landscape classification is given as "Broad Valley Lowland", which is characterised as a broad, shallow, level valley floor that has naturally flooded to form Kilbirnie Loch. There is a dense network of woodlands, shelterbelts and hedges and occasional long views to the North Ayrshire Hills. There is some industry within this investment corridor, with an industrial plant at Dalry and some Whisky Bond Warehouses at Beith.

3.2.5   Glasgow Link Investment Corridor

The Glasgow link investment corridor is also part of the regional character area "Ayrshire Basin", which is characterised as an extensive semi-circular lowland area focused on the town of Ayr. This investment corridor is located in the more rural part of the "Ayrshire Basin" with a gently rolling landform, broken by a network of hedges and field boundaries.

The landscape classification is given as "Ayrshire Lowlands", which is characterized as extensively agricultural in nature. It is a complex landscape which is dissected by many burns and streams, giving an undulating lowland landscape that is predominantly pastoral, although there are some areas of arable farming on the lower level areas with better soils. The "Ayrshire Lowland" landscape character area has a strong network of 18th / 19th century field boundaries which are formed by well conditioned hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees.

3.2.6   Irvine Valley Investment Corridor

The Irvine Valley investment corridor is also part of the regional character area "Ayrshire Basin" as described in 3.2.4. As it moves east it becomes part of the "Ayrshire Rim" character area, which is characterised as "an extensive area of plateau moorland" with hills that are "broad and often shallow sloped, comprising areas of moss and blanket bog. Large areas are afforested with coniferous plantations".

The settlement pattern tends to be "focused in the series of upland river valleys which cut through the hills, often providing the corridor for communication".

The landscape classification moves from "Upper River Valleys" in the east to "Lowland River Valleys" in the west as it reaches Kilmarnock. The "Upper River Valleys" are of a pronounced V-shape in this area, with steeper valleys sides and a narrow floodplain. The valley slopes are generally pasture, bounded by tree lined hedgerows with woodland associated with designed landscapes such as Loudoun Castle and Lanfine House. The "Lowland River Valleys" are generally narrow, often just a few hundred metres wide, and bounded by steep slopes between 10 and 30m high. The valley slopes are well wooded and the rivers run in tight meanders. Field boundaries tend to be hedges.

Glengarnock from Kilbirnie

3.2.7 A70 / A76 Investment Corridor

The A70 / A76 investment corridor, like the Irvine Valley, is also part of the regional character areas "Ayrshire Basin" and "Ayrshire Rim" as described above.

The landscape classification moves from "Plateau Moorlands" to "Upland River Valleys" and on to "Lowland River Valleys" and the "Ayrshire Lowlands" beyond. The "Plateau Moorlands" is characterised by an "extensive ridge dividing the Ayrshire Basin from the Clyde Basin, forming a transition between the foothills and the uplands to the south". The "Plateau Moorlands" consist of "blanket bogs, heather and grass moorland with comparatively level topography" with "extensive plateau basins rising to soft contoured ridges". It is an expansive landscape so any development within it would be highly visible. The landscape classifications for "Lowland River Valleys" and the "Ayrshire Lowlands" are given elsewhere while the "Upland River Valleys" in this part of the study area share many similar characteristics to others mentioned above, they also have some distinct characteristics of their own. The River Nith Valley has a distinctly U-shaped nature, rising to steeply sloped hills either side of the flat bottomed flood plain, while the Upper Ayr Valley is broader and open rising to moorland plateaus. The Cumnock Investment Corridor is also characterised by the scars of industry, namely bings, embankments and open cast coal mines.

3.2.8 Doon Valley Investment Corridor

The Doon Valley investment corridor is, like previous investment corridors, part of the regional character areas "Ayrshire Basin" and Ayrshire Rim", but it is also part of the "Southern Uplands" regional character area at its eastern boundary. The "Southern Uplands" are characterised by "smooth, conical peaks with extensive foothills and plateaus". Forestry and upland sheep farming are the predominant land uses in this character area.

The landscape classifications for this investment corridor are once again "Upland River Valleys" and "Lowland River Valleys" as described above, along with "Southern Uplands with Forestry" to the eastern most part of the site. The "Southern Uplands with Forestry" consist of "hills with steep, smooth slopes, rising to rounded summits.

Cut into the uplands are a series of distinctive glacial valleys with U-shaped cross sections, precipitous side slopes, hanging valleys, waterfalls, crags and scree". The land cover in this area is "predominantly forestry which extends over the summits or is concentrated on the side slopes, leaving the domed peaks exposed".

3.2.9 Carrick Investment Corridor

The Carrick investment corridor is part of the regional character area "Carrick Hills and Valleys" and follows the coastline from Girvan to Ayr. This part of the character area "is dominated by a raised beach landscape, punctuated by a series of coastal headlands".

The landscape classifications for this investment corridor are varied ranging from "Raised Beach Coast", as described in the North Coast Investment Corridor section, through "Coastal Headlands", "Coastal Valleys with Policies", "Lower Dale" and on to "Foothills".

The "Coastal Headlands" are characterised as a "distinct area of high ground at the southern end of Ayrshire Bay", with a "bluffy, almost craggy summit". The lower slopes are pasture giving way to rough grazing as you move higher up. There is some semi natural woodland on the more sheltered slopes.

The "Coastal Valleys with Policies" are characterised as a "broad, shallow coastal valley and bay, enclosed by moorland hills to the north and south". The landscape is dominated by Culzean Castle and its associated policies woodland and farmland. The land cover is a mosaic of arable farmland and pasture in the lower valley, moving through pasture and broadleaved and coniferous shelter belts and woodland in the mid and upper valley. The field boundaries are dominated by hedges and shelterbelts.

The "Lower Dale" landscape type is found in the lower reaches of the valley of the Water of Girvan. It is characterised as a broad, flat bottomed valley with well defined slopes rising to foothills to the north and south. The Water of Girvan meanders across the valley floor. The land use tends to be arable cultivation of medium sized fields that are enclosed by beech and hawthorn hedges and the occasional drystone dyke. The hedgerow trees and shelterbelts tend are dominated by mature beech.

The "Foothills" landscape classification is a transition between the more settled Ayrshire Lowlands and the moorlands / uplands in the east. The area is cut by "a series of valleys, giving a dissected landform of incised valleys between rounded ridges and plateaus with occasional un-dramatic summits". The lower slopes tend to be pastoral with fields enclosed by fences, hedgerows and drystone dykes, giving way to rough grazing as you rise up the slopes. The summits tend to be dominated by moorland or coniferous forestry.

3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

3.2.10 Arran

Arran is an island with a varied landscape and geological structure, the Highland Boundary Fault cuts the island in two, which contains many archaeological sites. The northern half of the island comprises "a dramatic landscape of heavily glaciated, granitic peaks and valleys", while the southern half comprises "lower and more subdued moorlands". In addition to these two contrasting halves "a settled and pastoral fringe runs around the island above the raised beaches and cliff lines along the coast. The east side of the island is generally more sheltered, wooded and settled than the more exposed and remote western coast".

3.2.11 Designed Landscapes

Refer to Figure 12 – Designed Landscape Locations

A Designed Landscape Survey (the Survey) for Ayrshire was carried out in 2009 by Peter McGowan Associates with Christopher Dingwall. The report states that 'the term designed landscapes covers the policies (parkland) of a landed estate, together with any gardens and the wide planned and planted ground that forms its setting. The terms can also include public parks and cemeteries, and potentially other types of planned site of high environmental quality such as hospital grounds and university campuses'.

The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscape in Scotland (the Inventory) is the only official national list of gardens and designed landscapes in Scotland. It was first published in 1987 and then listed and described 275 sites across Scotland that were deemed to be of national importance, including 20 sites across Ayrshire. The Designed Landscape Survey for Ayrshire states that 'it is widely recognised that many more gardens and designed landscapes exist than are included in the Inventory. The survey produced a list of 152 sites of national, regional or local interest, including the 20 previously identified Inventory sites. The survey identifies 22 sites of national significance, 25 of regional significance and 106 of local significance.

3.3 Forestry, Woodland and Hedgerows

Refer to Figure 13 – Existing Woodland Locations and Figure 14 – Green Space Audit

The Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy produced in 2003 outlined the general layout and type of Woodland in Ayrshire. Ayrshire and Arran, like many other parts of Scotland, experienced extensive tree planting for softwood timber production throughout the latter part of the 20th century. Of the circa 295,000 ha of Ayrshire, woods and forests contribute to approximately 21% of the total land cover – circa 61,950 ha.

Ancient and semi-natural woodlands are recognised as being of importance for their nature conservation value and the contribution that they make to the character of the landscape. Farm woodlands, including shelterbelts and hedgerow trees, contribute to the landscape and provide important habitats for wildlife. On a larger scale there are a number of fine examples of estate woodlands in Ayrshire. These are often composed of a mixture of designed landscapes and plantations.
Ayrshire, as a well wooded area with extensive softwood plantations, has an important resident timber processing industry - ranging from large mills to small family run sawmills. These businesses not only add important value to the raw material grown in Ayrshire but also provide more than 2,000 jobs.
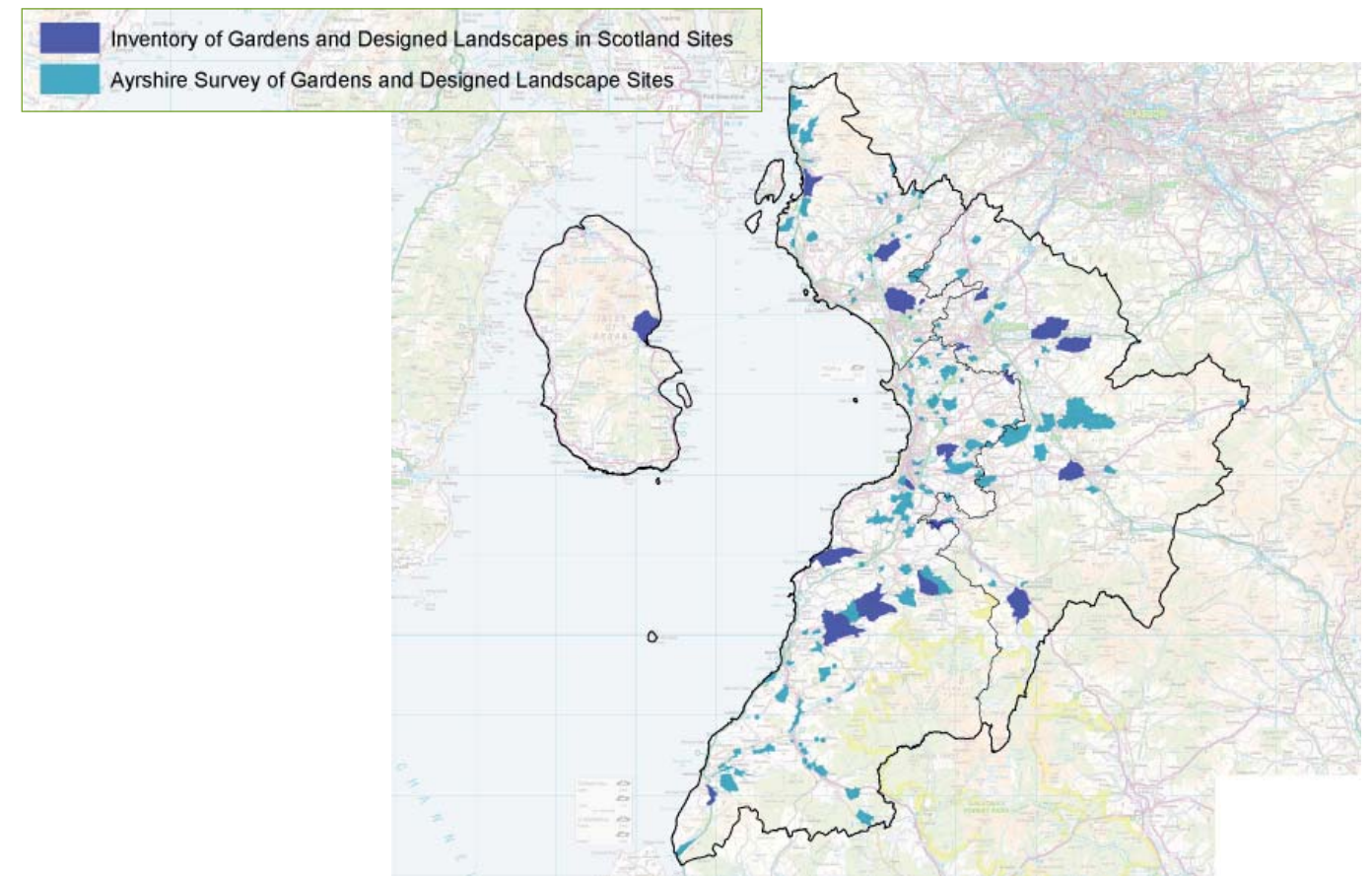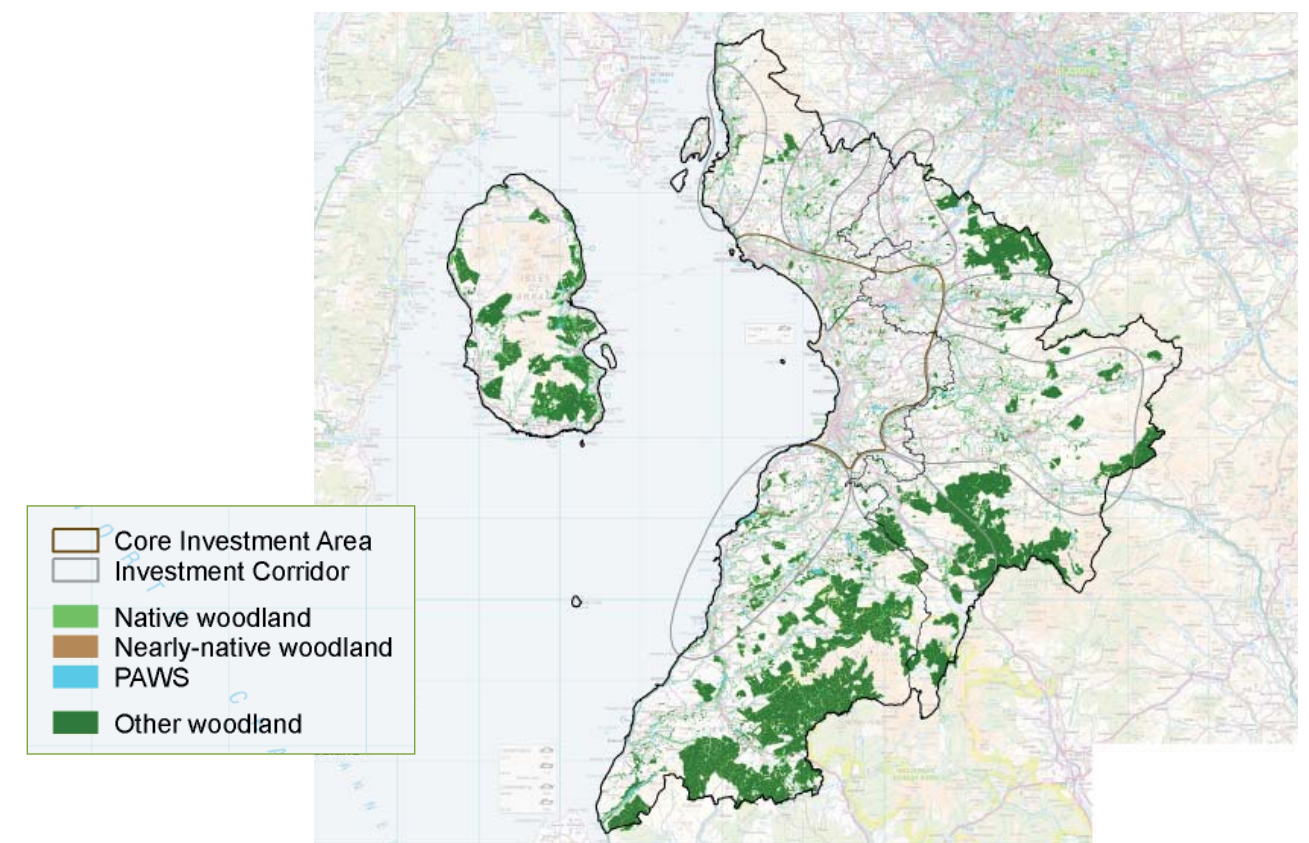

Figure 12 Designed Landscape Locations

Figure 13 Existing Woodland Locations

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK

3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

Legend:
- Roads and tracks
- Roadside (manmade)
- Parking/loading
- Roadside (unknown)
- Tidal water
- Foreshore/rocks
- Railway
- Path
- Buildings - residential
- Buildings - commercial/institutional
- Glasshouses
- Other structures
- Airports
- Public park and garden
- Private gardens
- School grounds
- Institutional grounds
- Amenity - residential
- Amenity - business
- Amenity - transport
- Playspace
- Playing fields
- Golf courses
- Tennis courts
- Bowling greens
- Other sports
- Green access routes
- Riparian routes
- Woodland
- Open semi-natural
- Open water
- Allotment
- Churchyard
- Cemetery
- Other functional greenspace
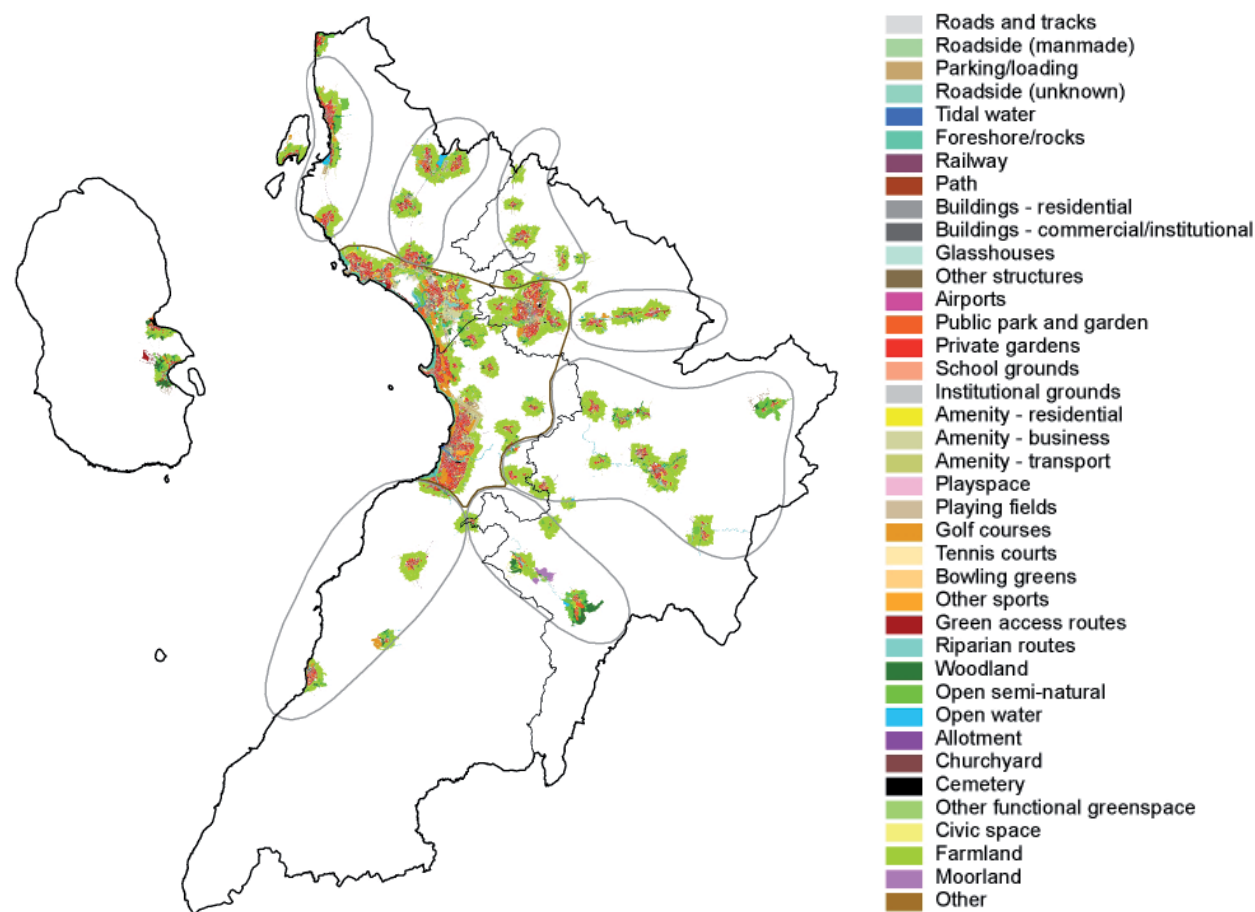- Civic space
- Farmland
- Moorland
- Other

Figure 14 Green Space Audit

3.3.1 Semi-Natural and Native Woodlands

A significant element of the woodland resource is the long-established semi natural broadleaved woods that account for just over 3% of the total countryside area. These woodlands are located principally in lower lying areas close to valley floors and following the river networks. Native species of trees are predominant in these woodlands, some of which are known to have been in existence for many hundreds of years. Certain areas, including the gorge woodlands of the River Ayr, are considered to be of particular importance and as such have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). In the north of Arran woodlands in Glen Diomhan have been included within an SSSI on account of the presence of rare species of whitebeam endemic to the island.

The great majority of Ayrshire's native woodlands, which is only a small percentage of Ayrshire's total woodland cover, were cleared by previous generations to increase areas of cultivation or to provide softwood timber resources. A few protected areas have retained harbour significant wildlife interest. The best examples include River Ayr Gorge, Craig Wood of Glen Tig, Ness Glen near Loch Doon, Skelmorlie Glen, Benlister Glen and Dundonald Wood. These woodlands contain indigenous species including oak, ash, elm, alder and birch, often with introduced beech and sycamore.

The more extensive broadleaved tree and woodland features are, therefore, of plantation origin or are part of farm landscapes.

3.3.2 Estate Woodlands and Designed Landscapes

The woodlands of estates and their designed landscapes, often surrounding mansion houses and castles, are significant features of the landscape and make a positive contribution to most of the lowland landscape. The composition of these woodlands is usually a mixture of deciduous and conifer species, often incorporating exotic specimen trees and shrubs. Typical mixes include; Oak, Elm, Beech, Lime, Horse chestnut, Sycamore, Ash, Yew and Scots Pine and can be seen at Culzean Castle, Kelburn Castle, Knock Castle and Brodick Castle on the coast; Loudoun Castle, Glenapp Castle, Sorn Castle and Auchinleck inland. In addition, there are many remnants of designed landscapes and woodlands throughout Ayrshire which have a significant combined contribution to the settled and prosperous agricultural character of the region, such as at Blair, Dumfries House, Dundonald Castle, Sundrum Castle, Craufurdlan Castle, Cloncaird Castle, Caprington Castle, Rowallan and Lanfine House .

3.3.3 Farm Woodlands, Tree Lines and Hedgerows

The most widespread tree/woodland features of the Ayrshire landscape can be regarded as an integral part of the farm landscapes, most of which were shaped in the 18th and early 19th centuries. An essential feature of Ayrshire's farmland is the extensive pattern of hedgerow field enclosures. These define a roughly rectilinear pattern of enclosure with clipped hawthorn hedges (occasionally beech is used, but not extensively). Field sizes vary from circa 0.5 ha to 1.5 ha in the lowland areas, becoming larger in the uplands, and often switching to stone dyke enclosures. Hedgerows are frequently reinforced by tree lines, usually beech, oak, ash or sycamore, but elm has declined due to Dutch elm disease.

The patterns of hedgerows, tree lines and farm woodlands make positive contributions to the farm landscapes of Ayrshire and help to emphasise subtleties in the rolling landscape. They also add interest through shade and silhouettes and mark the seasonal changes positively. In addition, hedgerows provide valuable habitats and corridors for wildlife and help to screen or mitigate the effects of developments in the landscape.

The dominance of hedges and hedgerow trees has led some commentators to describe Ayrshire as the most English of Scottish counties, recalling the classic field patterns of the English Midlands and its varied hedgerow styles. The survival of this lowland landscape is particularly significant given the deterioration experienced in many comparable parts of Scotland. Within Ayrshire, however, the signs of decline can be detected in the form of gappy or outgrown hedges, or the trend not to replace felled or fallen hedgerow trees (particularly noticeable along road corridors). Agri-environmental schemes have been proposed to counteract the onset of decline and to conserve a landscape which, though locally common, has a degree of intactness rarely found elsewhere in Scotland or elsewhere in the British Isles.

3.3.4 Softwood Forests

The most extensive woodlands in Ayrshire, and the ones which contribute most in terms of jobs and economy, are the softwoods forests found in the more upland areas of Ayrshire and Arran. These have been planted over the last century by the Forestry Commission and private foresters. Large areas of marginal farmland were afforested, including moorland foothills and the lower parts of the Southern Uplands. Given the land area, extensive forests are, therefore, a common feature of the Ayrshire landscape. Public criticism of softwood forestry has now largely disappeared due to careful restructuring of upland plantations and a better understanding of their economic worth and opening them for various forms of amenity, including active sports. This type of forestry continues to be targeted as an important part of the forestry mix and is one of the woodland types included in the Right Tree Right Place planning document. Even so, some commentators believe that softwood intensification has peaked due to alternative and financially attractive land uses in the uplands. Most notable of these is wind energy developments which have already had a major impact on softwood forests, and secondly carbon trading which makes reconversion of softwood forest land to mire and bog attractive due to their high carbon sink value.

3.3.5 Inventory

The Forestry Commission (Scotland) and SNH maintain an Ancient Woodland Inventory which records the location and size of ancient or semi natural woodland throughout Scotland. There are several categories of woodland identified, these being:

(i)   Ancient Woodland
(ii)   Long-established woodland of semi-natural origin
(iii)   Long-established woodland of plantation origin
(iv)   Other woods on "Roy" woodland sites
(v)   Other woodland

The inventory shows that nearly 70% of woodland is outside the Ayrshire Investment Corridors as illustrated. Woodland is clustered around the fringes of Ayrshire and also in Central and Southern Arran.

3.4 Natural Heritage Assets

Refer to Figure 15 - Biodiversity and Figure 16 - Corridors for Wildlife

Ayrshire and Arran encompass coastal, lowland, mid-altitude and upland landscapes which, despite the predominance of cultivated land, support a variety of flora and fauna. In addition, the complex geology of this region provides a broad range of geological and geomorphological interest. These are reflected in the designation of over 70 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), half of which are related to geological interest. These SSSIs include one National Nature Reserve (NNR) at Glen Diomhan (North Arran), one Special Protection Area (SPA) - Ailsa Craig, and two proposed Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) - Merrick Kells and Cockinhead Moss. In addition, the local authorities have identified many sites of local wildlife importance (i.e. Listed Wildlife Sites). These designated and listed sites represent only a small percentage of Ayrshire which contains the most valuable and sensitive recorded resources. There are many other areas of local value for wildlife and several large areas whose general value for natural heritage is broadly recognised.

Core Investment Area
Investment Corridor
Scottish Wildlife Trust reserves
Special Protection Areas
Special Areas of Conservation
Sites of Special Scientific Interest
Ramsar sites
National Nature Reserves
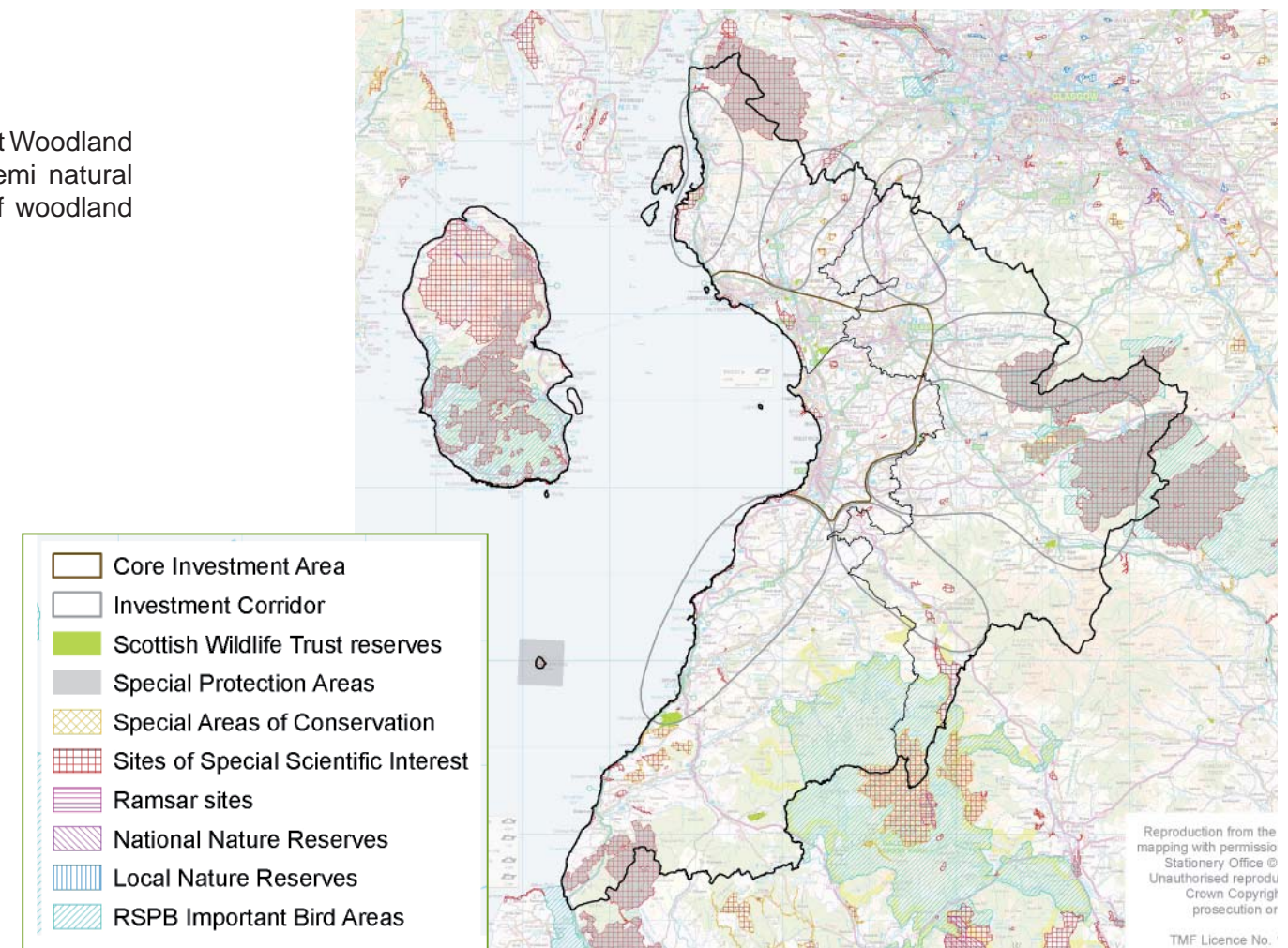Local Nature Reserves
RSPB Important Bird Areas

Figure 15 Biodiversity

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

Figure 16 Corridors for Wildlife

3.4.1 North Ayrshire

In North Ayrshire the major environmental designations to be protected include the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, 17 SSSIs, Eglinton Park and Natura 2000 Sites at Cockinhead Moss, Bankhead Moss, Dykeneuk Moss and Renfrewshire Heights (SPA)

3.4.2 East Ayrshire

East Ayrshire contains one Special Protection Area (SPA), the Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands SPA, which extends to some 16, 603 hectares. The SPA is of exceptional interest due to its variety of blanket bog, wet and dry heaths and upland grasslands, and was designated specifically because of its international importance for the breeding of hen harrier, short eared owls, merlin, peregrine and golden plovers. There is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC's) designated within East Ayrshire at Airds Moss. There are a total of 21 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) in East Ayrshire which extend to a total of 19,343 hectares. There are two confirmed and one proposed Local Nature Reserves (LNR's), 128 designated and provisional wildlife sites, and one Country Park within East Ayrshire located at Dean Castle.

3.4.3 South Ayrshire

There are 32 SSSIs in South Ayrshire covering a total area of 4076.3ha. In South Ayrshire, Ailsa Craig has been designated a Special Protection Area (SPA), under the EC Birds Directive (1979), whilst parts of Glen App and the Galloway Moors have been put forward as a potential SPA. Under the EC Habitats Directive (1992), the Lendalfoot Hills Complex and Merrick Kells (partly in Dumfries and Galloway) have been put forward by SNH as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).

3.4.4 The Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan was completed in 2001 and a revised plan was completed in 2007. 32 Ayrshire habitats were identified within the original LBAP and of these 20 are UK BAP Priority Habitats. Detailed information is not yet available for all of them and only parts of the habitat data sets have been digitised.

1. Maerl beds
2. Saline lagoons
3. Seagrass beds
4. Benthic zone
5. Rocky shore
6. Pelagic zone
7. Coastal salt marsh
8. Sheltered muddy gravels
9. Coastal sand dunes
10. Coastal vegetated shingle
11. Maritime cliff and slopes
12. Raised beach platform
13. Rivers and streams
14. Mesotrophic lakes
15. Fens
16. Purple moor grass and rush pastures
17. Reedbeds
18. Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows
19. Cereal field margins
20. Upland calcareous grassland
21. Lowland dry acid grassland
22. Lowland meadows
23. Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
24. Planted conifers
25. Lowland wood-pasture and parkland
26. Upland mixed ashwoods
27. Upland oakwood
28. Wet woodland
29. Blanket bog
30. Lowland raised bog
31. Upland heathland
32 Urban

Habitat and Species Action Plans have been devised for the following:

Lowland Raised Peat Bogs: The Lowland Raised Peat Bogs inventory contains 39 sites in Ayrshire, of which 22 are in East Ayrshire and 17 in North Ayrshire. One other site has been identified in South Ayrshire. Raised bog SSSI, of national importance, has been declared for Barlosh Moss and Dalmellington Moss in East Ayrshire and Cockinhead Moss, Bankhead Moss and Dykeneuk Moss in North Ayrshire. Cockinhead, Bankhead and Dykeneuk mosses have been recognised as being of European importance and been declared SACs. Dalmellington Moss is a wildlife reserve of the SWT.

This Habitat Action Plan has the long-term vision to bring as many of the lowland raised bogs into favourable conservation condition as possible and maintain the irrecoverable sites as sites for wildlife.

Coastal Habitats: There are already 60 sites along the coast which have a conservation designation (i.e. SSSI, Wildlife Sites or Local Nature Reserves) and where, for some of them, the coastal wildlife is being positively managed.

The overall vision for this complex of habitats is to:

a) Retain as much of the most specialist coastal habitats (e.g. sand dunes, salt marsh, rich coastal grasslands) as is possible, in units as large as possible.

b) Achieve positive management for as much of the coastal habitats as possible for their specialised coastal biodiversity especially where the land has another use.

c) Stimulate an enjoyment and appreciation of Ayrshire's coastal wildlife and an interest in its welfare amongst the people of Ayrshire

Water Vole: there are nine sites with water voles and these were found south and east of Girvan and north-east of New Cumnock, all in the upper reaches of the catchment of the River Stinchar.

The management objectives are:

a) Protection and enhancement of sites where water voles are present.
b) Enhancement of the habitat in the area around those sites to promote growth of existing colonies.

Farmland Birds: A number of the species identified with the highest biodiversity status in Ayrshire are farmland birds. Many of these have been regarded as common but recent studies have shown huge declines in their populations mainly due to changes in farming practices, including pesticide use, hedge removal, more efficient weed removal including from hedge bottoms and changes in the time of year when crops are sown and harvested. The species which are widespread are Tree Sparrow, Skylark, Linnet, Reed Bunting, Bullfinch, Grey Partridge, Song Thrush, Lapwing, Snipe, Curlew, Redshank and Yellowhammer.

The decline in population has been affected by removal of hedges, or their very severe cutting resulting in loss of nesting sites for some species, and felling of hedgerow trees. Loss of 'weedy' habitats, either within crops or along field margins, has meant a loss of weed seeds for the birds' winter survival and changes in the timing of ploughing and cultivation has meant a loss of winter stubble as a seed source. Lapwing nests may be vulnerable to being destroyed through field operations or livestock trampling from March to June.

Ayrshire has only very small amounts of arable land (about 12%), mostly along the coast, which has restricted the potential distribution of the corn bunting. The extensive pasture land from improved to hill rough grazing provides habitats of various qualities, especially as many of the lowland fields are surrounded by hedges, although many of them are severely 'pruned'.

This habitat plan aims to encourage measures that benefit farmland birds across Ayrshire through demonstration, sharing good practice and encouraging changes in management initially in small, targeted areas. An important objective is to show that such measures are compatible with or even beneficial to commercial farming. Monitoring of the success of projects will allow measures to be evaluated.

3.4.5 The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

Biospheres are places with world-class environments that are designated by the United Nations (UNESCO) to promote and demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature. They are places which value and promote conservation and sustainable development on a regional scale. Biospheres are created to protect the biological and cultural diversity of a region while promoting sustainable economic development. They are places of cooperation, education and research where local communities, environmental groups, and economic interests can work collaboratively on conservation and development issues.

Galloway and South Ayrshire is being proposed as a new style UNESCO Biosphere because of its unique combination of special landscapes and wildlife areas, rich cultural heritage and communities that care about their environment and culture and want to develop it sustainably. Biosphere designation will help understand, define, sustain and enhance those special qualities. As an internationally recognised marketing brand for superb natural environments, Biosphere designation will offer new opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities to demonstrate how to live work and play in a world class environment.

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire could be the first 'new style' Biosphere in Scotland and would be only the third in the UK. Biospheres have three main functions; conservation, learning /research, and sustainable development. Biospheres are managed by a framework which divides the area into three complementary management zones – Core Area, Buffer Zone and Transition Area. The Transition Area is a more flexible area in which sustainable economic and community development would be actively promoted. Biosphere designation would bring no new regulation of activities within the area.

3.5 Built Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Refer to Figure 17 - Heritage

Ayrshire, Arran and the smaller offshore islands have an outstanding and diverse heritage. As major assets they can only be selectively reviewed in a wider study which is focused on green networks. The selective review features those assets thought to be, by location and function, most valuable when considered as part of a green network. It is not intended as a comprehensive list.
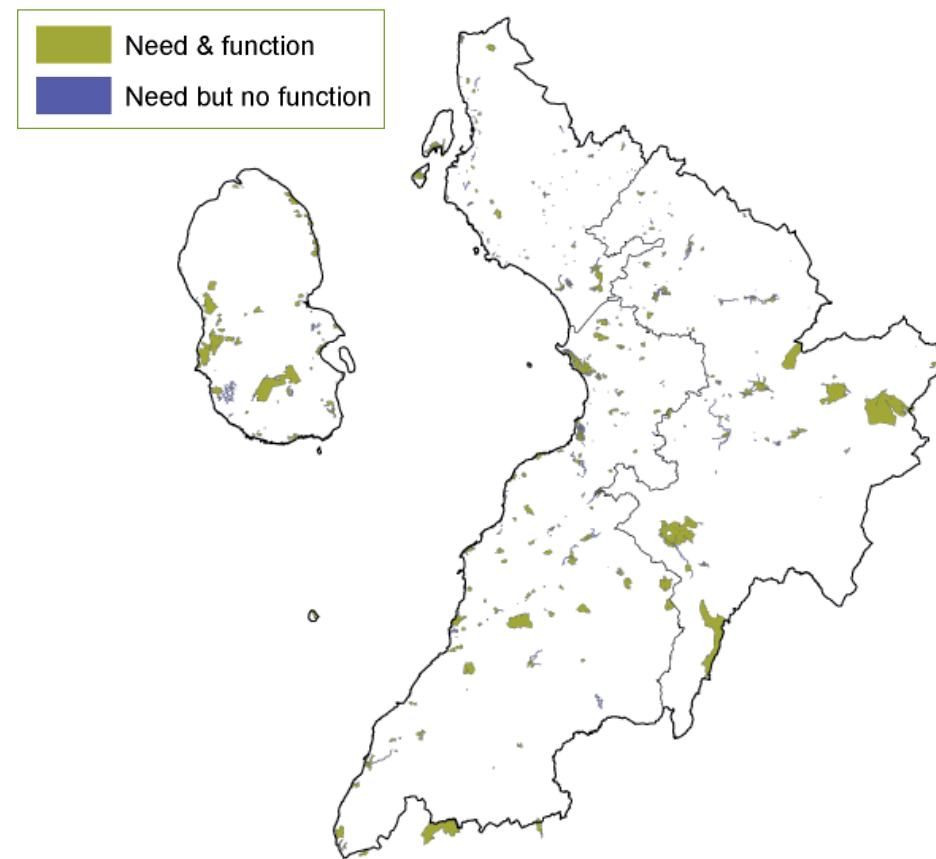

Figure 17 Heritage

3.5.1 Prehistoric

Evidence of prehistoric human activity in Ayrshire is most visible in Arran, where the greatest concentrations of monuments remain intact as significant features in the landscape. Such monuments are not absent from mainland Ayrshire, but they are not present in the same concentrations, nor do they contain monuments of the same complexity and condition. There are, however, many prehistoric features still visible in the landscape, particularly in the less cultivated hills of North Ayrshire and in the coastal hills south of Ayr. These include many cairns, a few chambered cairns (and long barrows), standing stones and inscribed stones (the Ballochmyle cup and ring marked rocks are perhaps the most significant Neolithic/Bronze Age feature in mainland Ayrshire).

Many prehistoric sites are difficult to detect in the landscape, but do appear under certain climatic conditions. Frost cover, snow, low sunlight and crop marks can expose the locations of ancient dwellings and lines of enclosure. These more ephemeral earth and timber structures from the prehistoric period often appear under these conditions and are subtle but intriguing components of the landscape heritage.

Iron Age features are more evident throughout the region as a result of their large numbers, their younger age, their long occupation and their robust construction/size of construction. Approximately 200 forts and duns have been discovered in Ayrshire. These are circular stone structures usually sited on the top of hills, ridges or prominent knolls from which they could guard surrounding farmland. Duns are similar to forts but are smaller defensive structures capable of accommodating only one family or small group of people. Of locally significant and certainly symbolic importance are the Celtic crosses which marked early Christian gathering places throughout Ayrshire. These are perhaps not major features of the landscape, and a number have been taken into museums, however, where they remain, their contribution to the local landscape character is felt.

East Ayrshire has a wealth of archaeological sites and locations, containing 1055 sites of archaeological significance and two archaeological locations at Dunaskin and Muirkirk.

3.5.2 Cumbrae and Arran

The highlights of the built heritage include the Cathedral of the Isles on Cumbrae, built in 1851, which is the smallest cathedral in Europe and has Victorian Gothic style architecture and is set within a woodland landscape. Brodick Castle, home of the Dukes of Hamilton, is situated in a woodland park, with extensive gardens, waymarked trails and a Victorian walled garden. Lochranza Castle originally a 13th/14th century two storey hall-house, was heightened and converted in the 16th century into a tower-house. Arran has an outstanding archaeology, with many stone artefacts. There are numerous ancient monuments which include chambered tombs, stone circles, standing stones, hut circles, cists and forts dating back as far as the Mesolithic period, some 10,000 years ago. The standing stones and stone circles of Machrie Moor are striking in the landscape and there is a small concentration of sites around Blackwaterfoot.

Isle of Arran

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3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

Geology on Arran

Arran has an international reputation for its geology and geomorphology which are of enormous interest to many of the visiting parties that come to the island, particularly from Universities. These visits make a major contribution to the local economy. The underlying geology is illustrated in Figure 18 – Geology of Arran. The rocks are broadly divided by the Highland boundary fault and include igneous rocks, particularly in the north, with Devonian and carboniferous rocks characterising the south, where there are many sills and dykes which result in dramatic coastal scenery. There are also many interesting geological features, such as 'Hutton's Unconformity' at Lochranza; raised beaches, which are prominent at Brodick and Corrie; King's Cave, reputed to be a hiding place of Robert the Bruce when he began his campaign to claim the Scottish throne; and many glacial features, including 'U-shaped valleys, moraine ridges and glacial erratics'.
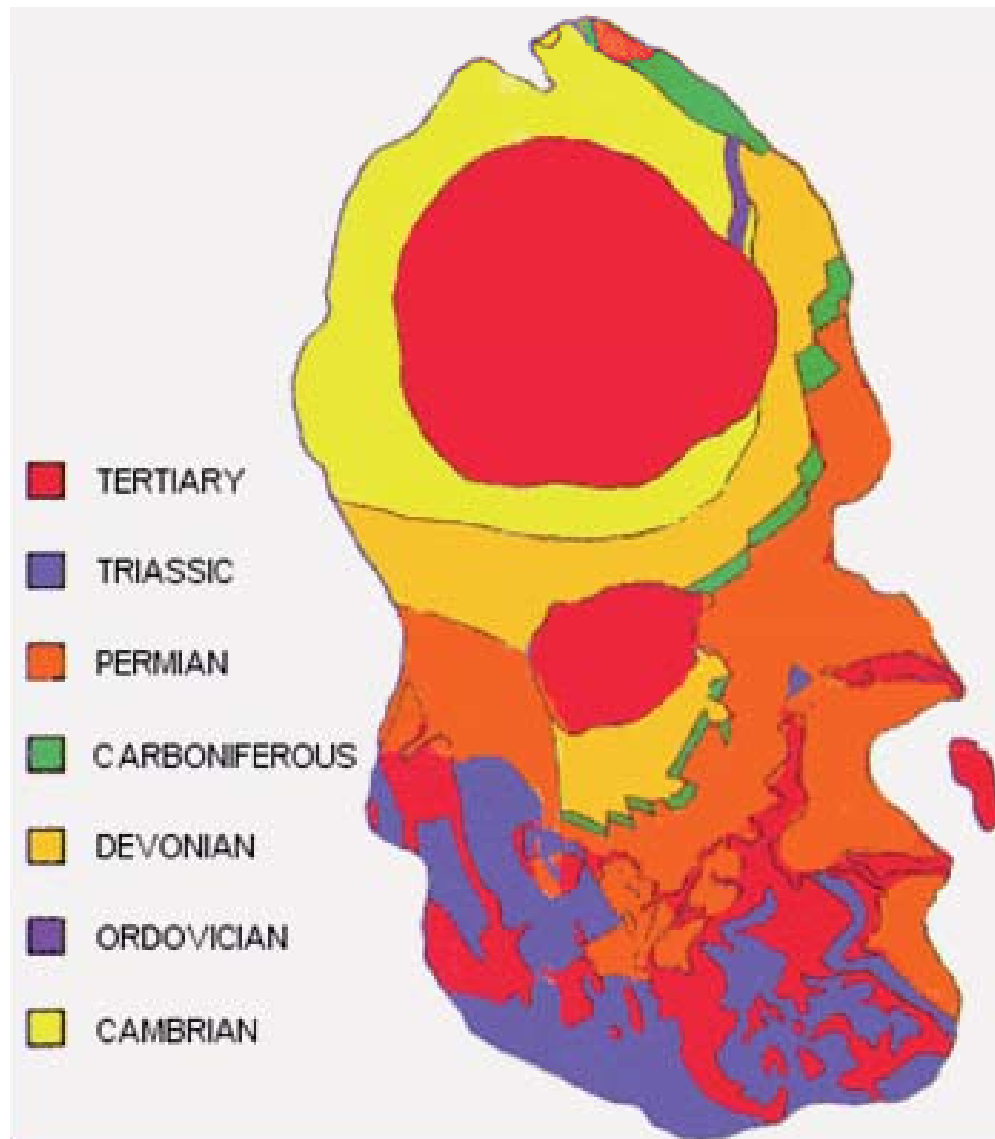

Figure 18 Geology of Arran

3.5.3 ### Mainland Ayrshire

Baltersan Castle is a 16th Century tower house approximately six miles from Turnberry, which is near the mediaeval abbey of Crossraguel, a Cluniac site on the Ayrshire Pilgrims' Trail to Whithorn, near Maybole, originally founded in 1244.

Culzean Castle and Country Park, near Maybole, is another property with links to the Kennedys and to General Eisenhower, who was given a tenanted flat in the castle in 1945. It was originally a tower house in the 1400's and was developed in phases to eventually become a neoclassical cliff top mansion by the 18th century. It has a country park, beaches, a deer park, woodlands, terraces, gardens and vinery.

Dunure Castle was built in the 1300's, near the coast at Dunure for the Kennedys. In this part of the County is Croy Brae, more widely known as The Electric Brae. Greenan Castle is another Kennedy building near the coast, dating back to 1603. Dulquharran Castle, near the village of Dailly was built in the 1780's next to the River Girvan and is now a golf and leisure venue. Blairquhan Castle/Mansion near Strainton, south east of Ayr is a striking building situated near some excellent hill walking country. Further afield, inland to the south-east, is Loch Doon Castle. Built in the 1200's on an island in the Loch for Robert, Earl of Carrick and was reconstructed in the 1930's to allow the loch to be used as a reservoir.

Dean Castle Country Park in Kilmarnock is the ancestral home of the Boyd's. Its 14t space hand 15th century castle houses are set in a 200 acre country park with woodlands and other attractions. Dundonald Castle, near Kilmarnock, is a prominent structure built in the 1370s by Robert II to mark his succession to the throne. Remains of an earlier but equally grand 13th century castle are clearly visible. Castle Hill was occupied by a large fort in the Dark Ages and a prehistoric fort before that. Rowallan Castle near Kilmaurs is a renaissance building located on the banks of the Carmel Water on a site dating back to the 13th century, although it took its present day form in the 16th century. Loudoun Castle and County Park is situated next to Galston and was used as an amusement park, until its recent closure.

Sorn Castle overlooks the River Ayr 4 miles east of Mauchline. It dates from the early 1400's and was built for the Hamilton's. Between Kilwinning and Dalry is the Museum of Ayrshire Country Life and Costume where visitors can access the Garnock Valley.

Kelburn Castle, near Fairlie, dates from the 13th century and is the seat of the Earl of Glasgow. It has extensive gardens, trees and waterfalls and Kelburn Glen has some of Scotland's finest woodlands. Law Castle, near West Kilbride was constructed as a wedding gift for Princess Mary in the fifteenth century and is now used as holiday accommodation. Portencross Castle, near West Kilbride is a tower house built on lands originally owned by the Ross clan by Robert Boyd in the early 1400's.

Eglinton Country Park is one mile north east of Irvine and passed from the Eglington's to the Montgomery's, who abandoned it in 1929 after losing all their money building Ardrossan Harbour. It fell into disrepair and was used as target practice for tanks in World War Two.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

3.5.4 List of Main Sites with Potential Links to Ayrshire Green Network

Great Cumbrae, North Ayrshire

- Cathedral of the Isles
- Museum of the Cumbraes, the Garrison Centre, Millport

Arran, North Ayrshire (Built and Cultural)

- Brodick Castle and Gardens Country Park
- Lochranza Castle
- Kildonan Castle
- Arran Heritage Museum, Brodick
- Kings Cave, Torbeg (Natural Heritage with Bruce history)
- Arran Archaeology (a very large number of sites; Machrie Moor is most famous for standing stones and circles)

Arran, North Ayrshire (Natural)

- Geology international asset
- Geomorphology international asset

Ayrshire Country Parks

- Culzean Castle & Country Park, South Ayrshire
- Dean Castle & Country Park, East Ayrshire
- Eglinton Castle &Country Park, North Ayrshire
- Kelburn Castle and Country Park, North Ayrshire
- Loudoun Castle and County Park, East Ayrshire

Ayrshire Castles and Historic Buildings

North Ayrshire (mainland)

- Portencross Castle (Tower)
- Kilwinning Abbey

East Ayrshire

- Loch Doon Castle
- Barr Castle
- Caprington Castle
- Carnell Castle
- Cessnock Castle
- Dundonald Castle
- Craufurdland Castle
- Kilmaurs Place
- Kingenclugh Castle

- Mauchline Castle
- Newmilns Tower
- Rowallan Castle
- Sorn Castle
- Terringzean Castle

South Ayrshire

- Greenan Castle
- Dunure Castle
- Blairquhan Castle
- Crossraguel Abbey
- Dalquarran Castle
- Maybole Castle

Attractions

North Ayrshire

- Vikingar, Largs
- The Museum of Ayrshire Country Life and Costume, Dalgarvel, Kilwinning
- Largs Museum
- Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine
- Gallery , West Kilbride
- West Kilbride Museum
- North Ayrshire Museum, Saltcoats
- The Heckling Shed and Burns Lodging House, Irvine

East Ayrshire

- Dumfries House, Cumnock
- Baird Institute , Cumnock
- Auchinleck House, Cumnock
- Baird Institute, Cumnock
- Burns House Museum, Mauchline
- The Gallery, Stewarton
- Burns Monument Centre and Kay Park, Kilmarnock
- Dick Institute, Kilmarnock
- Doon Valley Museum, Dalmellington
- High House Winding Gear, Auchinleck

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

South Ayrshire

- Stumpy Tower, Girvan
- McKechnie Institute, Girvan
- The Rose Gardens, Knockcushan Gardens and Orchard Gardens, Girvan
- Bargany Gardens, Girvan
- Belleisle, Rozelle, Craigie Parks and Gardens, Ayr
- Maybole Castle
- Maybole Town Hall
- Bruce's Well, Prestwick
- Burns National Heritage Park, Brig O'Doon
- Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Alloway
- Souter Johnnies Cottage, Kirkoswald
- Dunaskin Heritage Centre, Waterside, Dalmellington,
- Cathcartson Visitor Centre, Dalmellington
- Dalmellington Mote
- Scottish Industrial Rail Museum, Dalmellington

	Conservation Areas	Properties In Care	Scheduled Monuments
East Ayrshire	26	2	29
North Ayrshire	13	10	92
South Ayrshire	21	3	91
Total	60	15	212

3.6   Road and Path Networks

3.6.1   The Types of Paths and Trails that exist in Ayrshire

Path networks are used for a variety of purposes ranging from journeys to school or to work, and also for recreation. Depending on their designation and layout they may be used not only for walking but also shared with cyclists and with horse riders.   Walking and cycling are regarded as integral components of transport policy in Ayrshire and have an invaluable role to play in providing a sustainable approach to transport opportunities. The provision of suitable footpath and/or cycle route links will encourage individuals to walk or ride as a practical alternative to trips taken by car.

Public transport in Ayrshire also plays a vital role in an integrated approach to sustainable transport by reducing the dependency on cars. Linking public transport to path networks is important to encourage non-car use of the countryside.

Common aims of the three Ayrshire councils are:

- To develop Ayrshire as a quality destination for outdoor access through walking, cycling - including mountain biking - and horse riding.
- To ensure that existing and future networks are accessible to residents, non-car owners and tourists.
- To improve, extend and develop the existing path infrastructure to increase levels of usage.
- To maximise the potential for access to the coast and open hills.
- To promote initiatives that discourage the use of the car in favour of more active and sustainable modes of transport.3.6.2

Core Paths

Refer to Figure 19 – National Cycle Network and Figure 20 – Core Paths

Core paths designated under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 indicate the key routes that each local authority has identified following consultations with local communities, land managers and user groups such as Sustrans and the British Horse Society. Core paths are being signposted and will be shown on future editions of Ordnance Survey maps. Figure 20 indicates the location of the core paths in Ayrshire.
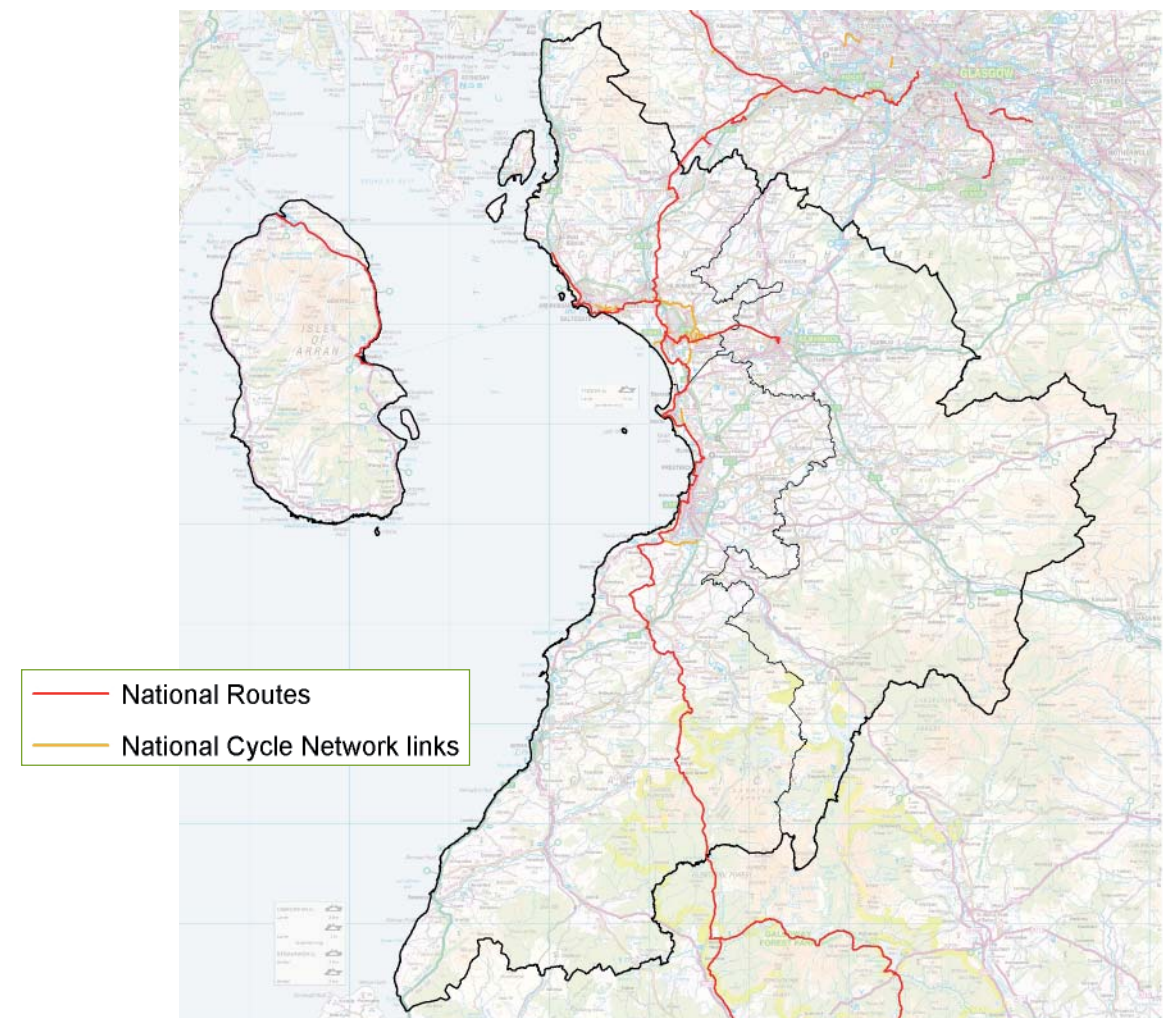

Figure 19 National Cycle Network

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
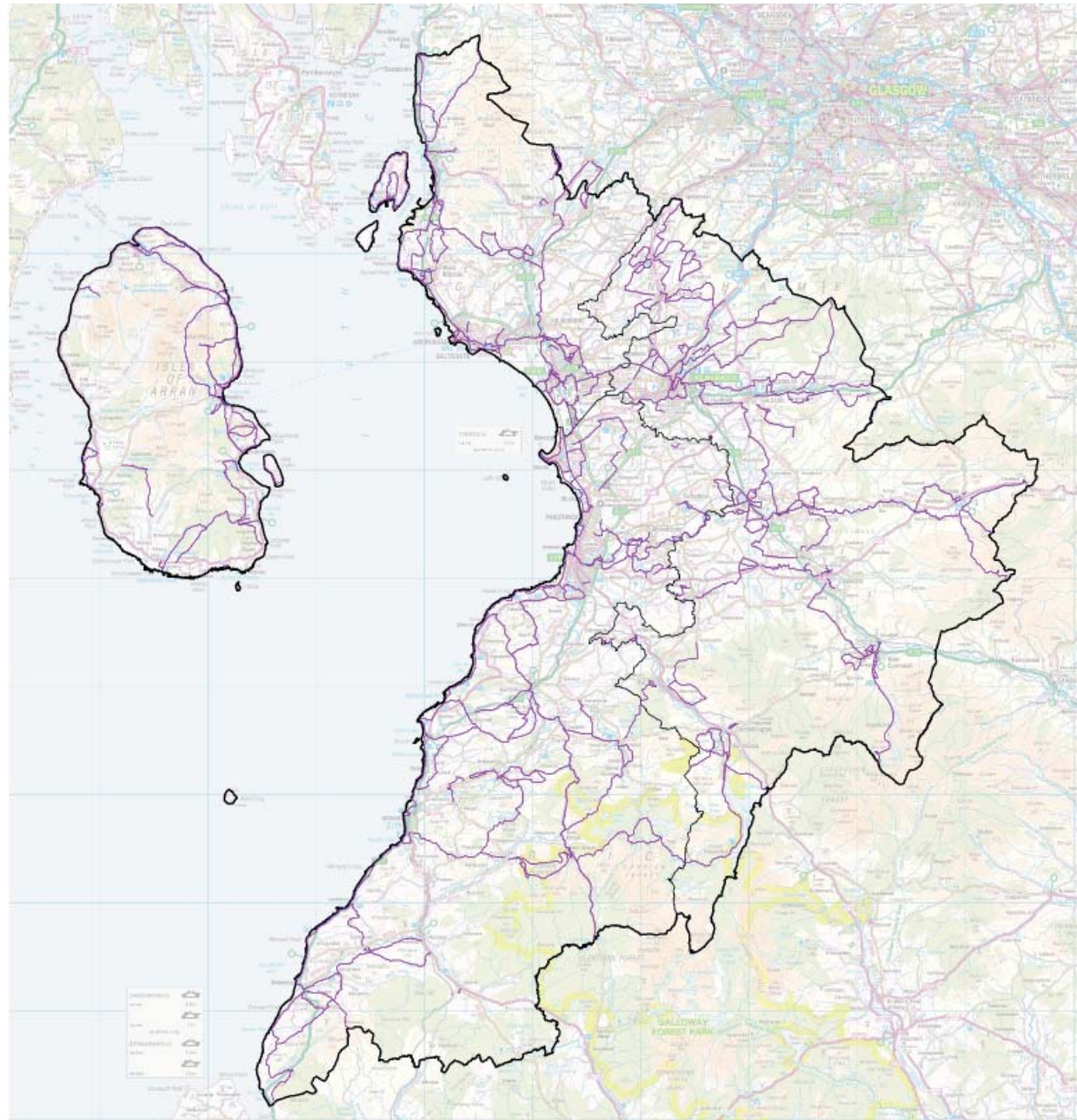## 3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

Figure 20 Core Paths

It is important to note that Core Paths also have more descriptive titles to assist users in identifying their nature and character, for example in Ayrshire there are:

- Long distance paths - such as the River Ayr Way and the Muirkirk Sanqhar Walk
- National cycle network - two National Cycle Network (NCN) routes pass through Ayrshire, NCN Route 7 and NCN Route 73
- Local cycleways such as the Garnoch Valley Cycleway and Maybole South.
- Mountain biking routes for example the Arran Bike Club Black Trail and the Brown Carrick Hills Route.
- Coastal paths - in this case the Ayrshire Coastal Path and the Isle of Arran Coastal Way.
- Heritage trails include Loch Doon Road, and the Old String Road on Arran

3.6.3 Paths, Trails, Cycle Routes and Their Context

The access legislation in Scotland gives the public the right of access to most land with guidance on exceptions detailed in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. There remains a demand for more paths and routes and the network of core paths in Ayrshire is designed to help fulfil that demand, whilst the location of designated cycle routes in the region is shown in Figure 19 – National Cycle Network. There is no restriction on cyclists or horse riders sharing paths with walkers but clearly an obligation is placed on riders to act in a responsible way.

Path trails, cycle routes and bridleways are present in both urban and rural areas to facilitate access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, for a range of purposes and to a range of destinations, for example:

- Schools
- Places of work
- Parks and recreational locations
- Exercise
- The countryside
- Other leisure and pleasure opportunities

Routes to schools promote active travel from an early age and may possibly engender habits of a lifetime, whilst walking or cycling to work is not only sustainable but also contributes to the individual's health and well being.

3.6.4 Groups

Various groups, such as the Ramblers Scotland and Scottish National Heritage, promote recreational and leisure use of paths for walkers.

Sustrans in Scotland and the Scottish Cyclists Touring Clubs look after the interests of cyclists and actively promote the development of cycling networks and routes, whilst the British Horse Society has a regional organisation working in Ayrshire.

Disabled access groups, such as Forth and Tay Disabled Ramblers, represent that sector as the Scottish sister organisation of the Disabled Ramblers Association.

There is a multiplicity of special interest groups working in the green travel sector and upon whom the councils may draw for specialist knowledge and information.

The local authorities remains the statutory bodies for establishing and managing core paths and have the power to maintain them and remove obstructions. However, as this is a not a duty there are no prescribed minimum legal standards applicable to core paths.

Sustrans is thought to be the only other specialist group with access to some limited funding to facilitate the extension and/or improvement of the cycling network.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

3.6.5 The importance of the condition of paths for users

The path networks are used by a variety of users within each of the groups of walkers, cyclists and horse riders. One size does not fit all and groups within groups will have different expectations as to what is desirable or represents a minimum acceptable standard, which will also be influenced by journey purpose. Journeys to work or school would, for instance, be likely to require quite different standards to a rural walk over a historic route.

Within the walkers group there are those for whom part of the attraction of the walk includes the physical challenges that a route may present. Alternatively there are those with mobility impairments that need wheelchair access although it is important to recognise that not all disabled users are in wheelchairs as such a group may also include the visually impaired or people with mental health problems. Specialist interest groups for disabled ramblers have on occasions used a grading description to give members some feeling for the degree of difficulty of their 'wheelchair walks' or 'walks on wheels' by using descriptions such as 'Easy' 'Moderate' or 'Challenging'.

This wide variety in standards means that it is important to know which sectors within which groups comprise a path's users.

Core characteristics of a good path will involve

- A suitable surface
- Appropriate gradients
- Adequate width for shared paths – this has a special meaning for bridleways
- Clear signing
- Appropriate arrangements for gates and other furniture

In addition people need to feel safe and not threatened by their environs, this would be particularly important for children's safe routes to school.

Ayrshire Coast Cycleway

3.6.6 Quiet roads and how these form a network with paths

Refer to Figure 21 – Green Travel Routes

By their very nature Quiet Roads include rural roads with very little traffic on them but which may still be used by the occasional vehicle, whilst at the other end of the scale they cover routes such as former military roads or drover roads which are no longer used by vehicles.

The two cases represent quite different circumstances. In the case of the 'vehicle free' road the walker, mountain biker or horse rider would be the dominant user, such as would be the case for example with the Isle of Arran's Old String Road which has been labelled as a Heritage Path.

However, in the case of the quiet public highway, whenever a vehicle was present it would be the dominant user. This is particularly relevant as these roads have alignments and limited visibility that could be perceived by walkers, bikers and riders as threats to their personal safety; although in all other respects they represent good opportunities for active travel over well established routes. Frequently this latter type of highway will form a link between two paths thus forming part of an overall route.

The prime benefit from using Quiet Roads is that they usually provide access to areas with attractive scenery and by association are considered fresh and traffic pollution free.
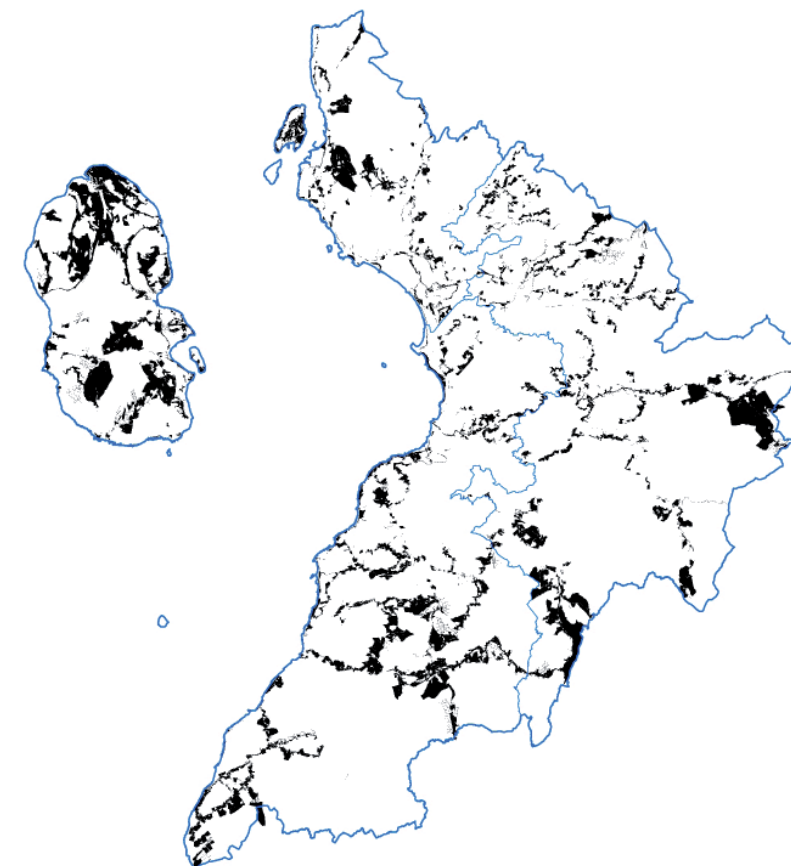

Figure 21 Green Travel Routes

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

3.6.7 **Walking and Cycling Routes in Ayrshire**

The large number of historic and heritage sites in Ayrshire and Arran are connected by a network of walking and cycling routes as well as quiet roads.

North Ayrshire Resources

Refer to Figure 19 – National Cycle Network and Figure 20 – Core Paths

- NCN Route 7 runs approximately north to south through North Ayrshire passing through Irvine and Kilwinning and close to Dalry and Kilbirnie.
- NCN 73 runs approximately east to west from Kilmarnock in East Ayrshire to Ardrossan in North Ayrshire, connecting Irvine, Kilwinning and the Three Towns.
- Both routes provide opportunities to link further afield, for example to Glasgow and Ayr on NCN 7 and Brodick and Lochranza on the Island of Arran on NCN 73.

East Ayrshire Resources

- Scottish Coal Cycle Route –Dalmellington - Coalburn in South Lanarkshire
- Dean Castle Country Park now has a link route which joins it to the National Cycle Network Route 73, providing access from Kilmarnock to Ardrossan.
- Route 7 passes through the Galloway Forest near Maybole.

South Ayrshire Resources

- Map of Cycle routes in and around South Ayrshire.
- Map of key environmental and conservation information for South Ayrshire including local footpaths and cycle routes.
- Some routes are wheelchair accessible in normal weather conditions.
- Ayr, Prestwick Girvan and Troon promenades.
- Paths through Belleisle, Rozelle, Craigie and other public parks.
- Fullarton Woods, Troon.
- Daily Trails Network and Girvan Water.

There are a number of websites providing further information on walking and cycling in South Ayrshire on the following:

- Ayrshire Paths
- Ayrshire Coastal Paths
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Sustrans - Routes for People
- Mountain Bike Routes and Walks in South West Scotland
- The River Ayr Way
- UK Walking Routes

3.6.8 **Major transport corridors as a natural focus for visual landscape enhancement**

The trunk road network in Ayrshire comprises A76, A77, A78, A737 and A738 and provides the core regional transport corridors connecting with Glasgow, Stranraer, and Dumfries, together with the Scottish motorway network. A supporting network of A class roads serves the region's needs in addition to feeding and distributing traffic to and from the trunk roads.

The landscape across Ayrshire varies from the western sandy coastal strip across a green rolling landscape into the forests, foothills and moorlands in the south and west. Such a variable countryside provides the potential for travellers to view the attractive scenery and landscapes. Unfortunately the highways themselves have not necessarily been laid out to provide viewpoints and vistas and therefore the opportunities for travellers and tourists to enjoy the countryside from their vehicles are quite limited.

In the investment corridors and core area there is an opportunity to improve the visual amenity adjacent to major road corridors. These are the main arterial routes which are traversed daily by commuters, haulage and potential investors. There are frequent lay-bys and 'left over' sections of road along major highways which have potential to improve setting, views (and view points), interpretation and biodiversity.

3.7 Vacant and Disused Land

Refer to Figure 22 – Vacant and Derelict Land

Vacant land is land that is capable of being re-used. Derelict land is land which is so damaged by previous development or use that it is incapable of re-use without rehabilitation.
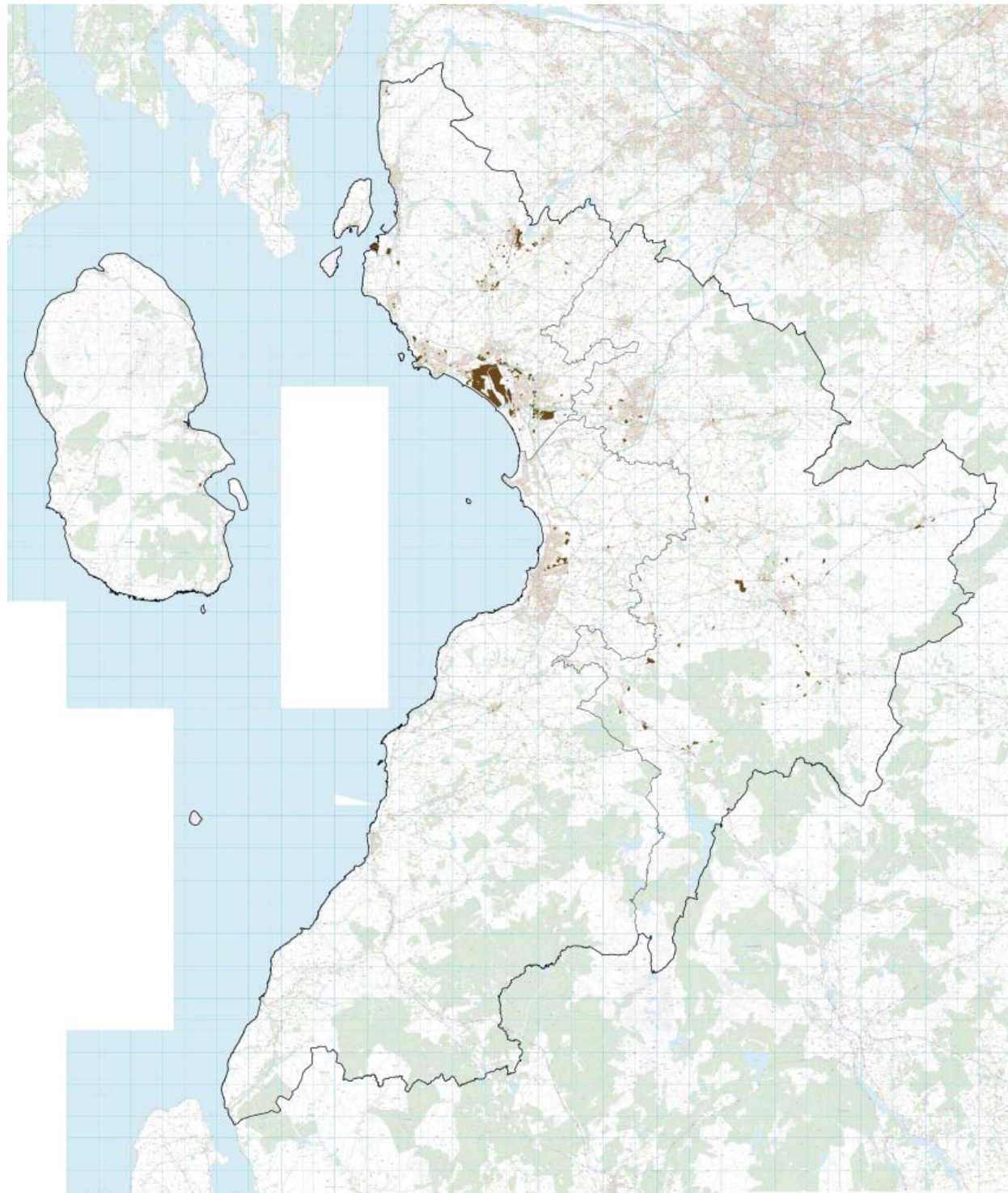

Figure 22 Vacant and Derelict Land

3.7.1 General Location

A Vacant and Derelict Land Survey has been undertaken in East, North and South Ayrshire, this information is detailed on Figure 22 – Vacant and Derelict Land. Also highlighted on this plan are the sites in relation to the identified Investment Corridors.

The Vacant and Derelict Land sites are divided thus:

East Ayrshire - 124 sites (circa 350 ha)
North Ayrshire - 286 sites (circa 1,276 ha)
South Ayrshire - 48 sites (circa 114 ha)

The majority of the sites are predominantly located within, and around, areas with a former industrial historical use such as Irvine, Ayr, Auchinleck, Prestwick, and Glengarnock. Within North Ayrshire the concentrations of vacant and derelict land are within Irvine Bay, as well as relating to redundant industrial sites at, for example, Ardeer, Lochshore & Willowyard.

Of the 458 sites, only 11 are located outwith the Investment Corridors and Core Towns namely around Sinclairston, Burnside, Burnhouse, Barrmill, Skelmorlie and Barr.

There are no sites in the Carrick Corridor or Glasgow Link Corridor.

With regard to designated contaminated sites in the region (these sites are not necessarily vacant and derelict land):

"East Ayrshire Council in their Contaminated Land Strategy 2010 identified 2,240 historical industrial sites in the district where there is a potential for contamination. The risk based process prioritised all of these sites into five categories. Priority 1 (very high risk), Priority 2 (high risk) and priority 3 (medium risk) are all categories where further inspection is required. Priority 4 (low) and Priority 5 (very low) are categories that do not require inspection. 1,108 Inspection Works have been completed on 831 sites primarily linked to Priority 1, 2 and 3. Of the 831 sites, 685 have been re-prioritised to No Further Action. All (initially prioritised) Priority 1 and 2 sites have been inspected, with 94 sites still in the Inspection process. In Total 1,498 sites have been completed or there is No Further Action, 146 sites are still being inspected and 596 sites have still to commence some form of inspection (all of which were initially Priority 3)".

3.7.2 Nature of the Land

The nature of Vacant and Derelict Land may relate to the industrial legacy from its historical usage, namely:

- Coalfield Communities in East Ayrshire.
- Mining towns and villages of East Ayrshire, namely Catrine, Auchinleck, Cumnock, Lugar, Logan, Muirkirk, New Cumnock, Patna and Dalmellington.
- The harbours of Girvan, Troon and Ardrossan.
- The former steelworks site at Glengarnock/Lochshore.
- Industrial past related to the major town Centres of Kilmarnock, Ayr and Irvine.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
3.0 Description of Existing Key Features

Due to the nature of the former usage, the sites vary in landscape appearance and structure and can be broadly divided into:

- Naturally re-vegetated colliery spoil (related to former coal communities).
- Landscaped colliery spoil (related to former coal communities).
- Quarries – brickworks.
- Historical Refuse tips.
- Reclaimed industrial / commercial land – steelworks / harbours / former garages / disused railways/vacant plots on industrial estates etc.
- Former school sites/bowling greens etc.

Naturally revegetated colliery spoil (e.g. Little Mill Colliery at Rankinston, Auchmillan Spoil Heap)

Coal spoil tips are an industrial and cultural legacy. Over the years these spoil tips have been colonised by habitats and species that favour the acidic conditions provided by the tip material and may now support habitats of considerable local biodiversity value. However the visual appearance sometimes looks patchy, with open slopes of visible colliery spoil.

Opencast adjacent to the A70 near Glenbuck

Landscaped colliery spoils (e.g. Barony - Auchinleck, Pennyvenie - Dalmellington)

Some tips have undergone restoration in an attempt to blend more naturally into the existing landscape or to create a landform that is more suitable for a future after-use. These restored tips often appear rather featureless and of little biodiversity value, but in certain circumstances where they have undergone major landscape planting they can provide suitable conditions for species that were traditionally found in a more agricultural environment. A wide range of habitats can be found on landscaped colliery spoil such as scrub, woodland, species-rich grasslands and wetlands.

Quarries – (e.g. Afton Brickworks)

Quarries are artificial exposures of sand/rock; the exposures and the variable steep topography associated with disused quarries provide many valuable green areas and wildlife habitats.

Works near Oahiltree

Refuse tips

Refuse tips that are no longer in active use, usually seeded with a grassland mix. Normally maintenance has ceased on these sites and the undisturbed nature of these tips provides an important refuge for a wide range of plants and animals. Methane and leachate can be significant legacy issues.

Reclaimed Industrial Areas (e.g. Glengarnock, Irvine Bay)

These undeveloped, reclaimed areas of land are often featureless and covered with hardstanding or seeded grass mix. Characteristic features are landlocked grassed plots within industrial estates.

Former school sites/bowling greens (e.g. School Road - Auchinleck /Bank Glen - New Cumnock)

Former, or current, underutilised public amenity or private school grounds generally seeded or planted areas.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
4.0 GIS Mapping Process

4.1   Methodology

The central mapping process for this study falls into five main stages:

- Typology
- Functionality
- Benefits
- Needs
- Needs fulfilled and not fulfilled

These stages follow a methodology that has been developed by The Mersey Forest team for green infrastructure planning. The general methodology (a version of which has been published[1]) has garnered significant acclaim in the North West of England and further afield and has been used for several previous studies, although it is always evolving.

The green network is made up of green infrastructure, which is defined as all plants and surface water, wherever they occur. A few examples are a street tree, the lawn in a private domestic garden, a football pitch, a moor, a river and the sea. The green infrastructure approach considers all of these things as a system which performs multiple functions upon which people and other species rely, such as evaporative cooling, food production and recreation.

This section gives a non-technical overview of the mapping method. For more technical detail see Appendix X.

4.2   Typology Maps

This step locates all green infrastructure and classifies it by type, giving a detailed picture of the existing green infrastructure resource. The following is the list of types used.

- Agricultural land
- Allotment, community garden or urban farm
- Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
- Coastal habitat
- Derelict land
- General amenity space
- Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
- Institutional grounds
- Orchard
- Outdoor sports facility
- Park or public garden
- Private domestic garden
- Water body
- Water course
- Wetland
- Woodland

The following map shows the output of this step. The main datasets used to reach this point were Ordnance Survey MasterMap, the Greenspace Audit and the Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
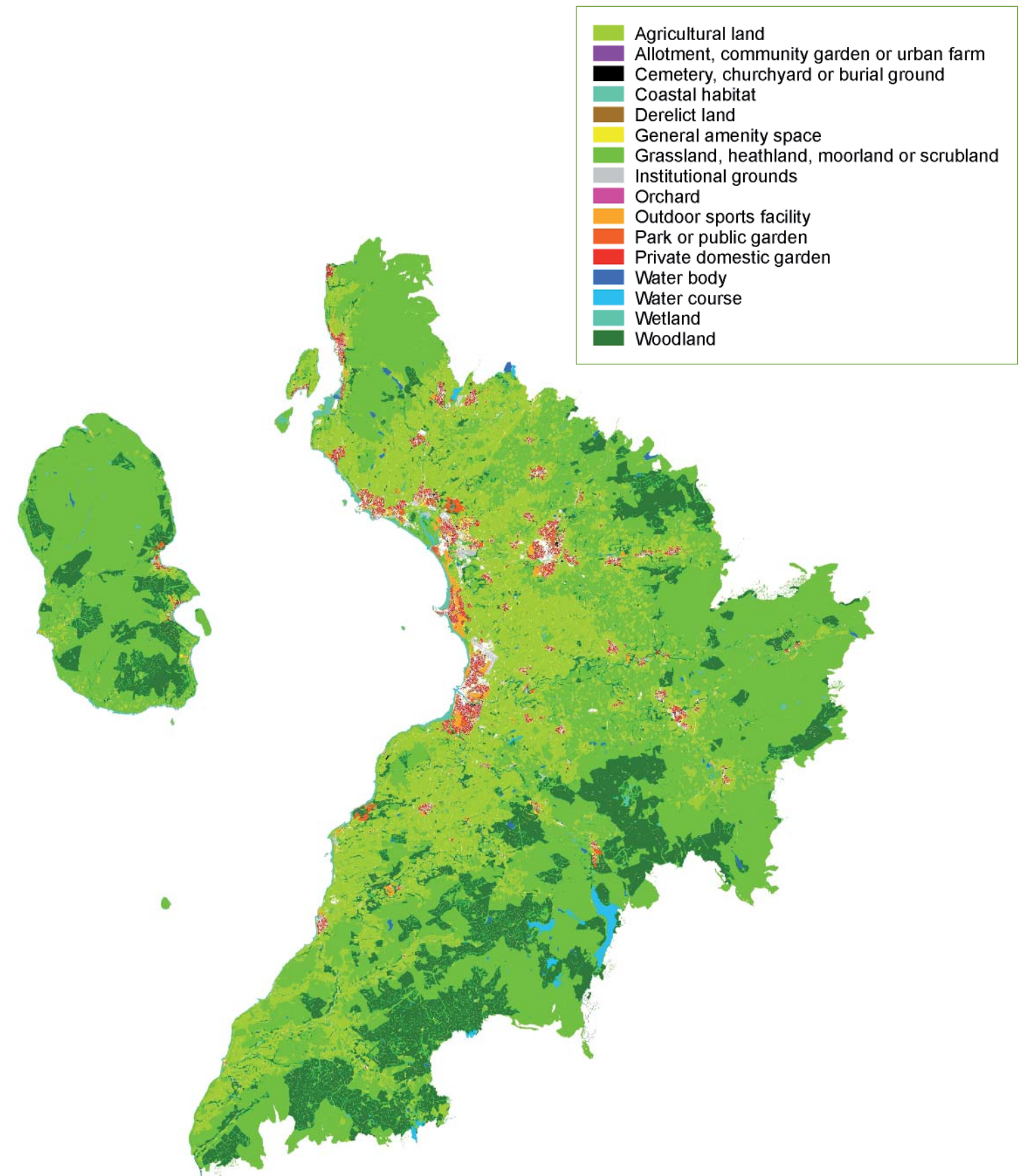

Figure 8 Existing Typology for Ayrshire

[1] http://www.ginw.co.uk/resources/A_Green_Infrastructure_Mapping_Method.pdf

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
4.0 GIS Mapping Process

4.3 Functionality

Green infrastructure performs a range of functions that are of benefit to people and other species. The following is the list of 28 functions used in this study.

- recreation - public
- recreation - private
- recreation - public with restrictions
- green travel route
- aesthetic
- shading from sun
- evaporative cooling
- trapping air pollutants
- noise absorption
- habitat for wildlife
- corridor for wildlife
- soil stabilisation
- heritage
- cultural asset
- carbon storage
- food production
- timber production
- biofuels production
- wind shelter
- learning
- inaccessible water storage
- accessible water storage
- water interception
- water infiltration
- coastal storm protection
- water conveyance
- pollutant removal from soil/water
- flow reduction through surface roughness
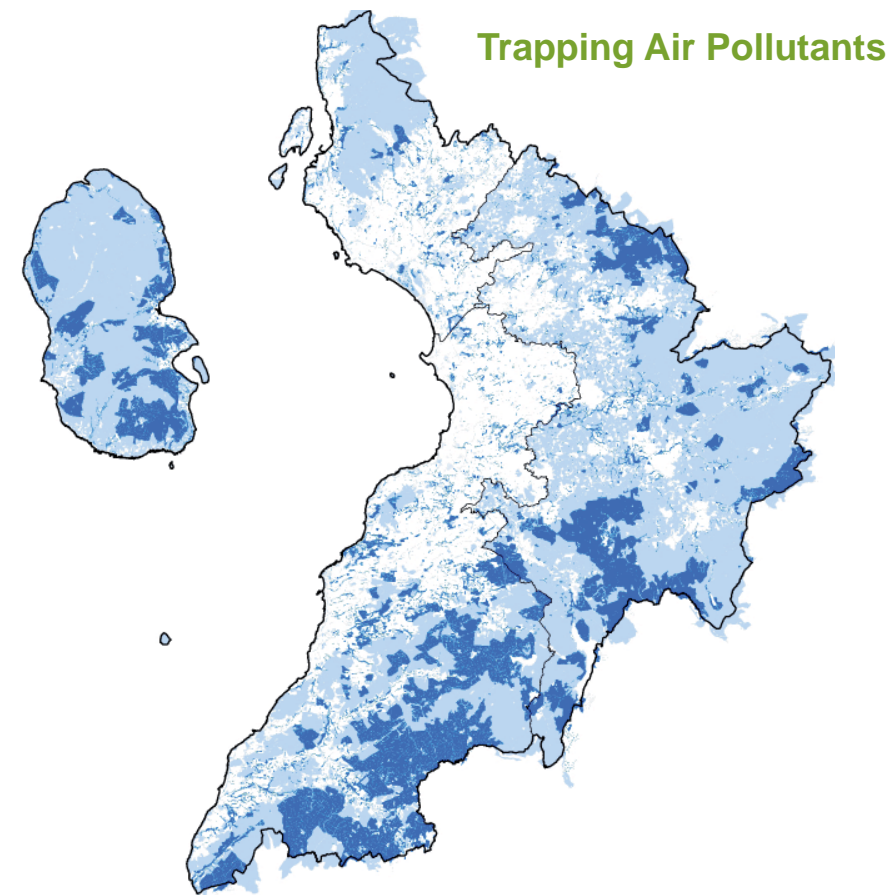
Trapping Air Pollutants

Figure 23 Function Map Example – Trapping Air Pollutants

Where each of these functions is currently performed by the existing green infrastructure was mapped using the typology mapping plus a range of other datasets. The Integrated Habitat Network data was used to help map the two wildlife functions. In some cases, it was not possible to be sure for certain pieces of land whether they perform certain functions, so instead likelihoods were assigned. The following map is one of the 28 individual function maps shown as an example. Note that the different shades of blue refer to different likelihoods of the green infrastructure performing the function.

The 28 function maps were also added together to give multifunctionality – the number of functions performed (or likely to be performed) by each piece of green infrastructure.
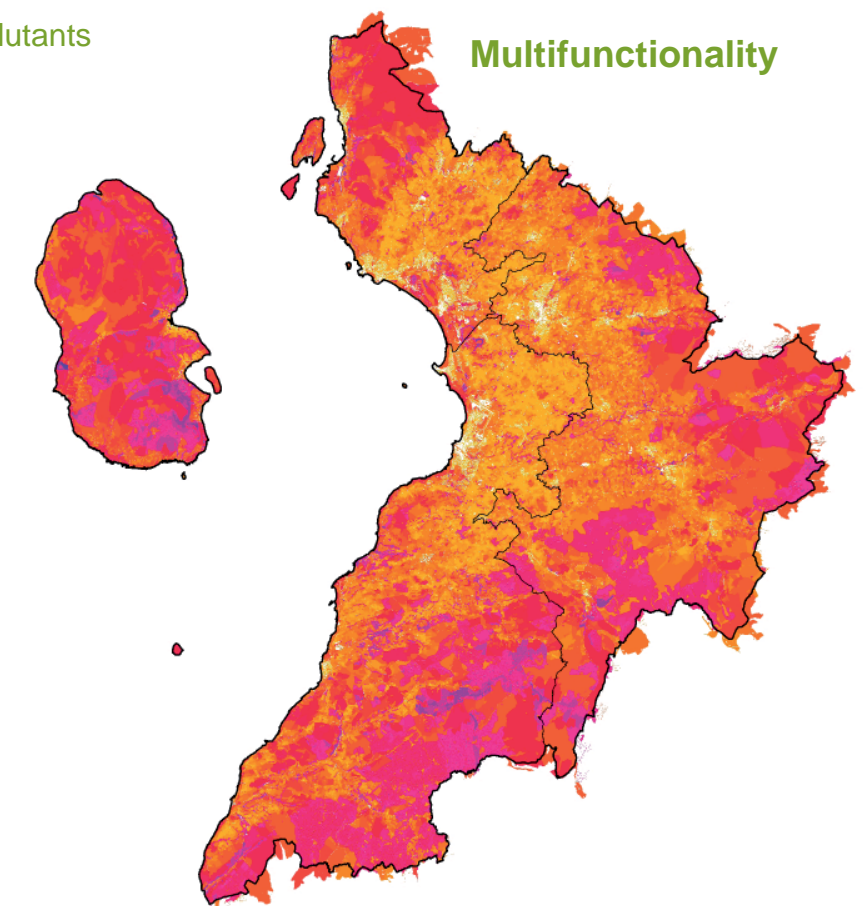
Multifunctionality

Figure 24 Multifunctionality

4.4   Benefits

The functions that green infrastructure performs lead to benefits for humans and other species. The Central Scotland Green Network project describes these benefits as follows[2].

- It will make Central Scotland a more **prosperous and competitive** place. In the modern economy, place matters. Knowledge-based businesses, and the people who work in them, are looking for attractive and distinctive environments. Outside the major cities, Central Scotland has tended to compete on the basis of cost and accessibility to the roads network but this is no longer sufficient. The CSGN has a key role to play in ensuring that the towns of Central Scotland are attractive and competitive business locations for an economy based on knowledge, skills and creativity; and in addressing negative perceptions of the area by promoting the region as a 'green' place to live and work.

- It will promote **health and well-being**. The evidence now tells us that access to, and enjoyment of, good quality green space and nearby countryside can make a major contribution to physical and mental health and to the well-being of communities. Children need natural places to play; young people and adults need places for exercise and sport; people of all ages benefit from safe and attractive places to walk, sit and meet. Walking and cycling networks encourage sustainable travel; community growing and gardens provide physical exercise and encourage healthy eating and they can be of enormous therapeutic value for people with learning difficulties or mental health problems.

- It will make Central Scotland a more **attractive and distinctive** place to live. Too many people in Central Scotland live in drab and degraded environments which have a huge influence on how communities see themselves and are perceived by others. The green network will have a key role to play in changing the face of these forgotten communities, making them attractive places in which to live and bring up families. Celebrating historic and cultural heritage fosters community pride and distinctiveness. The CSGN will also provide structuring principles for new development so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

- It will **enhance the nature and landscapes** of Central Scotland and support the Government's objectives for a greener Scotland. The environmental benefits of green spaces and nearby countryside increase exponentially when they are linked together in a network. Green infrastructure provides essential "environmental services", sustainable drainage, flood prevention, biodiversity, improved air quality, a reduction in noise and visual pollution and a reduction in carbon emissions. The CSGN will create a landscape which will maximise the environmental value of these services.

- It will make a major contribution to Scotland's efforts to **mitigate and adapt to climate change**. Investing in green space and active travel will help us to move towards a low-carbon economy and to mitigate the effects of climate change such as an increase in winter rainfall. In urban areas, sustainable drainage systems mimic natural drainage by slowing and absorbing rainfall and run-off; new and restored wetlands and managed coastal retreats promote biodiversity and reduce the risk of flooding.

Where these benefits are currently provided can be mapped by creating multifunctionality maps based on subsets of the complete function list. These subsets are the functions that most directly and undeniably lead to each benefit. The following is one of the five benefit maps, shown as an example. It shows where the benefit is currently provided by the existing green infrastructure.
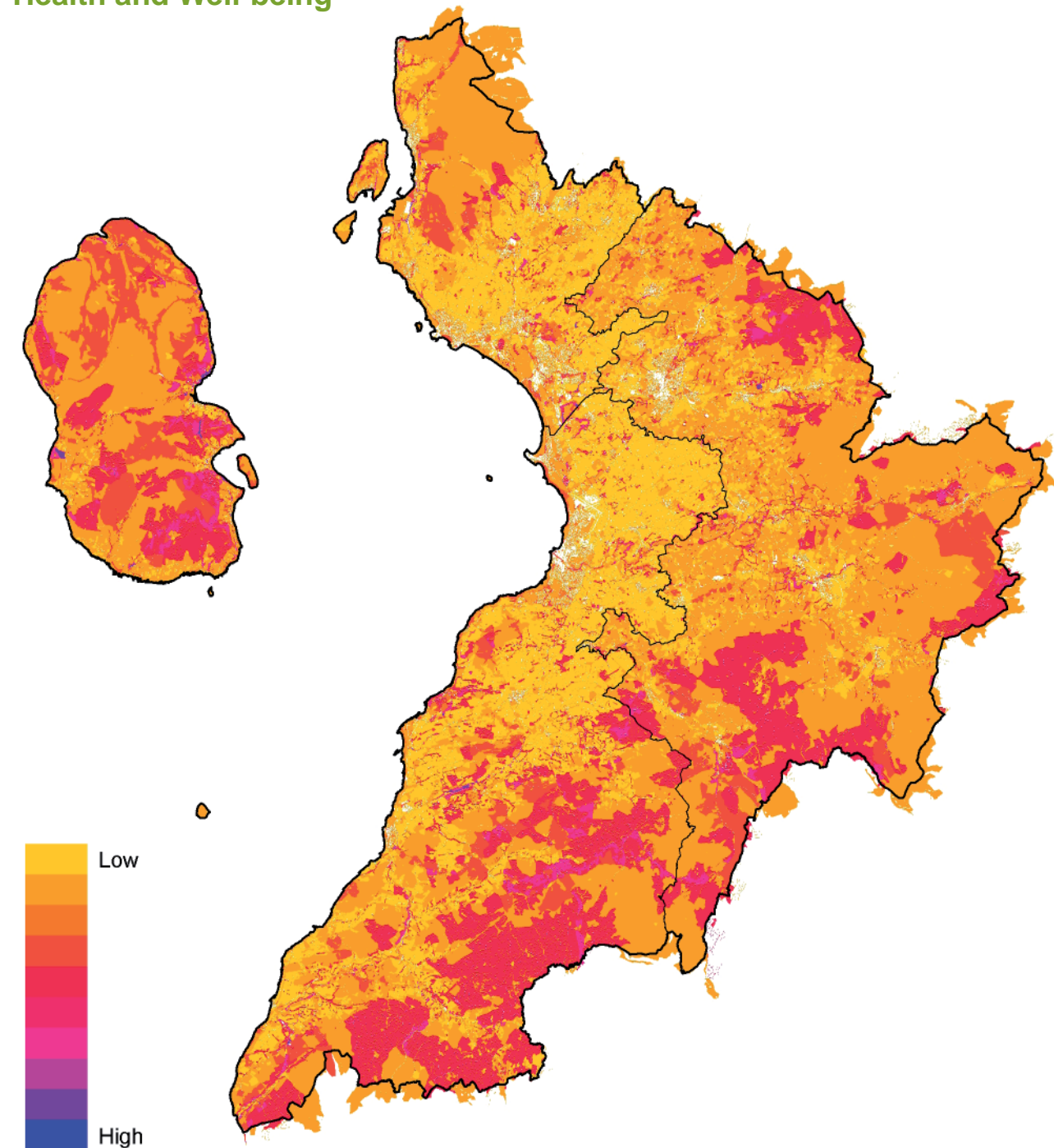
Health and Well-being

Figure 25 Benefit Map Example

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
4.0 GIS Mapping Process

4.5   Needs

In order to plan interventions it is necessary to know where there is particular need for each function as well as where they are currently performed. Therefore the areas where there is the greatest need for each function were identified. Because need is not necessarily linked to provision, and to avoid double counting, this mapping was carried out independently from the previous stages. A range of datasets were used, including the Integrated Habitat Network for the wildlife functions, and socio-economic statistics for other functions. The following map shows greatest need for one of the 28 functions, shown as an example of the 28 such individual maps produced.

4.6   Needs Fulfilled and Not Fulfilled
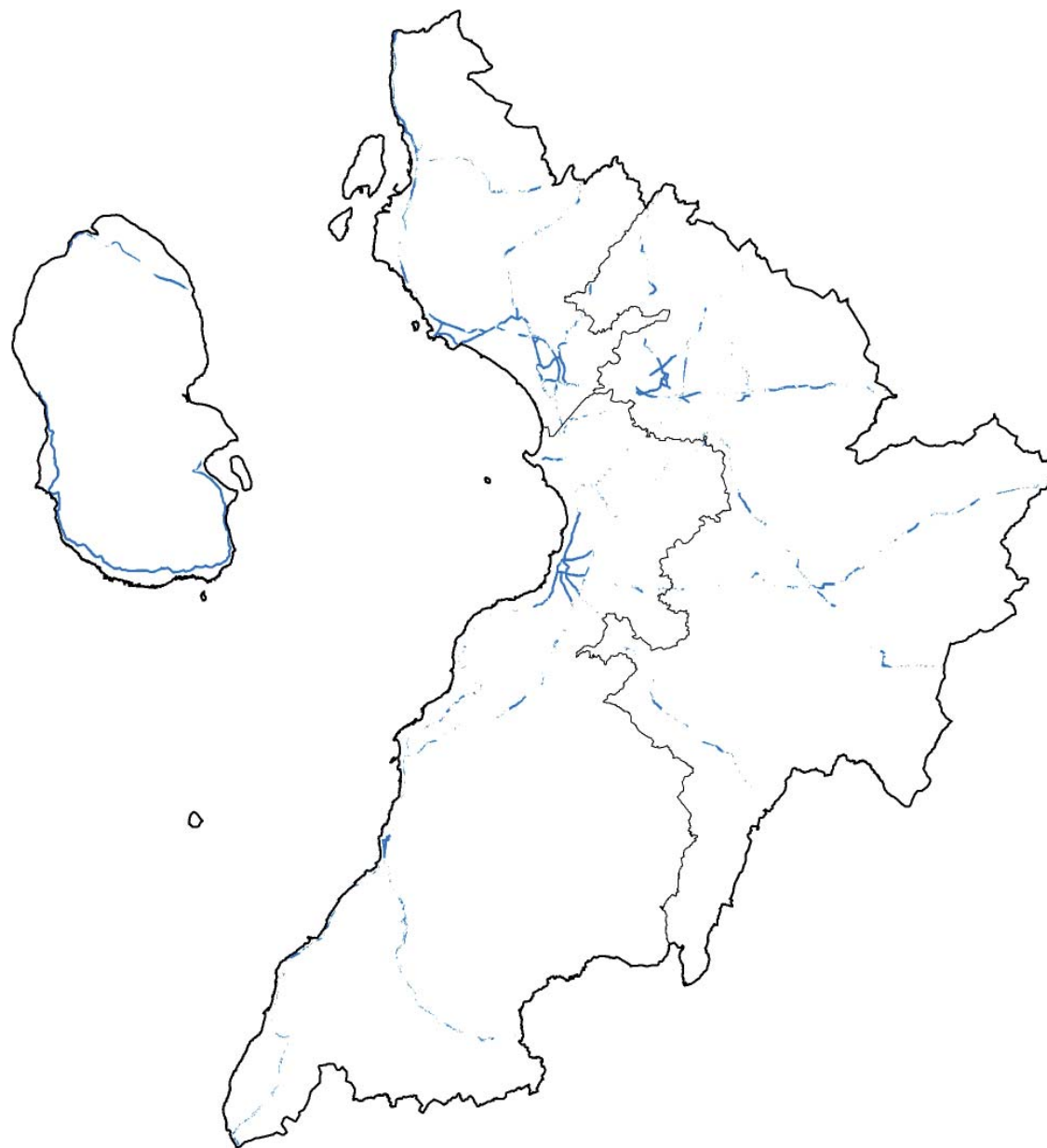
Once the locations of greatest need and existing functionality have been identified, it is possible to further identify where need for each of the functions is fulfilled by existing provision of that function, and where it isn't fulfilled. A particular piece of green infrastructure that performs a function that fulfils a particular need for that function is an asset in terms of that function. Intervention such as creation or enhancement of green infrastructure should be targeted at locations where a particular need is not fulfilled by existing provision of the function in question. Therefore these maps identify green infrastructure assets to be protected, as well as areas to be targeted for intervention. The following is one of the 28 maps showing need fulfilled and not fulfilled for each individual function, shown as an example.

Trapping air pollutants

Trapping air pollutants

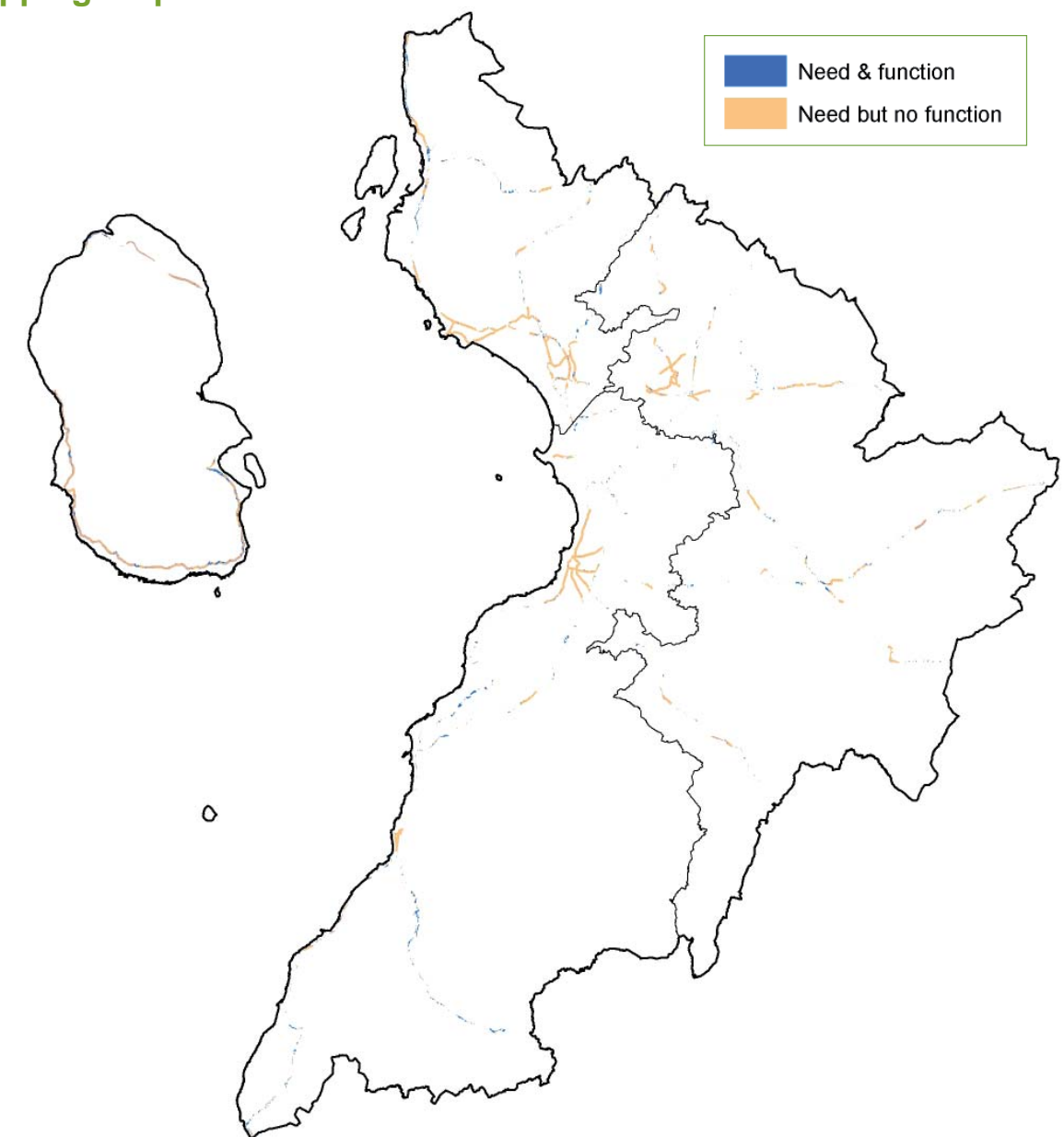Figure 26 Needs Map Example – Trapping Air Pollutants

Figure 27 Needs Fulfilled and Not Fulfilled Example – Trapping Air Pollutants

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
4.0 GIS Mapping Process

Needs fulfilled and not fulfilled maps were also produced in terms of all of the functions put together, and in terms of each of the benefits. The former and examples of the latter follow.
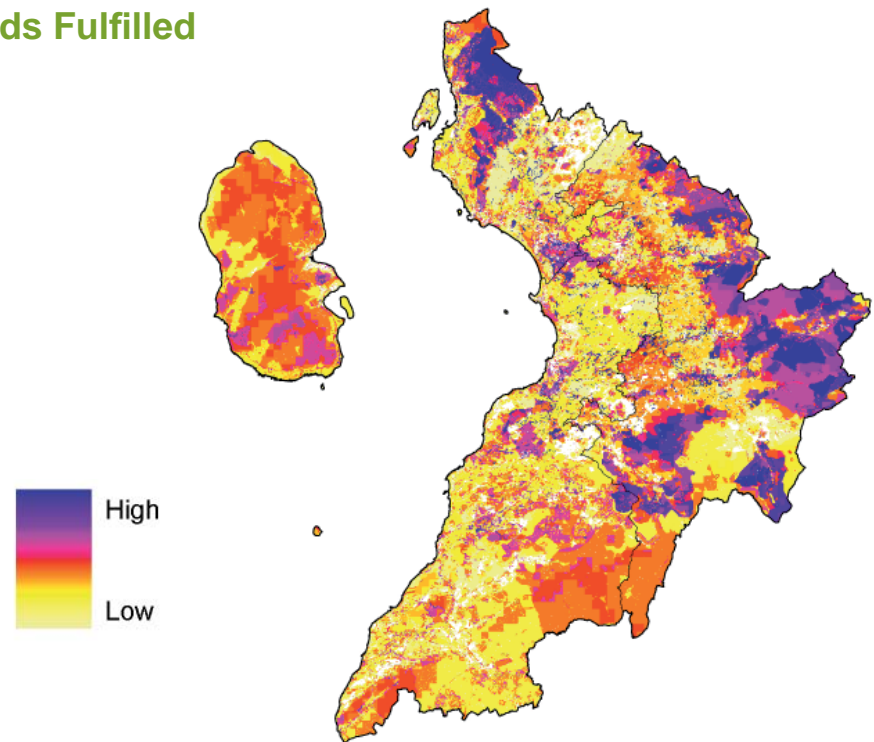
Needs Fulfilled

Figure 28 Needs Fulfilled Map for Ayrshire
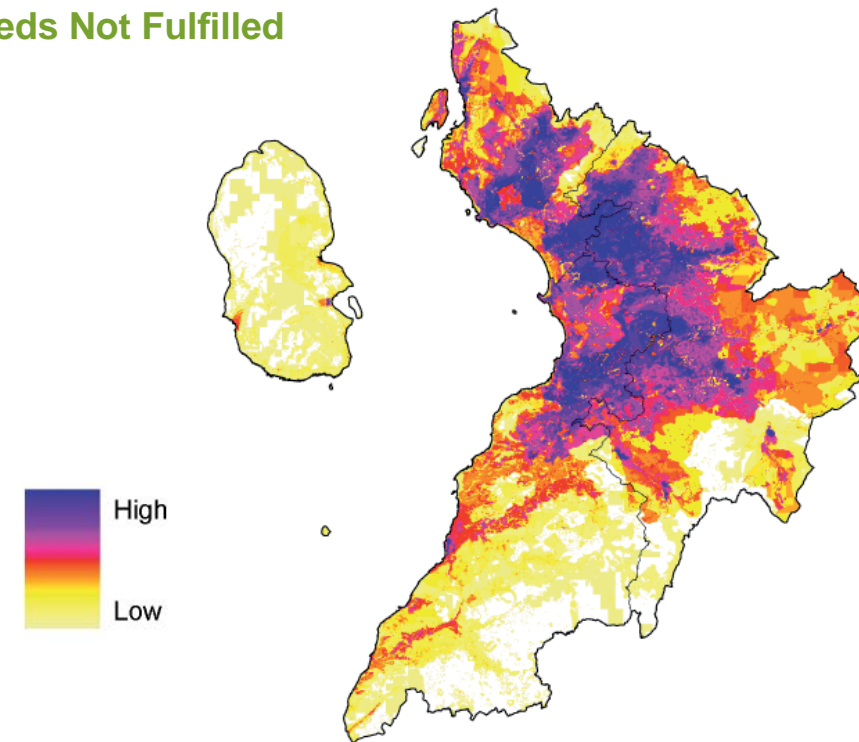
Needs Not Fulfilled

Figure 29 Needs Not Fulfilled for Ayrshire

Health and Well-being Needs Fulfilled
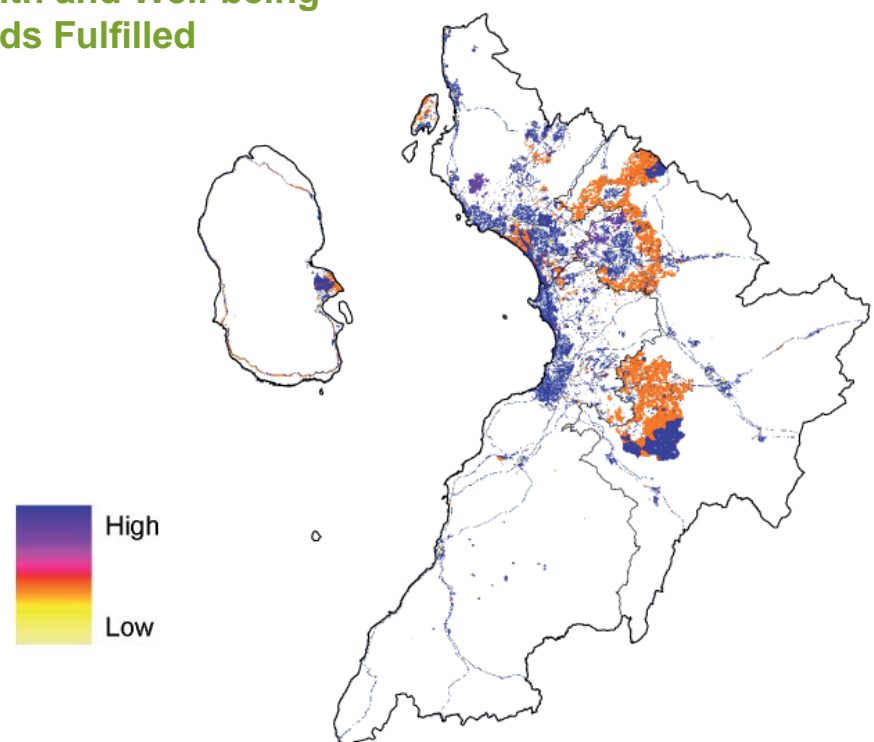
Figure 30 Needs Fulfilled Example – Health and Well-being

Health and Well-being Needs Not Fulfilled
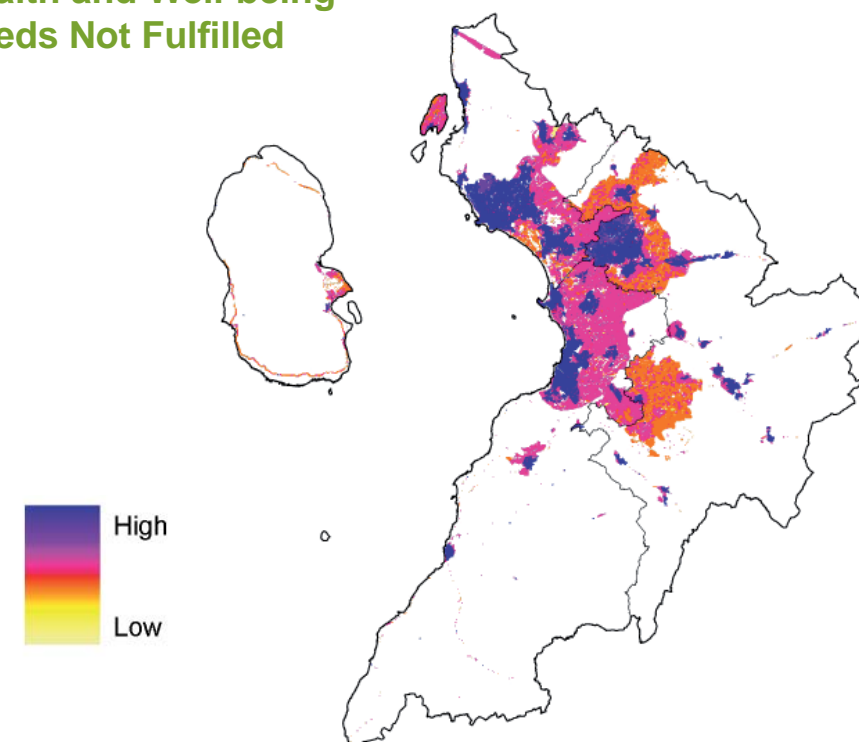
Figure 31 Needs Not Fulfilled Example - Health and Well-being

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
4.0 GIS Mapping Process

4.7 Data gaps

If the following data gaps were filled, the mapping could be significantly improved.

Dataset	Gap	Mapping improvement
Greenspace Audit	Rural areas	Accuracy of typology
Street tree audit	Does not exist	Typology and therefore functionality
Greenspace Audit	Indication of which spaces are open to the public	Recreation functions
Integrated Habitat Network	Arran	Wildlife functions & needs
Integrated Habitat Network	Other habitat types	Wildlife functions & needs
Tree canopy cover	Does not exist	Functionality

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
5.0 Principal Force of Change

5.1   Socio-Economic Drivers and Funding

Creation and management of the Ayrshire Green Network will cost many millions of pounds. Capital funding will be required for creation of new green infrastructure assets and revenue funding for the provision of staffing to coordinate action and undertake maintenance and management over the long term. The concept of Ecosystem services provides a framework for looking at whole ecosystems in decision making, and for valuing the ecosystem services they provide, to ensure that society can maintain a healthy and resilient natural environment now and for future generations. Using the ecosystems services approach it is possible for environmental economists to establish a Net Present Value for the Ayrshire Green Network. It is recommended that this figure is established to provide a financial benchmark.

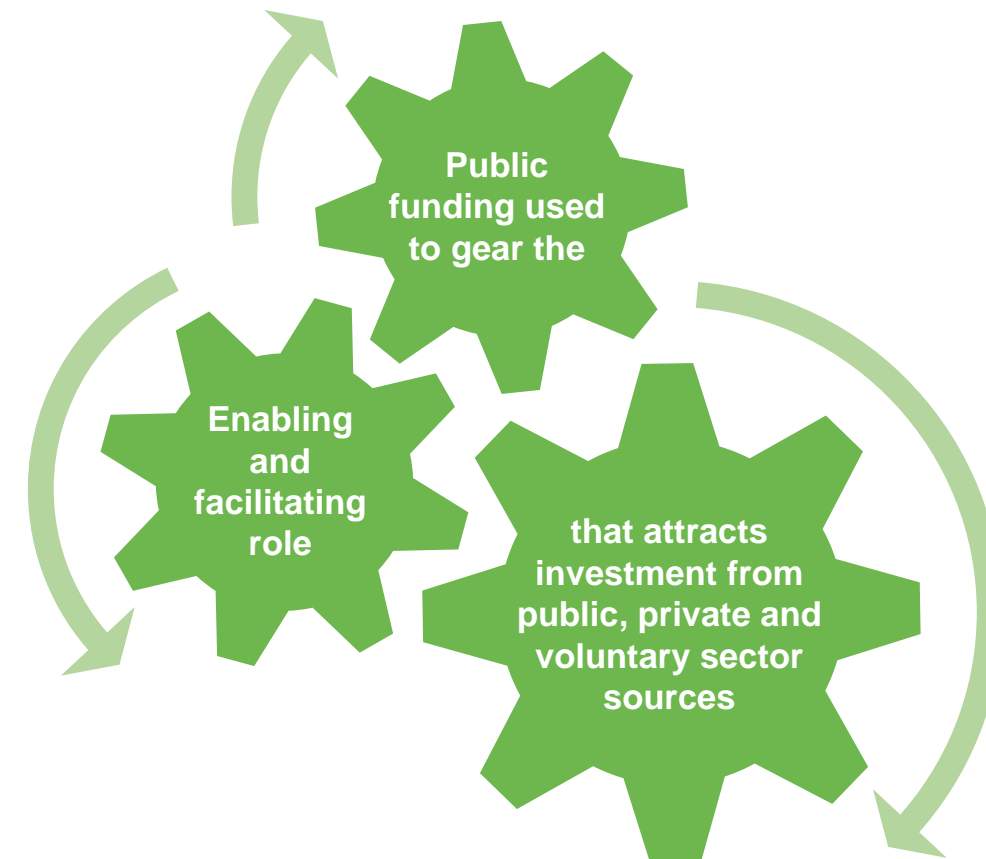In Ayrshire the two main drivers of the Green Network are:

- The National Planning Framework 2: CSGN
- Investment Corridors

In respect of the former it is expected that as a national priority the CSGN will bring public resources to the Ayrshire Green Network. It is not expected that these public resources will pay for the creation and management of the Green Network. The priority for public funding should be:-

- To wholly pay for the costs of enabling and facilitation, namely a professional team who fulfil these roles. It is proposed that this is referred to as the Ayrshire Green Network Unit.
- To contribute to the costs of the soft infrastructure which will be a key element of delivery through a partnership-led approach,
- To contribute funds into an Action Plan of projects; funds which can be used as 'matched funding' to draw in third party support from private and public resources such as the Lottery and EU structural funds.

In respect of investment corridors, public funds should be used for:

- Advanced landscaping, notably extensive tree planting, especially in major travel corridors.
- Providing sustainable transport alternatives, notably a grid of cycle routes linked to bus and rail hubs.
- Ensuring that a given percentage of funds attracted for built development is available for green infrastructure; it is proposed that 10% is the benchmark figure.
- Temporary greening of sites, including their use for energy forestry/crops, where development is not expected for >10 years.
- Develop and maintain a register of sites suitable for green infrastructure within each investment corridor.

Public funding used to gear the

Enabling and facilitating role

that attracts investment from public, private and voluntary sector sources

A major objective should be to ensure that all existing sources of public funding are working to their full potential. This requires two actions:

1. Reviewing all existing public funding sources and ensuring that no opportunities are being missed. In particular an appraisal is needed of existing European structural funds available to Ayrshire, and secondly funding available through SRDP for agri-environment measures including forestry. Comments received through this study suggest that the former is being under-utilised and that the latter is significantly under-utilised and that the main reason for this is the lack of soft infrastructure to promote agri-environment measures and the complexity of the grant process. A consultancy body should be engaged to actively promote and deliver the untapped benefits and resources within SRDP funding.

2. Ensuring that there is an active process of reviewing all new grants that become available. This responsibility should sit with an Ayrshire Green Network Unit.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
5.0 Principal Force of Change

5.2 Private/Public Sector Partnership Working

No sector of the economy is large enough to implement the Ayrshire Green Network alone. The only practical mechanism is delivery through a partnership approach. There are a number of existing partnerships in Ayrshire and it is recommended that these are brought together under the auspices of a single Ayrshire Green Network Partnership (AGNP). This is desirable; (a) to avoid duplication and repetition of work between different forums, (b) improve communications and liaison, (c) maximise on-going attendance. Examples of forums that could join the AGNP include the Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group and Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Partnership.

Existing forums are generally dominated by public sector interests, notably the local authorities and key environmental agencies such as SEPA, SNH and FCS. The forums need balancing between the three recognised sectors of civil society and to this end the proposed Ayrshire Green Network Unit AGN Co-ordinator (refer to section 7.1) should attract representatives from ENGO's, leading private sector companies (especially those using green products), representation from the farming and landowning sector and active community organisations.

To facilitate the involvement of the private and voluntary sectors it is recommended that meetings of the AGNP take place after normal working hours (experience elsewhere has shown that twilight time meetings can work well, (e.g. 17.15 to 19.30).

Consideration should be given to appointing a chairperson to the AGNP who is not from the public sector but a respected person in business or the voluntary sector; this can help draw in financial and logistical support from outside of the public sector. The Ayrshire Green Network Unit would provide the secretariat.

A memorandum of agreement can be used to define the levels of involvement from all parties. Such a document would not be legally binding but would have influence.

To support the work of the AGNP consideration should be given to the production of:

1. A graphic rich Ayrshire Green Network strategy.
2. An annual action plan (Year 1 in detail, Year 2 and 3 in outline).
3. Suite of supporting publications including an Annual report, which would also be a key accompanying document when applying for third-party funds.
4. Interactive website, containing all key documents but also a forum for public involvement and notices of forthcoming activities.
   The AGNP would have an advisory role in respect of the Manager of the Ayrshire Green Network.

5.3 Inspiring Communities, Organisations and Business

Notwithstanding the key role of an Ayrshire Green Network Partnership (AGNP) as a forum for discussion, debate and communication, the objectives of the CSGN in Ayrshire will only be delivered if the projects developed in support of the Green Network are communicated to the public at large, including visitors, in an accessible and inspiring way. There are many examples that can be used as a reference and then amended to devise a locally appropriate approach; some of these good examples include:

- The Mersey Forest
- Green Grid South Essex
- 6Cs Green Infrastructure
- Glasgow Clyde Valley Green Network

The long term success of the Ayrshire Green Network requires:

- A staff post dedicated to marketing and communications and funding opportunities.
- A strong and locally recognisable brand image which is used on publications and on-sites.
- Tie-ups with local radio, newspapers and internet providers with regular media coverage.
- Activities targeted at mass-public participation (possibly linked with theme days e.g. International day for biological diversity).
- Opportunities for companies to use their name on events and sites.

It is recommended that a full colour annual report is produced and used as a key marketing document and that a A5 flyer based on this is delivered to every household in Ayrshire in the most economic way (e.g. as an insert in free newspaper etc.).

Community Interpretation Area, Muirkirk

Soft Infrastructure

The term "soft" infrastructure is increasingly used to describe the roles performed by different parts of civil society in maintaining the economic, social and environmental infrastructure of communities. Over the last 30 years there has been an increasing trend away from public-centred provision of infrastructure services, with a compensatory larger role for communities, the voluntary sector and private enterprise. Driving this has been a recognition that the costs of supplying services is outstripping the ability of the public sector to deliver the resources required whilst maintaining public support on levels of taxation. It is probable that resources from the public sector towards achieving the objectives of the CSGN in Ayrshire will continue to be limited and can reasonably be expected to decline in real terms through time.

The voluntary sector could play a major role in delivering the Ayrshire Green Network but will not do so unless:

- They have a key role in delivering the Ayrshire Green Network strategy.
- Receive public sector investment funding over a long term to pay for a small but critical element of core staff.
- Are able to match their time against capital grants (as is permitted in Lottery funding programmes).

It is recommended that in developing a Green Network strategy that the role of the voluntary sector is explored and that an allocation of funding is made and sustained to build this capacity.

In most cases the private sector can play a role without the need for investment; what is generally needed to motivate the private sector is the ability to utilise their enlightened self interest. This can include:

- Marketing opportunities, targeting their customer base and also their own internal market (employees and share holders).
- Corporate social responsibility and corporate environmental responsibility, targeting the company's annual report.
- Employee involvement (for example in practical conservation projects).
- Linkage between planning permission and S75 provision.
- Good neighbourhood activities (especially in relation to environmentally sensitive activities such as open cast coal mining).

A small grants programme should be targeted at local community groups undertaking green network projects. The purpose of these grants is for the purchase of materials and tools and insurance from bodies such as BTCV Scotland. The value of grants can be small and may range from £50 to £250. Application should be made very easy and be on a form with no more than basic questions and no more than A4 in size. Groups should however be made aware of other sources of funding, notably through the BIG Lottery for larger projects and support given by the Ayrshire Green Network Unit.

The absence of a Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group is a serious impediment to realising the potential of SRDP in delivering the Green Network. Farmers and landowners are not expected to respond to a new initiative – the Ayrshire Green Network – without support from advisors who can help release the funds available through SRDP. In response, consideration should be given to:

- Employing a farmer and landowner liaison office in the AGN Unit.
- Employing constant advisors to bring new schemes forward linked to the Ayrshire Green Network strategy (Forestry Commission Scotland have promoted such schemes in respect of WIAT e.g. Scottish Borders Council).

5.4   Regeneration Priorities in Ayrshire

5.4.1   **Ayrshire Joint Structure – Growing a Sustainable Ayrshire** (approved 22.11.07)

A prime objective of the Plan is to ensure that Ayrshire is an attractive place in which to live, work, visit and invest. **All** areas have to maintain and improve their assets. There are a few areas where the market has been failing to bring forward sufficient investment to regenerate and renew itself and where under investment may be gathering pace and be cumulative. All three Councils have, through the community planning process, developed initiatives to tackle the many complex issues involved in regeneration. Regeneration Outcome Agreements have been published and these set out in more detail local priorities and action.

The Structure Plan provides a Strategic Land Use context for action at the more local level. The Scottish Executive's 2006 regeneration policy statement identified the **whole of Ayrshire** as a priority for regeneration. The **'Irvine Bay'** area in particular is recognised at the national level as requiring long term funding to overcome social, economic and environmental problems. This process is supported by national funding for the Irvine Bay Regeneration Company.

There is national recognition of the structural problems faced by the former **Coalfield Communities** in southern Ayrshire through the National Planning Framework. The deep mining industry on which these communities were based has long since gone and their relative isolation is such that they are unable to attract new investment and do not have easy access to alternative sources of employment.

Local regeneration priorities have been identified around the harbours of Girvan, Troon and Ardrossen and the former strategic site at **Glengarnock/Lochshore. Town Centre** regeneration initiatives have also been identified for **Kilmarnock, Ayr and Irvine.** Within **South Ayrshire, Girvan** was previously designated as a Social Inclusion Partnership area. Following the incorporation of SIP activity into the Community Planning Process, partnership work has continued within the town with an emphasis on social development and environment improvements. Similarly, parts of **Ayr** which were previously designated as SIPs are the focus of coordinated activity under the Community Planning process and the Lochside area of the town is the subject of major housing led, urban renewal action. The regeneration of **Ayr Town Centre** is being coordinated through Ayr Renaissance (a limited liability partnership) and has used Town Centre Regeneration Fund monies awarded in 2009, to carry out environmental enhancement work and bring vacant shops units back into use.

Within **North Ayrshire, Irvine** and the other **Irvine Bay Communities** are the focus of regeneration actions identified by Irvine Bay URC. These include urban realm works in Kilwinning (completed) and Irvine town centre (not yet commenced) and investigation of temporary greening of surplus industrial land (ongoing project being undertaken under the guidance of the Paul Hogarth Co.). Scottish Enterprise are championing the regeneration of the former steelworks at **Glengarnock/ Lochshore,** however this project is at an early stage in terms of progress. Townscape enhancement work has/is being undertaken within Beith and Kilbirnie in the Garnock Valley area.

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Within **East Ayrshire, Kilmarnock** and **Cumnock** town centres are the focus of regeneration plans led by the Council. Masterplans have been prepared for both town centres. An Inquiry by Design of the communities of **Mauchline, Auchinleck, Cumnock and New Cumnock** was undertaken in 2009 by the Princes Foundation for the Environment. The **Coalfields Regeneration Trust** and **East Ayrshire Coalfields Environment Initiative** are active within East Ayrshire. The coalfield area is not specifically defined but includes the former mining towns and villages of Catrine, Achinleck, Cumnock, Lugar, Muirkirk, New Cumnock, Patna and Dalmellington.

Other regeneration initiatives and individual projects of a smaller scale have been undertaken. The regeneration spatial priorities described above are recognised and promoted through policy COMM 1 of the Approved structure Plan. (Source Ayrshire JPU).

5.5   Links with CSGN Initiatives and Goals for the AGN

5.5.1   CSGN's **Vision for Central Scotland** 'is of a place transformed by the creation of a high quality green network, which will enrich people's lives, promote economic prosperity, allow nature to flourish and help Scotland respond to the challenge of climate change'.

CSGN have set 10 goals for 2030, realising and applying these goals to Ayrshire is considered below:

5.5.2   **Goal 1**   To ensure that every home is within 300m of an attractive, safe, **well-maintained green space or accessible countryside,**

Refer to Figure 32 – Communities within 300 metres of Greenspace / Accessible Countryside

Figure 5 illustrates communities in Ayrshire with a population greater than 2000; in general these are concentrated along the coast e.g. Ardossan, Irvine, Troon, Prestwick and Ayr. Kilmarnock is a distinct entity, as are the more isolated towns to the east and south e.g. Galston, Mauchline, Cumnock, Patna, Maybole and Girvan. Whilst most towns have countryside in close proximity this is not necessarily accessible countryside, although Ayrshire is well provided with Core Paths (refer to Figure 20).

The challenge of providing attractive, safe, well maintained green space links directly to revenue funding, maximising the benefit and 'getting the best out of' existing green spaces, particularly those underutilised, often mown grass spaces that contribute little in terms of the community and biodiversity. These spaces should be examined in detail and linked to the Green Space Audit and open space strategies:

East Ayrshire Council's Open Space Strategy, Entec 2008 states that the 'strategy must be sustainable and address local needs of communities now and in the future and will require concerted action of an extended period and will need to address the many challenges in relation to open space provision, priorities, investment, management and local engagement' and identifies the aims as follows:

- *Establish effective partnership working – establish broader consultation and closer integration with Development Plan and Community Plan policies;*
- *Set locally appropriate standards;*
- *Commitment to quality;*
- *Encourage active participation; and*
- *Secure best value.*

It is significant that only 1 park in Ayrshire has adopted Green Flag as a benchmark of quality and it recommended that this scheme is adopted for all major green community spaces, providing targets to achieve criteria which include 'A Welcoming Park', 'A Park which is Healthy, Safe and Secure', A Park which is Well Maintained and Clean' etc. The standard applies to country parks as well as urban parks.

The goal also applies to private development maximising the benefit of Section 75 Agreements and the creation of well designed, sustainable spaces.

Figure 32 Communities within 300 metres of Greenspace / Accessible Countryside

5.5.3 **Goal 2** To improve the **green infrastructure** of all our major towns and cities by investing in green and blue space, tree planting and sustainable urban drainage,

This goal links closely to the National Planning Framework, Planning Policy, masterplanning, urban renewal, regeneration initiatives and associated programmes (Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 'Growing a Sustainable Ayrshire COMM 1 Regeneration, COMM 2 Housing Investment, COMM 3 Housing Land Release, COMM 5 Housing in the Countryside, ENV 8 Flooding, ENV 9 Water Framework Directive).

The Green Network Strategy for Ayrshire should be developed to identify:

- Where is the Green and Blue Space in Ayrshire?
- The objectives of SEPA through the Water Framework Directive, Sustainable urban Drainage, (SUDS), Catchment Sensitive Farming and initiatives of the Ayrshire Rivers Trust.
- Where is the existing established Green Space?
- Quality of existing Green Space.
- How is green space currently managed, how does it contribute to Green Networks, can it be better managed to achieve a greater contribution for the community and to link to the wider potential network? (Linking to Ayrshire Green Space Audit, East Ayrshire Open Space Strategy etc).
- Underused green space.
- Golf courses – a major recreational feature of Ayrshire with well known facilities along the coast, potential for a sustainable eco-course management initiative. Refer to Appendices A and D.
- Links to Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 'Growing a Sustainable Ayrshire' ENV1 Landscape Quality, ENV 2 landscape Protection, ENV 3 Core Investment Area Landscape, ENV 4 Green Network.
- Contribution of new development and regeneration incorporating sustainable urban drainage, tree planting and high quality green spaces,
- Development of specific 'green' briefs for masterplanning and site development in the Core Area and strategic sites.
- Section 75 Agreements associated with new development.
- Tree Planting – review of existing tree stock in towns and development of a phased programme for renewal, replacement and management.
- Links to potential projects including Urban Forestry, WIAT and Ayrshire schools Green Initiative (refer to Appendix A)

5.5.4 **Goal 3** To create a high quality **environment for business**, by enhancing the landscape setting of every small and medium sized town in Central Scotland and reducing vacant and derelict land to an absolute minimum.

Refer to Figure 33 – Business Locations and Figure 34 - Opencast Locations

The GIS information in Appendix D identifies the location of business in Ayrshire as well as vacant and derelict land (refer to Figures 22 and 33). Links to Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 'Growing a Sustainable Ayrshire' ECON 1 Gateway Locations, ECON 2 Strategic Business Locations, ECON Local and Other business Opportunities and ECON 4 Reallocation of Surplus Industrial Land, LDP and Planning Conditions. The Ayrshire Green Network Strategy should identify:

- Existing business locations.
- Vacant and derelict land suitable for business.
- Small and medium sized towns and potential for temporary greening, urban forestry and WIAT schemes associated with business locations.
- Environmental Improvements to setting including.
  Approaches and Links, Rail and Road Corridors
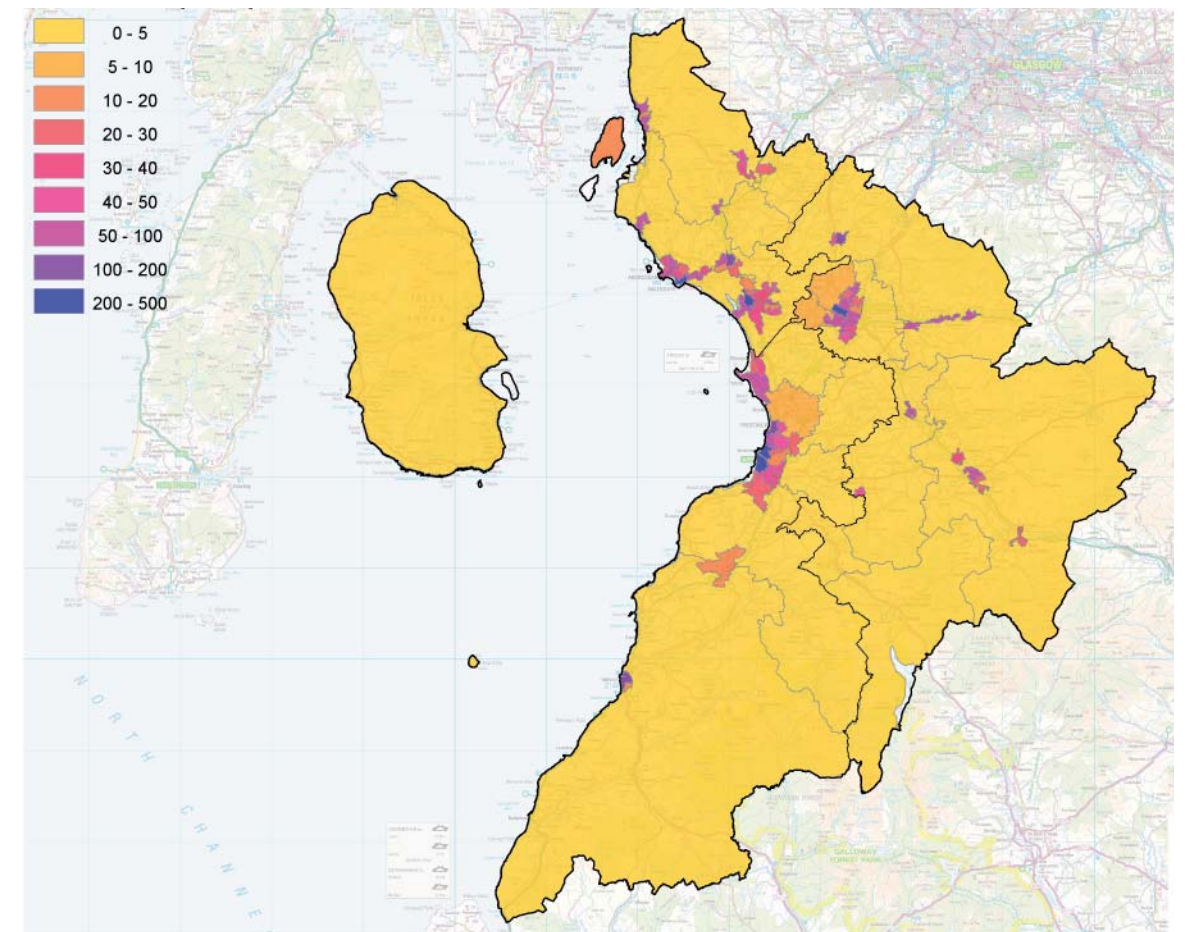 Entrances/Gateways
  Fringes
  Internal layouts

Figure 33 Business Locations

- Potential environmental improvements programme.
- Green Network specific aims through Section 75 Agreements.
- Reducing vacant and derelict land through
  Short & long term solutions
  Temporary Greening – Energy forest, biodiversity and visual benefits
  Bioremediation

Notable features of Ayrshire are the large scale bonded whisky warehouses, which are prominent features in the countryside/urban fringe. The spaces around the warehouses have great potential for improving biodiversity, visual screening and grassland management contributing to an improved green network.

Options for the future of Vacant and Derelict Land include:

As part of the strategy an inspection survey should be undertaken of all the sites to determine the possibilities and opportunities for Green Infrastructure enhancement e.g. in the form of planting / seeding / maintenance / remediation / biodiversity enhancement.

The majority of the sites are located within the Investment Corridors and their upgrade/ enhancement will benefit the overall impression of a Green sustainable corridor and hence be a potential catalyst for inward cultural and financial investment.
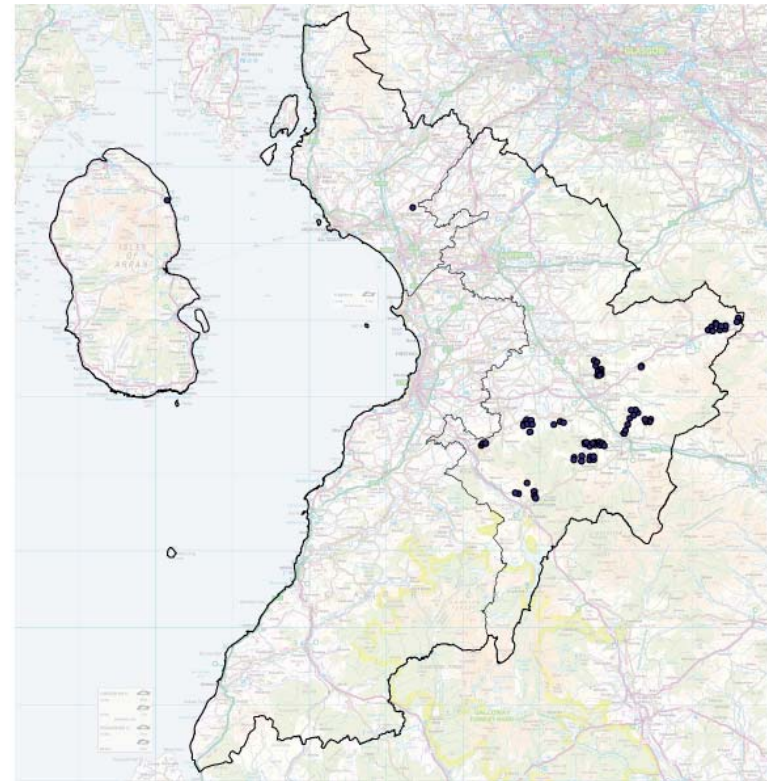
Figure 34 Opencast Locations

Within the site characteristics discussed a review of potential options can be evaluated:

Naturally revegetated colliery spoil – enhancement and protection of existing wildlife, flora and fauna and, if required in patchy areas, introduction of seed mixes specifically suitable for planting on colliery spoil heaps e.g. **Conservation Grassland Mix** - (Neutral MG5 type grassland) and associated hardy shrubs.

Landscaped colliery spoils – enhance the existing landscape planting and introduce a management plan to protect the implemented planting regime. Introduction of seed mixes specifically suitable for planting on colliery spoil heaps e.g. **Conservation Grassland Mix** - (Neutral MG5 type grassland) and associated hardy shrubs can enhance the visual appearance of the feature.

Quarries – undertake a planting regime in certain areas but retain the rugged exposure characteristics of the quarries which have a unique landscape appearance. Perimeter tree planting can soften visually the imprint in the landscape. Quarries can be considered for certain types of amenity development.

For the above, consideration should be given to **Short Rotation Coppice (SRC)** which is coppice grown as an energy crop. This woody solid biomass can be used in applications such as district heating, electric power generating stations, alone or in combination with other fuels SRC can be planted on a wide range of soil types from heavy clay to sand, including land reclaimed from gravel extraction and colliery spoil.

Reclaimed Industrial Areas - the contamination legacy of a site may limit the development or planting potential due to the financial constraints, however, all sites can be remediated. If development is not suitable a planting and maintenance regime should be implemented to enhance the green setting of the site and if possible introduce public amenity. If restrictions exist on the site due to the nature of the contamination, many options for remediation exist e.g. bio remediation/land farming techniques.

Former school sites/bowling greens - these sites may require enhancement and introduction of a variety of planting regimes to uplift the visual and public amenity opportunities.

From the data we have been provided regarding the location of the sites, the degree of detail varies between East, South and North Ayrshire e.g. only grid reference or name address and previous use.

We understand the councils must hold all this information in some form and we would recommend, as part of the next stage of the study, collation of all sites in a single database spreadsheet identifying - Name, Address, Grid Location, Area, Current Use, Former Use, Details of any remediation/planting or ongoing management and reports pertaining to the site history. This will assist greatly in the identification of opportunities and possibilities for Green Infrastructure enhancement.

5.5.5 **Goal 4** To deliver a threefold increase in the area of land used for **community growing** – allotments, orchards and gardens.

This ambitious goal should be developed through both the public and private sectors though:

- **Private sector** – part of masterplanning, new housing offer/planning condition/Section 75 Agreements, potential to embrace a Garden City type ethos/vision.
- **Public Sector** – consider orchards and allotments for underused Green Space, involving/creating community trusts, gauging demand for allotments in Ayrshire.
- Assessment of the current areas of gardens/allotments, etc. and potential demand from the community.

There are two current projects funded by Ayrshire LEADER to support the creation of new allotments/growing spaces which suggests latent demand for this type of facility. South Ayrshire Council manages three public allotment facilities. The availability of land in Ayrshire, its beneficial climate and potential for brownfield redevelopment may provide major opportunities for low density, self build eco home type developments and crofting/small holding (refer to Appendix A).

5.5.6 **Goal 5** To deliver at least a **50% increase in woodland cover**, in line with the Scottish Forestry target.

Ayrshire has considerable woodlands and forestry associated with its upland areas. The CSGN Vision of a 50% increase of woodland seems impractical in Ayrshire, given that uplands may be more beneficial as mires/peatlands, providing carbon sinks to counter global warming. The establishment of woodlands on derelict and disused land, urban and urban fringe land will provide the most benefit to green networks in Ayrshire.

The AGN Strategy should link closely to the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy, 2006 Scottish Forestry Target/2010 Right Tree Right Place, Future Woodland and Forestry Guidance (parallel study currently underway) and Env 3 Core Investment Area Landscape – greenbelt at Ayr, Prestwick & Troon, potential greenbelt protection area; ENV 4 Green Network D – 'the three Councils shall prepare a Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) to promote environmental regeneration and recreational access, especially within and between communities in the Core Investment Area and Investment Corridors'.

The AGN Strategy shall consider:

- Promotion of programmes to deliver increase in woodland cover.
- Urban fringe potential – links with Goals 1, 2 & 3 and WIAT initiative.
- Increase broadleaf cover associated with river corridors.
- Potential increase of woodland on farmland and identification of less productive land (indications are that the value of farmland is increasing in line with global demand for food production).
- Temporary greening of vacant land.
- Establishment of woodlands as a framework for development – business and residential.
- Supply for 'Energy Forest'.
- Ways of continuing the considerable work of East Ayrshire Woodlands and potential of Irvine Forest.
- Establishing woodland as part of opencast restoration as well as 'calling in'/reviewing existing restoration plans to work with operators to maximise benefits to green network establishment.

5.5.7 **Goal 6** To plan and deliver an **integrated habitat network** at a landscape scale with wildlife corridors joining up key sites and habitats, ensuring that every community has access to places where people can experience and enjoy nature and wildlife,

A parallel study is currently underway to deliver an Integrated Habitat Network (IHN) plan for Ayrshire, enabling linkage with neighbouring habitat networks, in particular the Glasgow Clyde Valley Network. The objectives of the IHN are to identify:

- Focal species appropriate to the region, and to research and describe elements of their autology to classify their functional interaction with habitat and the matrix of the wider landscape.
- Key areas for native woodland restoration and expansion in order to link core woodland habitats across Ayrshire and between neighbouring networks.
- Key areas for expansion or restoration of a number of identified open ground habitats to link core habitat areas within Ayrshire and between neighbouring areas, to maintain their ecological function and viability, as well as creating a functionally connected network.
- Land-use conflicts and opportunities between key habitat networks and development proposals, historic landscapes, archaeological records and landscape character.
- Links with neighbouring habitat networks.
- Links between semi-natural habitats and community access.
- New areas for planting woodland or creating other key open habitats in association with the Development Plan priorities.
- Confirm funding opportunities and links to SRDP priorities.

The GIS mapping helps to identify where are the gaps and potential linkages. However the mapping has identified that improving habitats is not only about improving corridors and links but also the blocky' nature of habitats in Ayrshire.

'Ensuring that every community has access to places where people can experience and enjoy nature and wildlife' provides the opportunity for a number of linked projects in Ayrshire (refer to Appendix A):

- Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative
- Catchment Sensitive Farming
- Urban Forestry Project
- Green Sustainable Living
- Lay-by Project

Ayrshire already has a significant juxtaposition of large scale industry and the natural environment. There are also a number of European exemplar projects which demonstrate that development can be successfully established as part of the natural environment, e.g. Malmo Sweden, Freiberg and Emsche Park in Germany. The lessons from these projects can be applied to Ayrshire and perhaps a demonstration project could be specifically developed for Ayrshire.

5.5.8 **Goal 7** To deliver a strategic network of high-quality routes for **active travel and recreation** throughout Central Scotland.

Refer to Figure 35 – Population within 2 km of a Railway or Bus Station

The establishment of Core Paths is a statutory requirement under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Some 76% of Ayrshire's population live within 2 km of a railway or bus station. There is therefore great potential to create local active travel routes. Improving paths trails and cycling routes will result in more energetic or active forms of travel which not only improve health and carbon reduction (sustainability) but also significantly increase the awareness of the green network and its environs.

It is important to remember that one size does not fit all and, for example, although most of the Ayrshire Coastal Route and River Ayr Route are only suitable for walking, the introduction of improvements to facilitate shared use with the cyclists and/or horse riders may significantly change the character of the route.

It is essential that any routes and networks created are designed and constructed to an appropriate standard and are therefore fit for purpose.

The aim is to achieve a modal transfer to more active forms of travel; therefore there is a case to afford priority only to those paths that do not need a car to access them. This would best be achieved through the extension of the existing urban path networks into the urban fringe, where practicable, creating circular routes, with the standards of provision suitable for shared use by cyclists as well as the disabled and families.

A secondary strand with equal priority would be the encouragement of schools to produce their own travel plans and include the identification of, or demand for, safe walking and cycling routes.
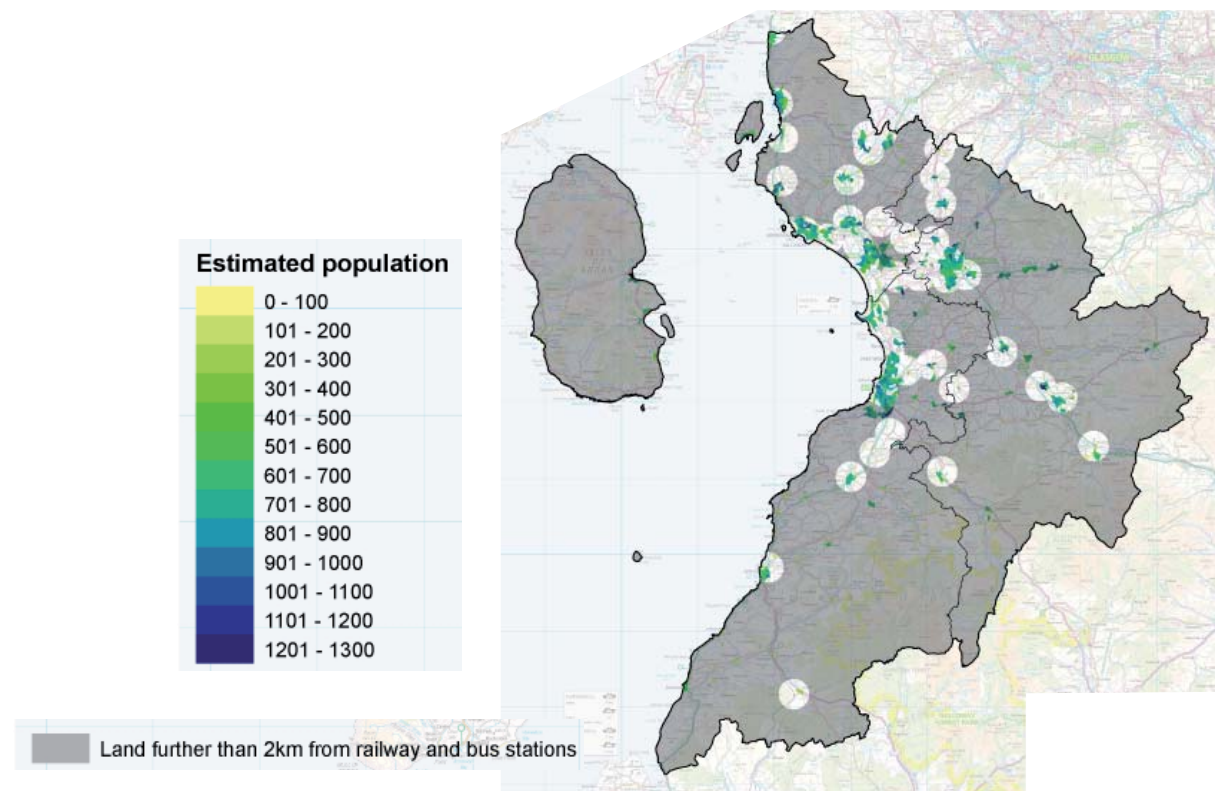
Figure 35 Population within 2 kms of a railway or bus station

Whilst the local authorities must adopt a strategic role in masterplanning the development of the path and cycleway network, there are a number of special interest groups who would be able to support initiatives through the detailed local knowledge of their members, and are able to promote usage through their websites and other publicity material. Similarly, joint working with rail and public transport operators to promote specific routes and access arrangements could lead to significant increases in levels of usage which, in turn, can increase the demand for improvement schemes. Opportunities do occur as part of new developments, land reclamation and regeneration projects, as well as road improvements to the major road network, for control to be exercised through the planning system.

It is important that further consultation is undertaken as part of the development of the AGN Strategy, including British Horse Society, Scottish CTC, Sustrans, Ramblers Scotland and Rail Ramblers.

The AGN Strategy should consider developing and building on a number of initiatives in Ayrshire:

- Continued development of the National Cycleway Network (Sustrans) and their potential projects:
  Promenade at Saltcoats – NCN 73, path becoming unusable.
  Potential extension of NCN 75 which currently links Ardrossen to West Kilbride to extend northwards to Gourock; this would fill in a gap originally identified in 1995, feasibility/planning scheduled for 2012.
  Feasibility study for North Ayrshire Council, road link between Kilwinning and Kilbirnie, would like to consider traffic free route. Associated with the River Garnock.
- Carrick Way
- Ayrshire Pilgrims' Trail
- South Ayrshire/Cycling Scotland Renewable Energy Project
- Active Travel Scotland.

Other initiatives to be examined during development of the AGN Strategy shall include:

- Potential of disused railway lines e.g.
  Kilmarnock – Galston- Mewmilns- Darvel – links to Louden Hill, an historic landmark/geological feature (good destination) and outside Ayrshire onto Strathaven, also links westwards from Kilmarnock to NCN route 73.
  Kilmarnock northwards to Kilwinning and Dalry
  Doon Valley – Patna to Dalmellington including Industrial Railway Centre.
  Muirkirk to Cumnock and link to Doon Valley
- Green Commuting and Heritage Links Projects (refer to appendix A)

5.5.9 **Goal 8** To ensure that the green network is **used by everyone to improve health and well-being** through physical activity and contact with nature, volunteering and learning outdoors.

Refer to Figure 36 – Health Deprivation

Promotion and use of the green network is an important objective of the CSGN, linking closely to the recommendation for a Communications specialist within the AGN development team (refer to Section 7.).

The AGN Strategy should consider the following aspects:
- Development of a marketing and communications strategy as part of the AGN strategy.
- The design of high quality spaces including meeting and social spaces, pocket parks etc to provide opportunities for contact and overcoming loneliness.
- The social benefits of community orchard and allotment associations.
- Group activities and volunteering e.g. BTCV Scotland, Green Gym initiatives.
- Training and learning outdoors e.g. twinning schools with sites.
- Contact with nature – Scottish Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Local Wildlife Groups.
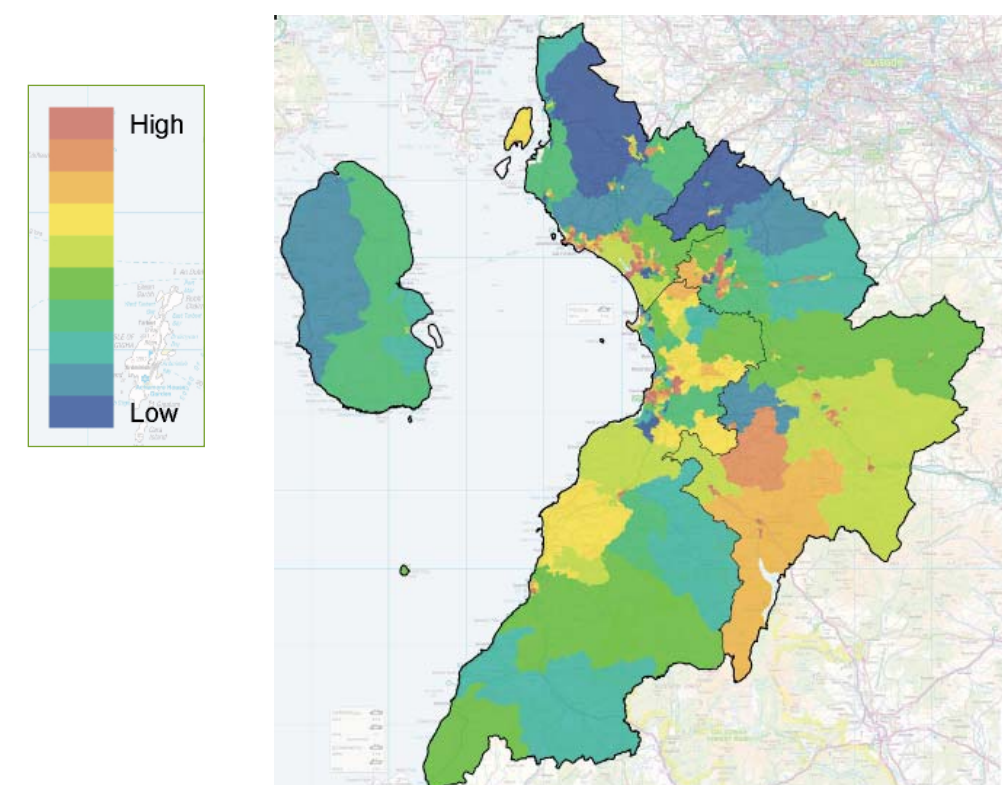

Figure 36 Health Deprivation

Potential projects (refer to Appendix A) could include:

- Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project
- Green or Sustainable Living Project
- Urban Forestry
- Green Commuting Project
- Wilderness camping.

5.5.10 **Goal 9** To **foster community pride and ownership** in the CSGN and to use the green network as a community resource, providing opportunities for education, volunteering, training, skills development and employment in land-based and low-carbon industries.

Goal 9 links very closely with Goal 8, the need for a holistic approach to the AGN Strategy, the structure of the AGN Partnership and management role out of the objectives. Consideration shall be given to:

- Creation of an Ayrshire Environment Network, bringing together all organisations and groups with an interest in the environment.
- Education, training and volunteering and links to existing initiatives e.g. East Ayrshire Woodlands.
- Linking to national funding opportunities for education and training.
- Ensuring that the AGN is high profile, including identifying champions in the private and public sectors.
- Working with communities to support existing initiatives, create new projects and to celebrate success.
- Consult with all stakeholders during development of the strategy.
- Maximising Ayrshire's USP as a holiday destination and green network potential of all routes to Arran, e.g. Arran Geopark, Heritage Link and Lay-by Projects (refer to Appendix A),
- Maximising the green network potential for the visitor economy.
- Establishing close links with shooting and conservation bodies.

5.5.11 **Goal 10** To help **mitigate climate change** through land management practices which help to capture, store and retain carbon, such as woodland expansion and the protection of peatland, and through the promotion of active travel.

The AGN Strategy provides has a significant opportunity to help combat climate change through good land management practice and flood risk management (refer to section 5.7 below). Relevant potential projects (refer to Appendix A) could include:

- Green Network Carbon Offset Project
- Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative
- Green or Sustainable Living Project
- Urban Forestry
- Green Community Project

5.6 Short and Long Term Management

Meeting CSGN's Goal 1 is a significant challenge to ensure that every home is within 300m of an **attractive, safe, well-maintained green space** or accessible countryside. Attractive environments can be achieved by strong vision and ambition, proper community engagement, good quality design, selection of robust materials, good quality plant material etc. Safety can be achieved in part by adopting secure by design principles and engagement with the community and police architectural liaison officer. However ensuring safe and well maintained green spaces is a significant challenge in the current climate of reductions in revenue funding.

In the same way that maximising existing green space resources is recommended elsewhere in this study, it should be an aim of the AGN to ensure the best use of existing management and maintenance budgets to achieve CSGN objectives.

The CSGN is a long term planning objective and significant resources will be required to ensure well maintained green space. Revenue funding of green spaces is often one of the first target areas for budget savings for Local Authorities. However the objective of the AGN must be to break the cycle of Capital Funding – Action – Decline. Management and maintenance of green spaces therefore needs to be proactive and creative and may include:

- Identifying project champions with political influence.
- Maximising contract periods during establishment phases e.g. including 5 years maintenance in the implementation contract.
- Ensuring provision of 10 year management plans for new development.
- Ensuring sustainable design principles are embraced by new developments.
- Learning the lessons from private land management e.g. Green Belt Group,
- Review effectiveness of various charging mechanisms e.g. commuted sums or service charge type initiative as part of new private developments to ensure Green Network objectives are met.
- Produce Green Network targets as requirements for all new developments.
- Embrace Green Flag / Green Pennant objectives.
- Where possible utilise Park Managers and Rangers – HLF Parks for People funded schemes will fund these posts for up to 5 years; HLF will also fund development grants to create Conservation Management Plans and 10 Year Management and Maintenance Plans.
- Embrace and engage with the voluntary sector to help to contribute to looking after their spaces e.g. BTCV, Friend's Groups etc.
- Review funding mechanisms for exemplar projects including Land Trust, Woodland Trust, Independent Park Trusts etc.
- Review existing maintenance regimes and budgets, are they appropriate to meet AGN objectives, is it necessary to mow all green space or can grassland be better managed to improve biodiversity, could this space be better used as a community garden etc?
- Work closely with local authority green space management and maintenance staff, ensure that they are part of the AGN process.

5.7   Impact of Climate Change

The climate is changing in the West of Scotland. Models suggest that by the 2050s:

- Winters will be slightly warmer and probably wetter, with the mean daily winter temperature up by about 1°C, compared to the baseline period of 1961-1990, and precipitation in the winter months of December-February up by about 20%.
- No significant rise is anticipated in the ferocity or frequency of winter storms, although the frequency of very wet days may increase in the period October-February from 4-5 on average at the moment to 7-10 days by the 2050s.
- The average annual number of days between December and February on which the temperature falls below 0°C is expected to decrease from around 9-10 to around 5 by the 2050s.
- Summers will be warmer and drier, with the mean daily summer temperatures up 2°C between now and the 2050s and precipitation in the period June-August down by 20% on average.
- Despite the trend towards warmer summers, the incidence of very high temperatures (above 25°C) in the months June-August is not expected to increase significantly.
- There is no evidence that the drier weather will be associated with an increased incidence of heavy downpours.

Source: The potential impact of climate change on South Ayrshire up to 2050 (South Ayrshire Council, 2010)

Such changes in climate will bring a range of impacts. These include increased risks for people, and especially urban populations, of heat stress in summer and increased risk from river, surface water and coastal flooding. Climate change is now considered to be one of the greatest threats to our social well being and economic future.

Green infrastructure has a significant role to play in helping to combat climate change. It provides a range of services that can make both a substantial contribution towards adapting to climate change and a limited yet important contribution towards mitigating climate change. Such natural interventions are increasingly being recognised as a desirable 'win-win' approach to combating climate change, as they also help to deliver multiple other social, economic and environmental benefits.

The mitigation services provided by green infrastructure include:

- Carbon storage and sequestration - storing carbon in soils and vegetation; the mires and moors of Ayrshire are a significant carbon store which should be protected, and existing and new woodlands offer significant potential for carbon storage and sequestration.
- Providing low carbon fuels - replacing fossil fuels with lower carbon alternatives, including bioenergy, wind and hydro.
- Material substitution - replacing materials such as concrete and steel (which involve high fossil fuel consumption in their production) with sustainably managed wood and other natural materials.

- Food production - providing environmentally sustainable food production that delivers food security.
- Reducing the need to travel by car - providing local recreation areas and green travel routes to encourage walking and cycling.

The adaptation services of green infrastructure include:

- **Managing high temperatures** - particularly in urban areas, where evaporative cooling and shading provided by green infrastructure can ensure that towns and cities continue to be attractive and comfortable places to live, work, visit and invest.
- **Managing water resources** - green infrastructure can provide places to store water for re-use, allows water to infiltrate into the ground sustaining aquifers and river flows, and can catch sediment and remove pollutants from the water, thereby ensuring that water supply and quality is maintained.
- **Managing riverine flooding** - green infrastructure can provide water storage and retention areas, reducing and slowing down peak flows, and thereby helping to alleviate river flooding.
- **Managing coastal flooding** - green infrastructure can provide water storage and retention areas, reducing and slowing tidal surges, and thereby helping to alleviate coastal flooding.
- **Managing surface water** - green infrastructure can help to manage surface water and sewer flooding by reducing the rate and volume of water runoff; it intercepts water, allows it to infiltrate into the ground, and provides permanent or temporary storage areas.
- **Reducing soil erosion** - using vegetation to stabilise soils that many be vulnerable to increasing erosion.
- **Helping other species to adapt** - providing a more vegetated and permeable landscape through which species can move northwards to new 'climate spaces'.
- **Managing visitor pressure** - providing a recreation and visitor resource for a more outdoors lifestyle, and helping to divert pressure from landscapes which are sensitive to climate change.

Green infrastructure projects that could make a contribution towards combating climate change include:

- Urban forestry initiatives – Initiatives to increase the urban tree canopy will help to manage high temperatures and capture rainwater, thereby helping to reduce urban surface water flooding.
- Making space for water – River catchment initiatives to re-naturalise rivers, connect them to their floodplains, increase upstream water storage, and slow down the passage of water downstream. Such linear corridors could also be linked to provide recreation routes for people and to facilitate species movement.
- Coastal habitats – Focusing on the creation and management of coastal habitats to provide a natural flood defence, a connected network to help wildlife to adapt to climate change, and to act as a resource for a potential increase in recreation and tourism with warmer and drier summers.

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5.8   Impact on Development and Planning Policy

There are two principal ways in which the Ayrshire Green Network will influence planning and development outcomes, a third related area is identified.

1. In terms of planning policy, by ensuring the incorporation of green network objectives in the three Local Development plans being produced by the Ayrshire Districts. These Local Development plans will then address a requirement in NFP2 to strengthen the role of Ayrshire as the country's western gateway. This will be achieved by:

a. ensuring that within each Local Development plan there is a policy provision on the Ayrshire Green Network, and
b. focusing upon the coincidence of the green network with strategic investment corridors. In respect of the latter this can facilitate advance greening and so improve urban and peri-urban environments to facilitate delivery of broader economic and regeneration objectives. Most of Ayrshire's urban settlements exist along investment corridors; these could form part of a subject plan, or action plan which could then form part of wider Green Network supplementary planning guidance.

2. The second means of embedding green networks into planning is via the development management system. This can be achieved through the use of planning conditions and, where possible, by means of Section 75 Agreements. However it should be noted that demands upon this planning tool from a plethora of different objectives mean that greenspace may not feature highest upon the list of priorities, that is unless Local Development Plans include appropriate supplementary guidance. The purpose of supplementary planning guidance would be to facilitate an appropriate proportion of developer contributions for the Green Network in each of the Ayrshire Districts. In terms of reinforcing the message of national planning and development policy, it would be appropriate to hold a Green Network workshop(s) for planning and related professionals in Ayrshire to emphasise the importance of green networks in planning policy and development management.

Another mechanism for ensuring delivery of green networks is through the Forestry Commission's 'Woodlands in and Around Towns' strategy to promote creation, connectivity and good management of woodlands for multiple benefits. Whilst not linked with planning per se, new planting sites in urban fringe locations may have development potential and will fall in to the planning system at a future date. Advance landscaping through tree planting can contribute towards the creation of 'green development frameworks' as well as meeting visual, leisure and biodiversity objectives. At present, SRDP grants are available to deliver such aspirations, which can perform an important role in the delivery of new green-space in developable areas.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
6.0 Action plans

6.1 Vision for the Ayrshire Green Network

The overall vision for the Ayrshire's Green Network is to **'identify, establish and maintain aspirational, competitive and sustainable places that contribute to the objectives of the Central Scotland Green Network'**

The overall vision is supported by a number of specific aims which closely link to those of the CSGN but are specific to Ayrshire:

- **Recognising and celebrating Ayrshire's existing assets that contribute to green networks and making these assets work harder.** Our GIS analysis has identified that almost the entire area of Ayrshire provides at least 2 functions that contribute to green networks. Rather than, say, acquire more and more green space or new land it would seem beneficial to improve and manage existing land assets to try and maximise, where possible, contributions to biodiversity and community benefits.

- **Recognising the importance of the agri-environment business to Ayrshire** and in particular the need to simplify and unlock the funding mechanisms and considerable potential that the current SRDP fund offers. It is clear that the agricultural arc surrounding Ayr and Irvine contributes least to the green network and therefore offers great potential to meet the Scottish Government's priority objectives for rural development for catchment sensitive farming and improvements to landscape and biodiversity.

- **Recognising the importance of the visitor economy to Ayrshire** and its strong link to the natural environment, including marketing and product development of initiatives that contribute to and enhance the green network e.g. Arran Geopark, improving transport corridors, visitor stop off and arrival points, interpretation and visitor facilities, active travel routes etc. The visitor economy includes catering for day trips and longer holidays.

- **Improving land management practices** and by implication water courses, diffuse pollution and coastal environments.

- **Embracing the Integrated Habitat Network objectives** including improving biodiversity, habitats and habitat management, linkages, networks and wider benefits of education, training and volunteering.

- **Embracing new lifestyle choices** – promoting Ayrshire as the place to live for a healthier, greener and more sustainable life.

- **Turning poor assets into good assets** – maximising the potential of urban green space. Realising underused green space for community benefit (e.g. allotments, community orchard and gardens) and improving biodiversity.

- **Realising the potential of urban woodlands** – Ayrshire has considerable woodlands and forestry associated with its upland areas. The CSGN Vision of a 50% increase of woodland seems impractical in Ayrshire given that uplands may be more beneficial as mires/peatlands, providing carbon sinks to counter global warming. The establishment of woodlands on vacant and derelict land, urban and urban fringe land will provide the most benefit to green networks in Ayrshire.

- **Recognising the opportunities, contribution and challenges of blue networks** to the Ayrshire Green Network, notably diffuse pollution and the importance of coastal environments.

- **Creating an environment for inward investment in Business** through the identification and establishment of advanced greening of possible investment sites and establishment of a programme of temporary greening (to include bioremediation, energy forestry and structure planting as well as greening of routes).

- **Identifying and establishing a network of active travel routes** with including urban links within 2kms of all transport interchanges and county wide linking to the wider National Cycleway Network links.

- **Health and Well-being** – creation and promotion of green infrastructure to positively contribute to the health and well-being of Ayrshire's community and to engage and involve the community to promote the benefits of the green network.

- **Utilising areas of Vacant and Derelict Land** – enhancing or greening areas of vacant and derelict land that is not currently earmarked for future development.

- **Recognition of success of Strategy** – ensure that all the successful outcomes of the implementation of the Green Network Strategy are positively reported for Ayrshire in order for the area to satisfy local, regional, national and international targets.

6.2 Action Plans

Refer to:

Figure 37 – Action Plan 1 Core Area
Figure 38 – Action Plan 2 North Coast Investment Area
Figure 39 – Action Plan 3 Garnock Valley
Figure 40 – Action Plan 4 Glasgow Link
Figure 41 – Action Plan 5 Irvine Valley
Figure 42 – Action Plan 6 A70/A76 Investment Corridor
Figure 43 – Action Plan 7 Doon Valley Investment Corridor
Figure 44 – Action Plan 8 Carrick Coast Investment Corridor

The inclusion of an environmental project in Scotland's National Planning Framework is of major significance, not least in terms of how the long term objectives can be funded. The CSGN is a bridge between policy makers at national and local levels and projects. While the CSGN provides a Development Fund administered by the Forestry Commission Scotland the step change required to meet the wide aims of the CSGN will need funding from all sectors if it is to be successful.

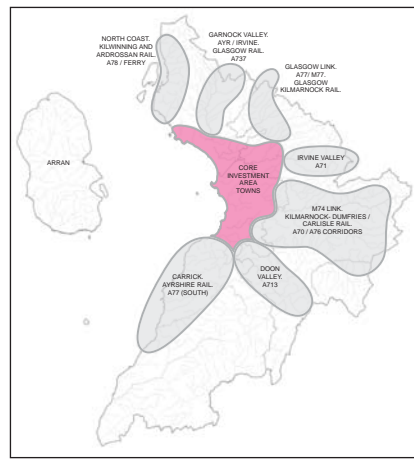Potential funding sources are summarised in Appendix C.

Location

Typology

Area %	
48.85	Agricultural land
0.01	Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.20	Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
3.01	Coastal habitat
0.19	Derelict land
3.40	General amenity space
10.74	Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
3.48	Institutional grounds
0.01	Orchard
3.95	Outdoor sports facility
1.66	Park or public garden
6.98	Private domestic garden
0.24	Water body
0.83	Water course
0.22	Wetland
3.92	Woodland

Ardrossan
Stevenston
Saltcoats
Kilmarnock
Irvine
Troon
Prestwick
Ayr

Needs not fulfilled

High
Low

Needs fulfilled

High
Low

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
Core Investment Area

The Core Investment Area is an area of coastal towns including Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston, Kilwinning, Irvine, Troon, Prestwick and Ayr together with Kilmarnock. Kilmarnock is a distinctly separated from the coast by gently rolling farmland. Rail and road (A 71 and A77) corridors and the River Irvine link Kilmarnock to the coast. The National Cycleway Network route 73 also links Kilmarnock to Irvine.

The landscape of the Core Area is characterised by an extensive semi-circular lowland area which is focused on the town of Ayr. It has a distinct land use and settlement pattern which sees heavily populated areas with a dense network of settlements and roads, sitting next to more rural areas where the main land use is dairy farming. The area is cut by a series of narrow river valleys with the farmland contained in a surviving framework of hedges and hedgerow trees.
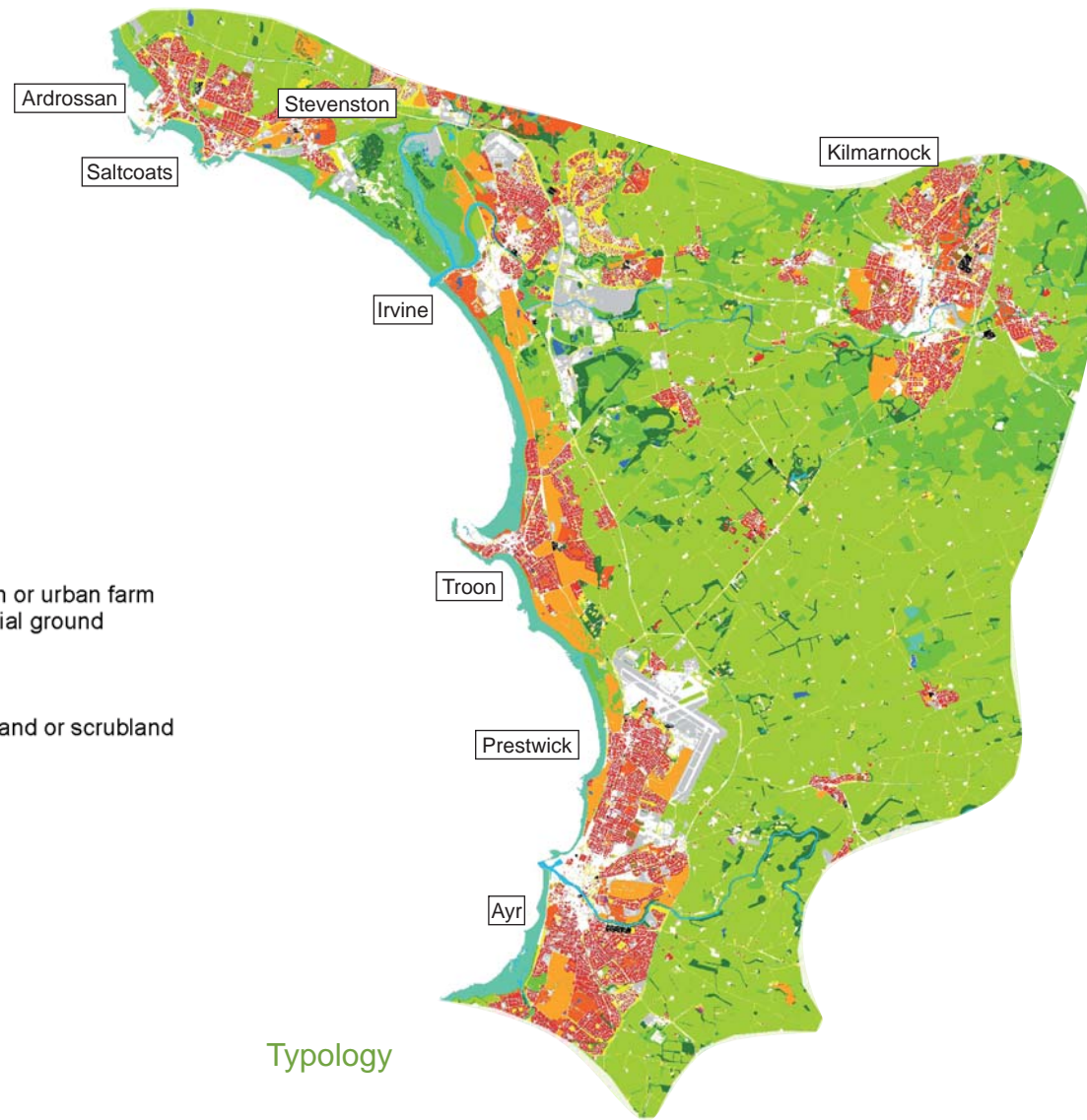
Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

- Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.
- Maximise the green network potential of the coast, Rivers Irvine and Garnock, rail and road corridors.
- Ensuring high quality, management and maintenance of existing green space to meet Green Flag benchmark standards.
- Undertaking survey of existing stock of urban trees, creation of an urban-tree strategy to ensure renewal, reinvigoration, replacement andmanagement.
- Develop an urban forestry initiative focused on (a) planting of new trees in public grounds (i.e. local authority, NHS etc) and (b) planting new peri-urban woodlands around settlements in accordance with the FCS WIAT initiative.
- Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.
- Build on the green network initiatives of Irvine Bay Regeneration Company.
- Undertake catchment sensitive farming, assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP.
- Identify existing poor quality industrial estates and business locations as well as vacant and derelict land in the vicinity of the towns to create high quality environments with advanced greening and urban woodlands.
- Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens.
- Create and promote an Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project.
- Create local active travel routes through a Green Commuting Project to provide green links for all within 2km of a railway or bus station. Explore potential of the disused railway between Kilmarnock and Kilwinning.
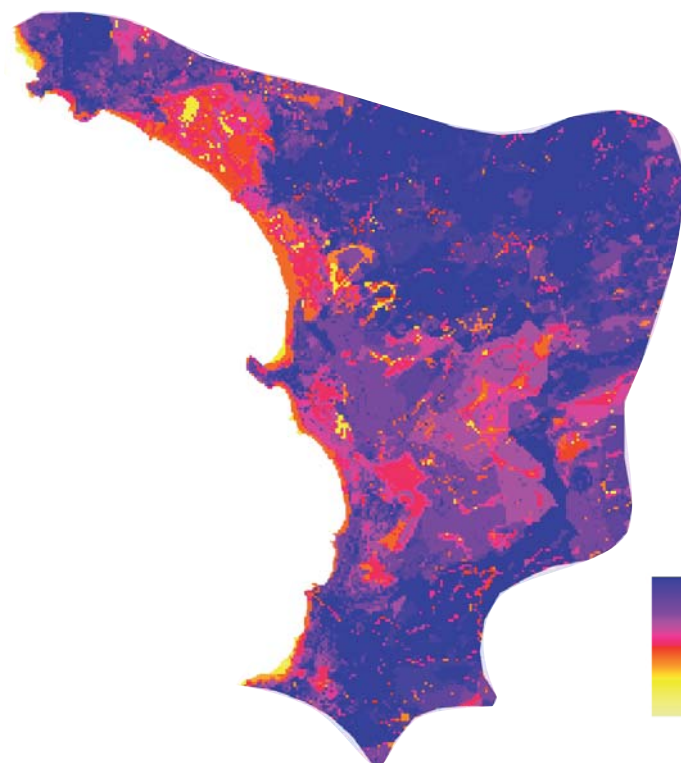- Coastal environment high priority linking to Clyde Area Advisory Group, River Basin Management Initiative etc.
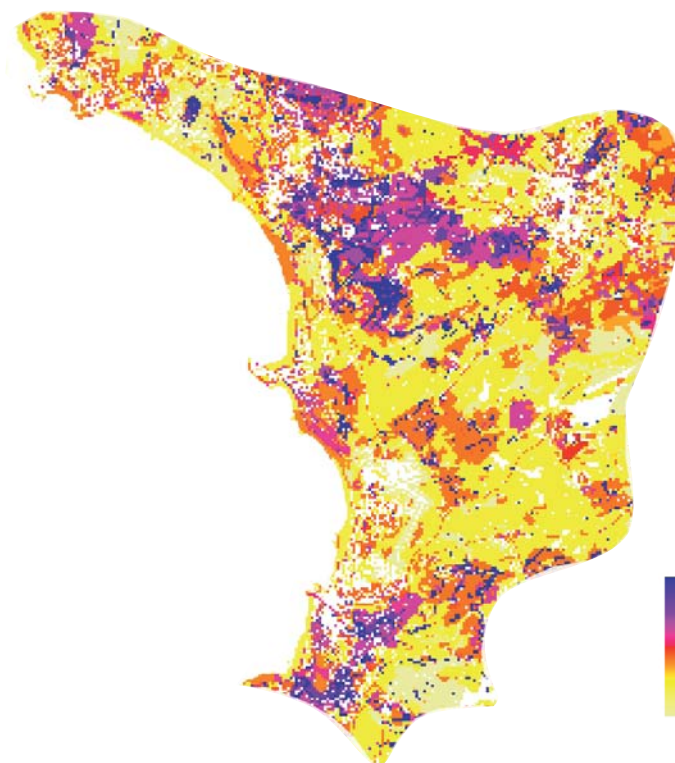
Location

Area %		
29.02		Agricultural land
-		Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.08		Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
4.68		Coastal habitat
0.05		Derelict land
1.33		General amenity space
49.63		Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
0.36		Institutional grounds
-		Orchard
1.36		Outdoor sports facility
0.21		Park or public garden
2.72		Private domestic garden
0.68		Water body
0.24		Water course
0.08		Wetland
4.99		Woodland

Typology

Needs not fulfilled

Needs fulfilled

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
North Coast Investment Corridor
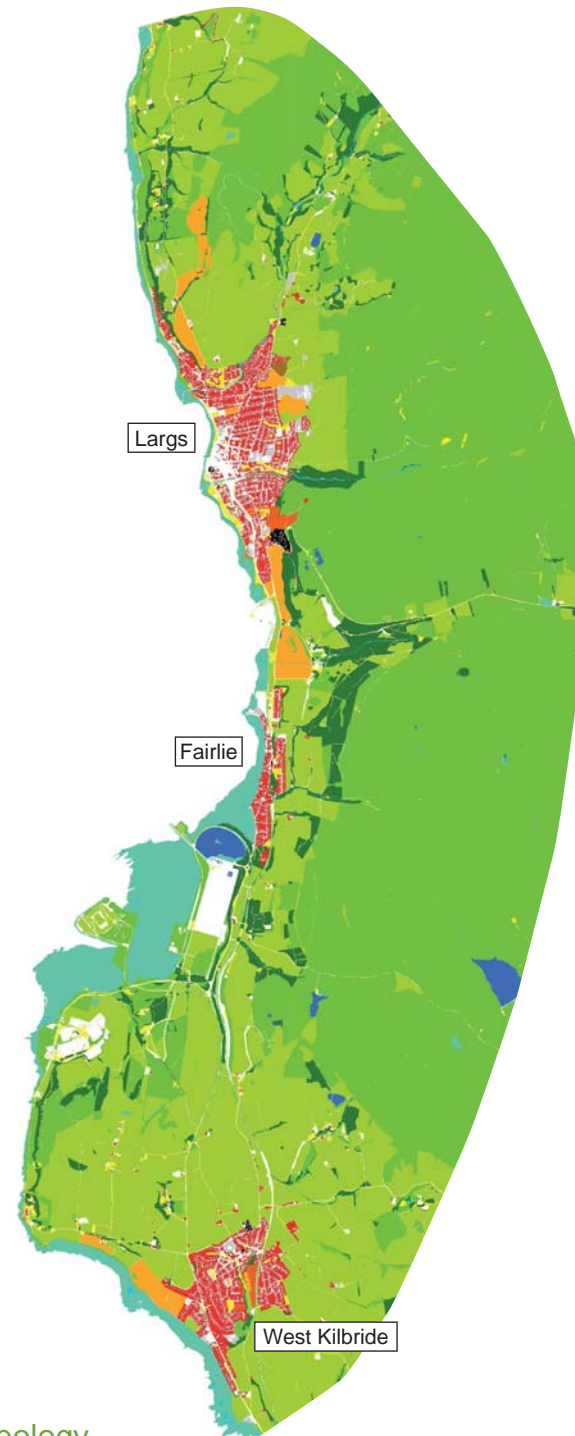
The North Coast Investment Corridor includes the coastal holiday towns of Largs, Fairlie and West Kilbride juxtaposed with large scale heavy industry set amongst dramatic coastal scenery and fine views to the islands of Great Cumbrae, Little Cumbrae and Arran. The corridor is constrained by a narrow road (A78) and rail corridor with hills to the east and sea to the west.
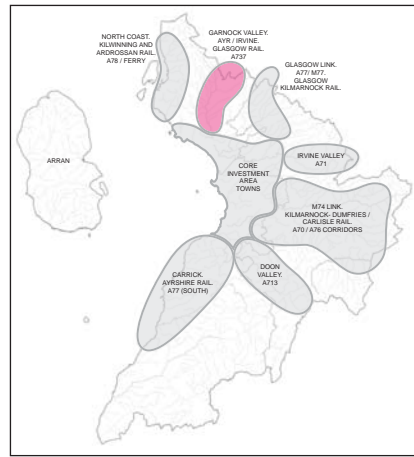
Seascape plays an important part of the north coast investment corridor with dramatic views across the Inner Firth of Clyde which is characterised by semi-sheltered waters, steeply rising shorelines often backed by wooded slopes.

Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

• Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.

• Improve the quality and setting of visitor facilities e.g. car parks and picnic areas along the coast.

• Maximise the green network potential of the coast, rail and road corridors.

• Ensuring high quality, management and maintenance of existing green space to meet Green Flag benchmark standards.

• Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.

• Assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP and maximise the woodland potential of the wooded hinterland.

• Identify existing poor quality industrial estates and business locations as well as vacant and derelict land in the vicinity of the towns to create high quality environments with advanced greening and urban woodlands.

• Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens e.g. Organic Growers of Fairlie.

• Develop an urban forestry initiative focused on (a) planting of new trees in public grounds (i.e. local authority, NHS etc) and (b) planting new peri-urban woodlands around settlements in accordance with the FCS WIAT initiative.

• Create and promote an Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project.

• Create local active travel routes through a Green Commuting Project to provide green links for all within 2km of a railway or bus station. Build on the green potential of National Cycleway Network, route 75 and embrace Sustrans ambitions to extend to Gourock.

• Coastal environment high priority linking to Clyde Area Advisory Group, River Basin Management Initiative etc.

Location

Area %	
64.86	■ Agricultural land
-	■ Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.14	■ Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
-	■ Coastal habitat
0.04	■ Derelict land
1.97	■ General amenity space
10.82	■ Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
1.36	■ Institutional grounds
-	■ Orchard
0.86	■ Outdoor sports facility
0.72	■ Park or public garden
3.75	■ Private domestic garden
0.10	■ Water body
1.53	■ Water course
0.34	■ Wetland
6.58	■ Woodland

Typology
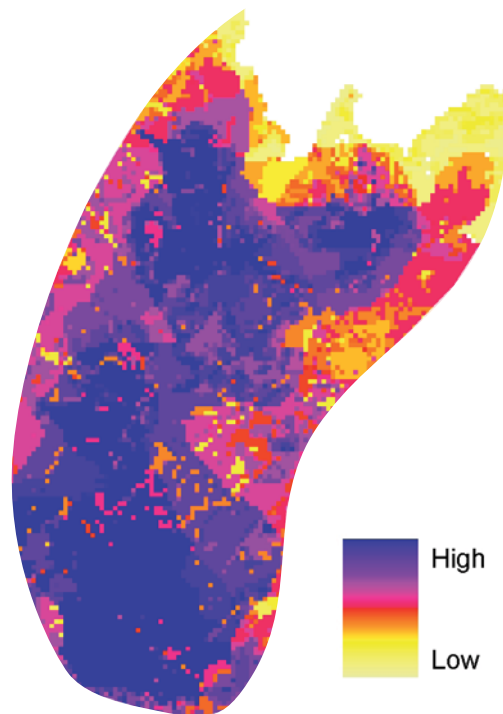
Needs not fulfilled

Needs fulfilled

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
Garnock Valley Investment Corridor
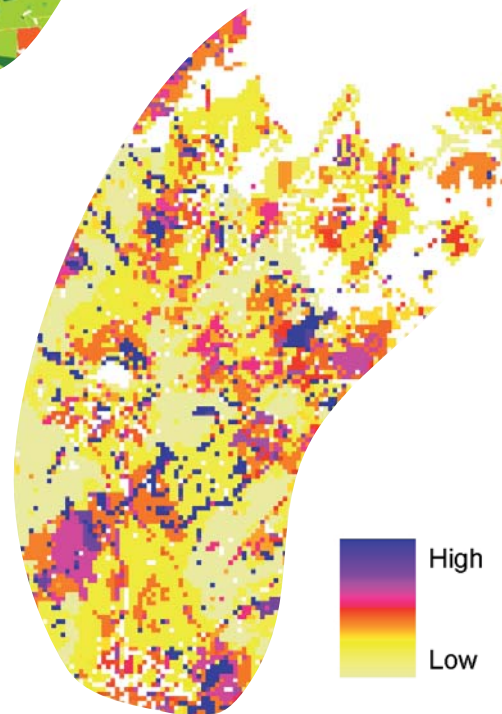
The Garnock Valley Investment Corridor associates with the gentle valley of the River Garnock with Kilbirnie Loch to the north and the town of Kilwinning to the south. Other towns in the corridor include Dalry, Beith and the former coal mining and steel working town of Glengarnock/Kilbirnie. The corridor contains rail and road (A737) links to Glasgow as well National Cycleway Network route 7. The area is characterised by former heavy industrial as well as former market towns set amongst rural gently rolling farmland. The large scale whisky bonded warehouses form a distinct feature of the open countryside linked by numerous small lanes.

The landscape is in part associated with the more rural part of the Ayrshire Basin with a gently rolling landform, broken by a network of hedges and field boundaries and "Broad Valley Lowland" which is characterised as a broad, shallow, level valley floor that has naturally flooded to form Kilbirnie Loch. There is a dense network of woodlands, shelterbelts and hedges with occasional long views to the North Ayrshire Hills.

The GIS mapping has identified that considerable areas of the investment area do not fulfil the needs of the green network indicating the potential and need to prioritise this area.

Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

- Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.

- Maximise the green network potential of the Rivers Garnock, rail and road corridors.

- Ensuring high quality, management and maintenance of existing green space to meet Green Flag benchmark standards e.g. Kilbirnie.

- Undertaking survey of existing stock of urban trees, creation of tree strategy to ensure renewal, reinvigoration, replacement and management.

- Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.

- Undertake catchment sensitive farming, assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP.

- Identify existing poor quality industrial estates and business locations as well as vacant and derelict land in the vicinity of the towns to create high quality environments with advanced greening and urban woodlands.

- Explore the potential for a greening initiative associated with the Bonded Warehouses and Whisky Industry.

- Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens.

- Develop an urban forestry initiative focused on (a) planting of new trees in public grounds (i.e. local authority, NHS etc) and (b) planting new peri-urban woodlands around settlements in accordance with the FCS WIAT initiative.

- Create and promote an Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project.

- Create local active travel routes through a Green Commuting Project to provide green links for all within 2km of a railway or bus station. Explore potential of the disused railways to north of Kilwinning.

Location

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
Glasgow Link Investment Corridor
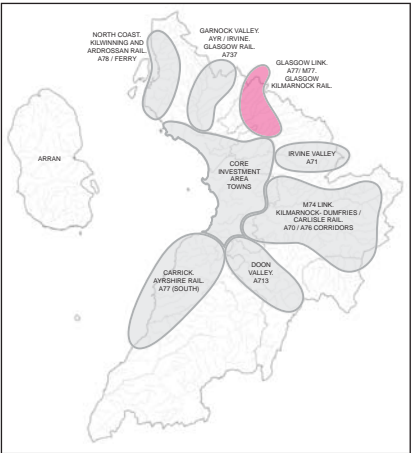
The Glasgow Link Investment Corridor tends to be an economic designation rather than a natural geographic corridor. The corridor associates with the road (A736) and rail corridor linking Kilmarnock to Glasgow. The corridor includes the villages/small towns of Stewarton and Dunlop and in the south east of the area Fenwick which is also associated with the A77/M77.

The Glasgow link investment corridor is typical of the extensive semi-circular lowland area characterised by a distinct land use and settlement pattern with tight urban areas sitting next to open more rural areas. The landscape is extensively agricultural in nature. It is a complex landscape which is dissected by many burns and streams which give an undulating lowland landscape that is predominantly pastoral, although there are some areas of arable farming on the lower level areas with better soils. The area has a strong network of 18th / 19th century field boundaries which are formed by well conditioned hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees.
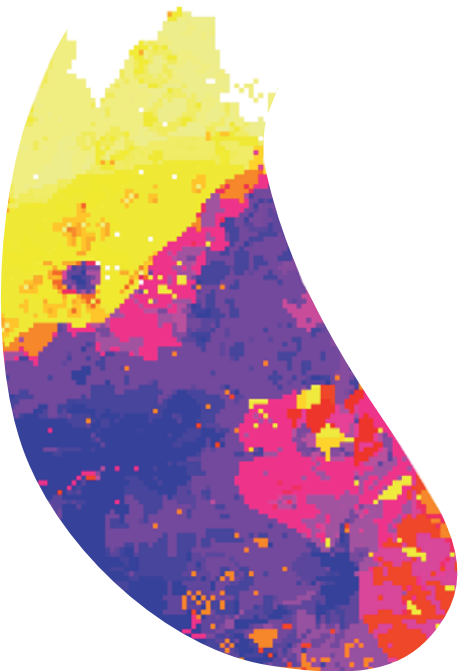
Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

- Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.
- Maximise the green network potential of the network of small burns, rail and road corridors.
- Ensuring high quality, management and maintenance of existing green space to meet Green Flag benchmark standards.
- Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.
- Undertake catchment sensitive farming, assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP.
- Identify low value farmland and potential for woodlands and biofuels,
- Embrace the IHN with regard to improving biodiversity on farmland.
- Identify existing poor quality industrial estates and business locations as well as vacant and derelict land in the vicinity of the towns and the M77 to create high quality environments with advanced greening and urban woodlands.
- Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens.
- Develop an urban forestry initiative focused on (a) planting of new trees in public grounds (i.e. local authority, NHS etc) and (b) planting new peri-urban woodlands around settlements in accordance with the FCS WIAT initiative.
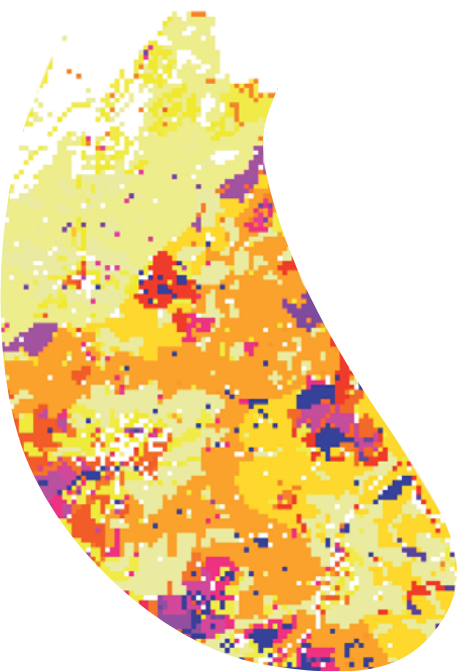
Area %	
29.4	Agricultural land
-	Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.07	Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
-	Coastal habitat
0.06	Derelict land
1.53	General amenity space
58.11	Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
0.46	Institutional grounds
0.01	Orchard
0.14	Outdoor sports facility
0.09	Park or public garden
1.53	Private domestic garden
0.15	Water body
0.41	Water course
0.29	Wetland
3.90	Woodland

Stewarton

Typology

Needs not fulfilled

Needs fulfilled

Location

Area %		
27.67	■	Agricultural land
-	■	Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.07	■	Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
-	■	Coastal habitat
0.03	■	Derelict land
1.30	■	General amenity space
52.23	■	Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
0.42	■	Institutional grounds
-	■	Orchard
0.50	■	Outdoor sports facility
0.07	■	Park or public garden
1.79	■	Private domestic garden
0.20	■	Water body
0.49	■	Water course
0.23	■	Wetland
11.82	■	Woodland

Typology

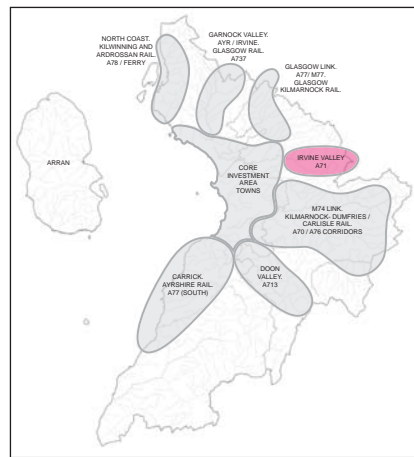Needs not fulfilled

Needs fulfilled

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
Irvine Valley Investment Corridor

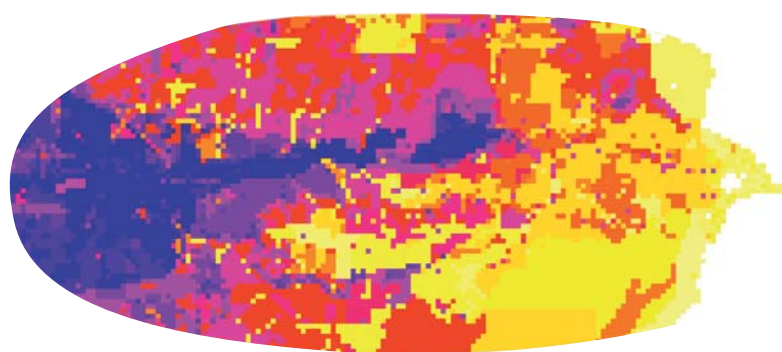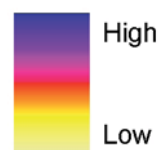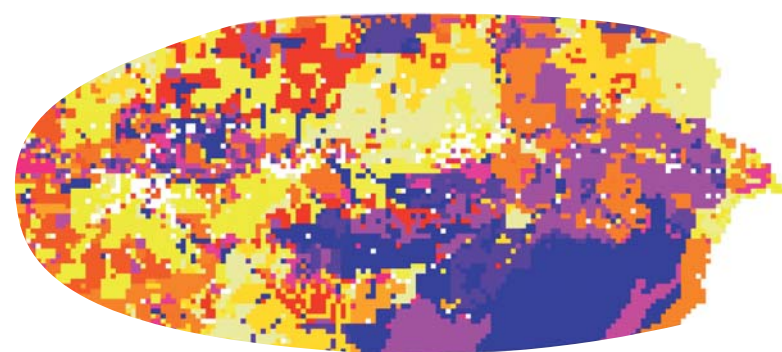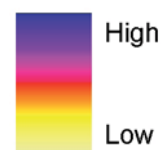The Irvine Valley Investment Corridor associates with valley of the River Irvine and the A71 road corridor which links the M74 and Lanarkshire to Kilmarnock and Ayrshire. The Investment Corridor contains the small linear towns of Darvel, Newmilns and Galston.

The character of the landscape changes from "Upper River Valleys" in the east to "Lowland River Valleys" in the west as it reaches Kilmarnock. The "Upland River Valleys" are of a pronounced V-shape with steeper valleys sides and a narrow floodplain. The valley slopes are generally pasture, bounded by tree lined hedgerows with woodland associated with designed landscapes such as Loudoun Castle and Lanfine House. The "Lowland River Valleys" are generally narrow and bounded by steep slopes. The valley slopes are well wooded and the rivers run in tight meanders. Field boundaries tend to be hedges.

Louden Hill is a distinct landmark at the eastern end of the valley and gateway feature to Ayrshire.
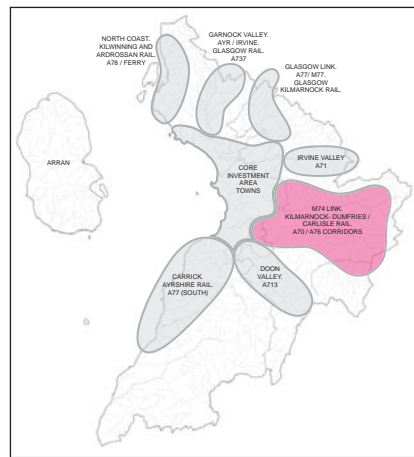
Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

- Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.
- Maximise the green network potential of the Rivers Irvine and road corridors.
- Ensuring high quality, management and maintenance of existing green space to meet Green Flag benchmark standards.
- Undertaking survey of existing stock of urban trees, creation of tree strategy to ensure renewal, reinvigoration, replacement and management.
- Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.
- Undertake catchment sensitive farming, assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP.
- Identify existing poor quality industrial estates and business locations as well as vacant and derelict land in the vicinity of the towns to create high quality environments with advanced greening and urban woodlands.
- Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens.
- Develop an urban forestry initiative focused on (a) planting of new trees in public grounds (i.e. local authority, NHS etc) and (b) planting new peri-urban woodlands around settlements in accordance with the FCS WIAT initiative.
- Create and promote an Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project.
- Create local active travel routes through a Green Commuting Project to provide green links for all within 2km of a railway or bus station. Explore potential of the disused railway between Kilmarnock and Strathaven.
- Recognise that the corridor is popular with visitors, improving lay-bys and stop offs including interpretation e.g. Lay-by and Heritage Links Projects.
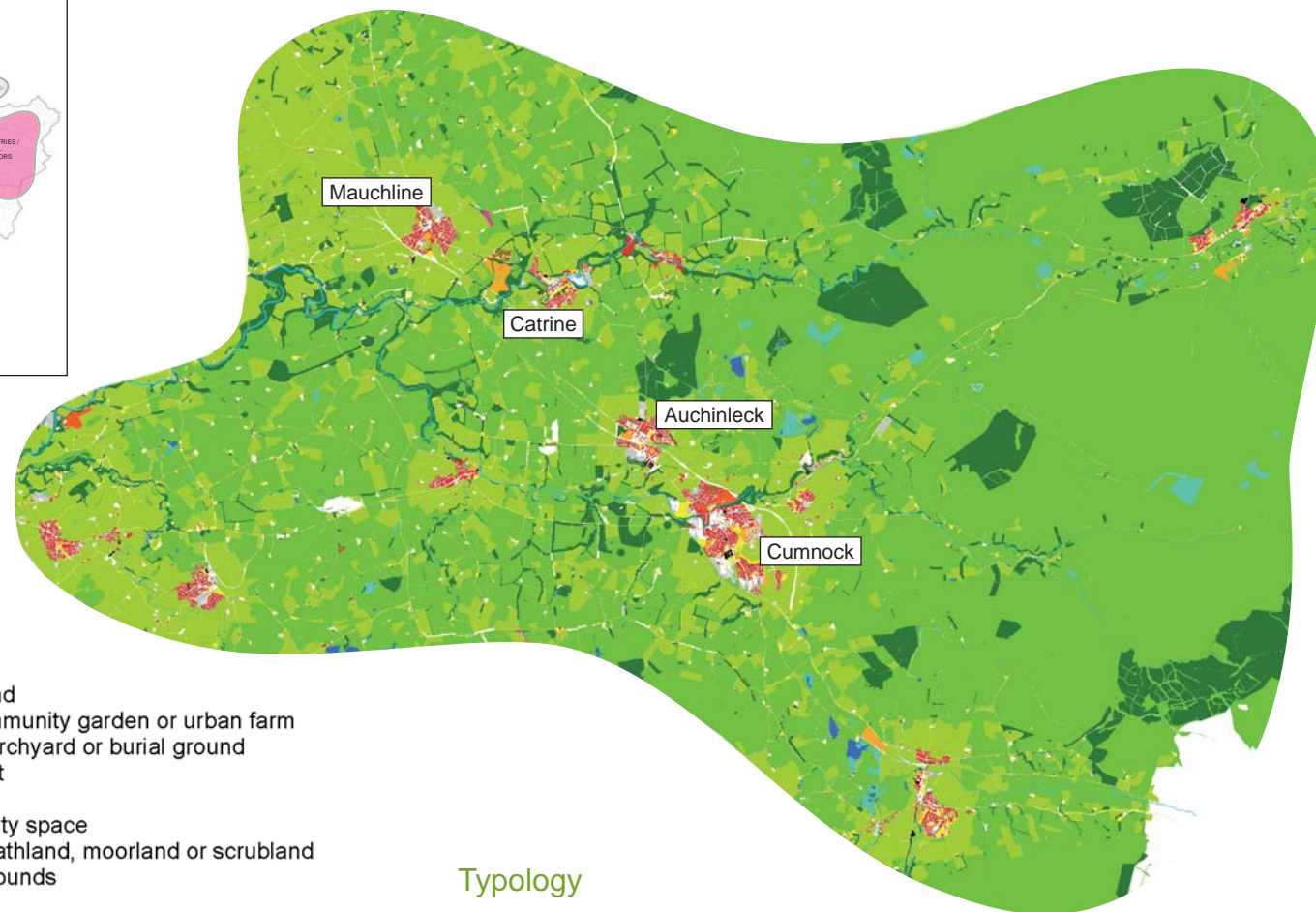- Develop and market Louden Hill as a visitor destination.

Location

Typology

Area %		
21.44		Agricultural land
-		Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.04		Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
-		Coastal habitat
0.04		Derelict land
1.07		General amenity space
63.30		Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
0.40		Institutional grounds
0.02		Orchard
0.19		Outdoor sports facility
0.09		Park or public garden
0.99		Private domestic garden
0.22		Water body
0.69		Water course
0.60		Wetland
8.28		Woodland

Needs not fulfilled

Needs fulfilled

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
A70 / A76 Investment Corridor
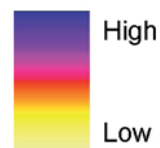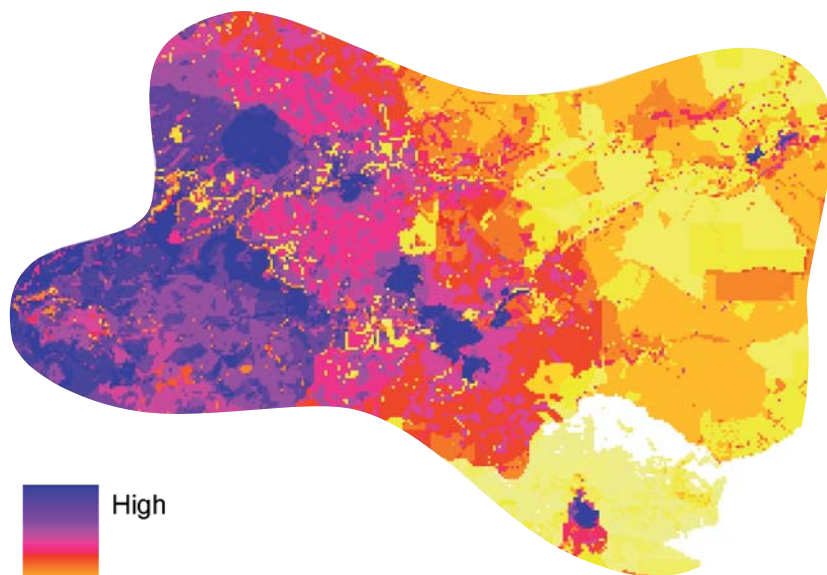
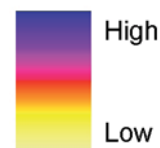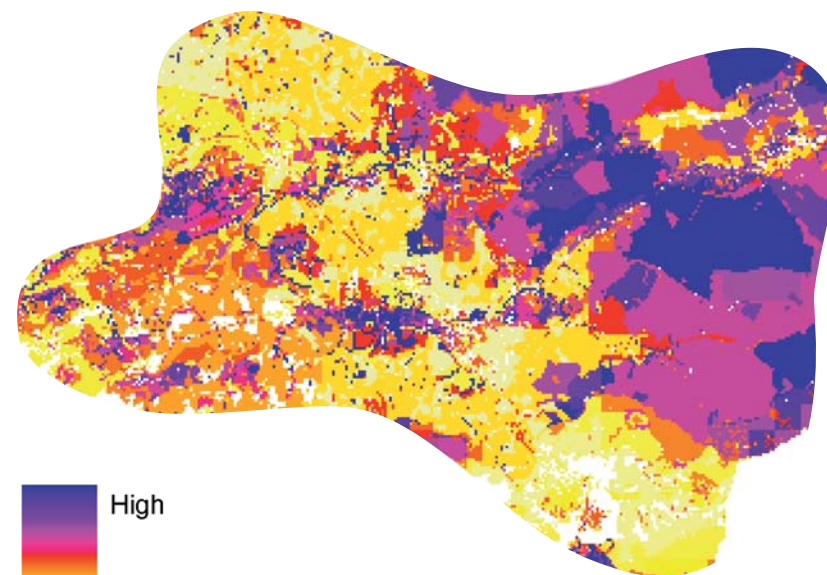The A70 / A76 Investment Corridor is a large area associated with the uplands to the east of the county and the river and road corridors of the A70/River Ayr and A76/River Nith (in part). Principal towns along the A70 include Muirkirk and along the A76, New Cumnock, Cumnock Auchinleck, Catrine (adjacent) and Mauchline. The investment corridor is a complex area of upland moorlands and incised river valleys becoming lowlands towards the west.
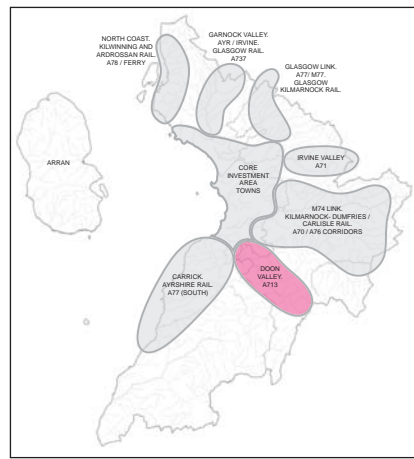
The "Plateau Moorlands" is an expansive landscape characterised by an extensive ridge dividing the Ayrshire Basin from the Clyde Basin, forming a transition between the foothills and the uplands to the south. The moorlands consist of blanket bogs, heather and grass moorland with comparatively level topography with extensive plateau basins rising to soft contoured ridges. The River Nith Valley has a distinctly U-shaped nature, rising to steeply sloped hills either side of the flat bottomed flood plain, while the Upper Ayr Valley is broader and open rising to moorland plateaus. The Cumnock Investment Corridor is also characterised by the scars of industry, namely bings, embankments and open cast coal mines

Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

- Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.
- Maximise the green network potential of the Rivers Ayr and Nith, rail and road corridors.
- Ensuring high quality, management and maintenance of existing green space to meet Green Flag benchmark standards.
- Undertaking survey of existing stock of urban trees, creation of tree strategy to ensure renewal, reinvigoration, replacement and management.
- Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.
- Undertake catchment sensitive farming, assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP.
- Identify existing poor quality industrial estates and business locations as well as vacant and derelict land in the vicinity of the towns and former heavy industrial sites to create high quality environments with advanced greening and urban woodlands.
- 'Call in' restoration plans for open-cast operations and work closely with operators to maximise potential to realise CSGN goals.
- Maximise potential for commercial forestry.
- Review upland management and restoration to maximise potential to meet climate change targets.
- Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens.
- Create and promote an Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project.
- Create local active travel routes through a Green Commuting Project to provide green links for all within 2km of a railway or bus station. Explore potential of the disused railway linking Cumnock to north east and south west. Build on cycling initiatives associated with wind energy sites.
- Recognise that the corridor is used by visitors, improving lay-bys and stop offs including interpretation e.g. Lay-by and Heritage Links Projects.
- Build on local initiatives including Dumfries House, RSPB Coalfields Environmental Initiatives and Muirkirk Walks.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
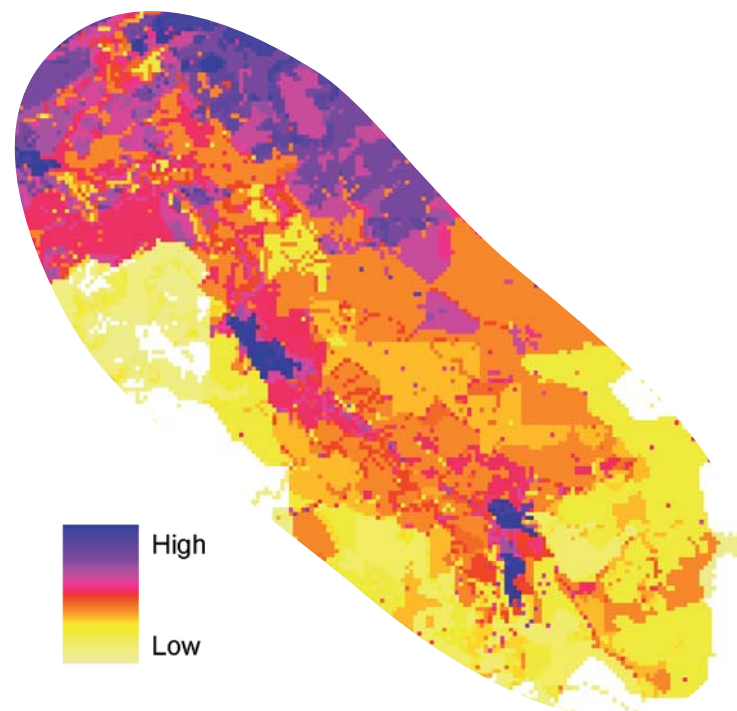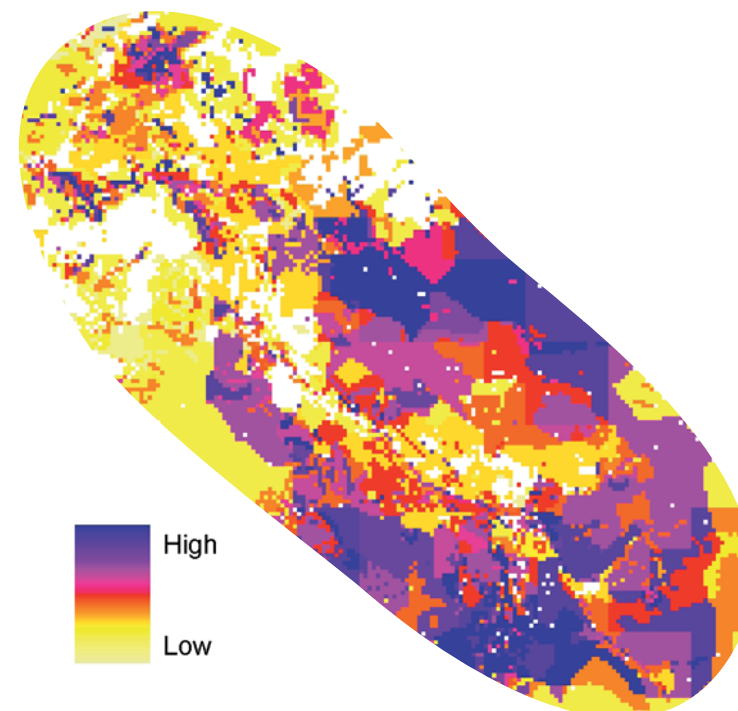## Doon Valley Investment Corridor

The Doon Valley Investment Corridor associates with the distinctive corridor of the River Doon and the A713 linking Ayr to Galloway. Principal towns include Dalmellington, Patna and Dalrymple. The southern part of the corridor is associated with former heavy industries and marked by derelict land, large areas of forestry and sheep farming.
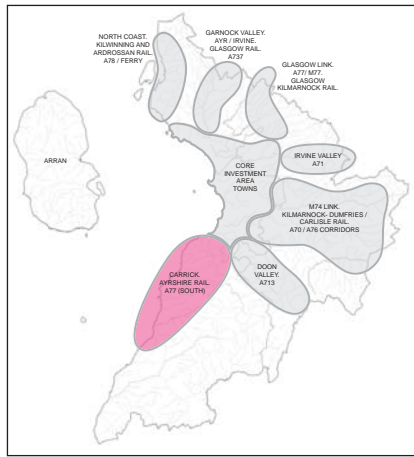
The uplands are characterised by distinctive glacial valleys with U-shaped cross sections, precipitous side slopes, hanging valleys, waterfalls, crags and scree. The land cover in this area is predominantly forestry extending over the summits or concentrated on the side slopes leaving the domed peaks exposed.

Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

- Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.
- Maximise the green network potential of the River Doon, rail and road corridor.
- Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.
- Undertake catchment sensitive farming, assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP.
- Identify existing poor quality industrial estates and business locations as well as vacant and derelict land in the vicinity of the towns to create high quality environments with advanced greening and urban woodlands.
- Explore potential of large areas of derelict/disused land for sustainable living.
- Maximise potential for commercial forestry.
- Review upland management and restoration to maximise potential to meet climate change targets.
- Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens.
- Develop an urban forestry initiative focused on (a) planting of new trees in public grounds (i.e. local authority, NHS etc) and (b) planting new peri-urban woodlands around settlements in accordance with the FCS WIAT initiative.
- Create and promote an Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project.
- Create local active travel routes through a Green Commuting Project to provide green links for all within 2km of a railway or bus station. Explore potential of the disused railway between Dalmellington and Patna and link to the Industrial Railway Centre.
- Promote use of the corridor by visitors, improve lay-bys and stop offs including interpretation e.g. Lay-by and Heritage Links Projects.
- Link to local initiatives e.g. Scottish Dark Sky Park Observatory.

Location

Area %		
21.55		Agricultural land
-		Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.01		Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
-		Coastal habitat
0.01		Derelict land
1.10		General amenity space
41.66		Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
0.37		Institutional grounds
-		Orchard
0.13		Outdoor sports facility
0.40		Park or public garden
0.58		Private domestic garden
0.51		Water body
0.68		Water course
0.37		Wetland
30.64		Woodland

Typology

Needs not fulfilled

Needs fulfilled

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
Carrick Investment Corridor

Location

The Carrick Investment Corridor is located on the coast to the south of Ayr. The area includes Maybole, the coastal town of Girvan and the historic landscape of Culzean Castle. The A719 generally follows the coast while the corridor includes the Carrick Hills National Cycle Network route 7 and the Rabbie Burns Birthplace Museum at Brig o' Doon.

The landscape is characterised by a raised beach landscape punctuated by a series of coastal headlands, small coastal valleys and foothills. The lower slopes of the hills are pasture giving way to rough grazing on higher slopes. There is some semi natural woodland on the more sheltered slopes. The landscape is dominated by Culzean Castle and its associated policies woodland and farmland. There are some broadleaved and coniferous shelter belts and woodland in the mid and upper valleys. The field boundaries are dominated by hedges and shelterbelts.

Green Network Potential to Satisfy CSGN Goals:

- Better use of existing green space – for the community, improving biodiversity, making existing green space 'work harder'.
- Maximise the green network potential of the coast, Rivers Doon and road corridors.
- Ensuring high quality, management and maintenance of existing green space to meet Green Flag benchmark standards.
- Ensure planning system embraces and enforces the creation of green networks.
- Undertake catchment sensitive farming, assist the farming community to maximise the grant potential via SRDP.
- Embrace urban forestry principles and encourage community and volunteer engagement through allotments, orchard and gardens.
- Develop an urban forestry initiative focused on (a) planting of new trees in public grounds (i.e. local authority, NHS etc) and (b) planting new peri-urban woodlands around settlements in accordance with the FCS WIAT initiative.
- Create and promote an Ayrshire Schools Green Initiative Project.
- Create local active travel routes linking with NCN 7, and the Ayrshire Pilgrims Way and Carrick Way initiatives.
- Recognise that the corridor is popular with visitors, improving lay-bys and stop offs including interpretation e.g. Lay-by and Heritage Links Projects.
- Review potential links to the Biosphere Project to the south east.
- Coastal environment high priority linking to Clyde Area Advisory Group, River Basin Management Initiative etc.
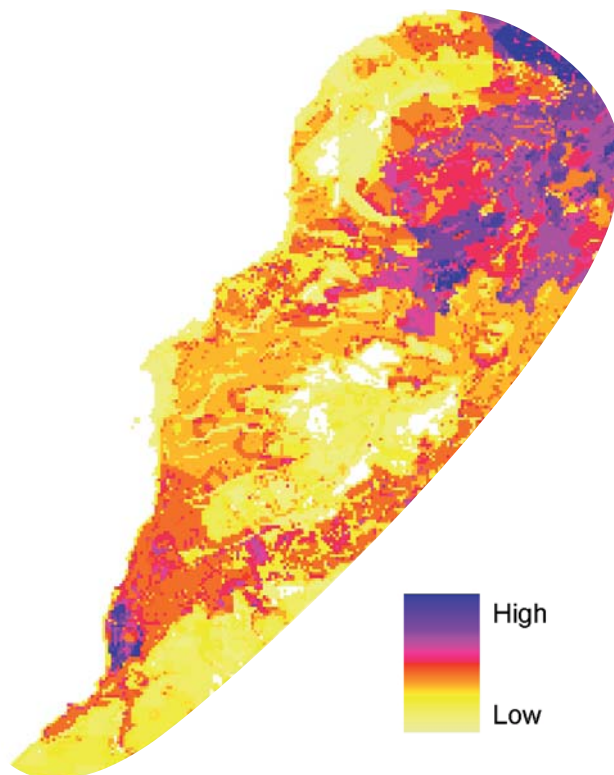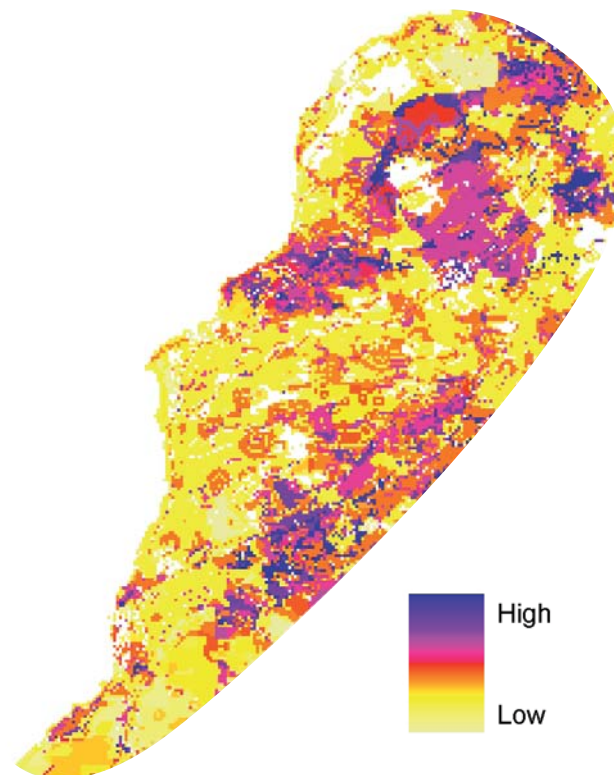
Area %	
58.63	Agricultural land
-	Allotment, community garden or urban farm
0.06	Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground
1.77	Coastal habitat
0.03	Derelict land
1.46	General amenity space
19.56	Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland
0.45	Institutional grounds
-	Orchard
0.80	Outdoor sports facility
0.69	Park or public garden
0.94	Private domestic garden
0.23	Water body
0.50	Water course
0.17	Wetland
11.49	Woodland

Typology

Needs not fulfilled

Needs fulfilled

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK

7.0 Recommendations

This study is very much a first step towards a Strategy to establish Green Networks in Ayrshire based on the vision and objectives of the Central Scotland Green Network. The Vision is far sighted and is a designated National Development under the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework. The CSGN is intended to make a significant contribution to Scotland's sustainable economic development. CSGN Vision for Central Scotland is:

'By 2050, Central Scotland has been transformed into a place where the environment adds value to the economy and where people's lives are enriched by its quality'.

With its low population and wonderful natural environment Ayrshire provides an exciting opportunity to improve, establish, look after and strengthen a green network contributing to the 3 District's economic sustainability, well-being of its community and meeting national objectives.

This study has largely been based on analysis of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data for Ayrshire which demonstrates that already most of Ayrshire is covered by at least two functions that contribute to a Green Network. The challenge in the current economic climate is to ensure that the Ayrshire green network is seen as a long term national framework to improve those functions and to make existing green networks 'work harder'.

7.1   Partnership and Staffing Structure

Planning and delivery of the Ayrshire Green Network requires a facilitating and enabling structure. The core elements of this are (a) a staff presence (b) a partnership of bodies working to a common set of objectives or plan.

Ayrshire Green Network Plan

An Ayrshire Green Network Plan would turn the Ayrshire Green Network into a set of policies and proposals and then be the basis for an Action Plan. The Ayrshire Green Network Plan could contain the following chapters.

1. An introduction
2. Context of Ayrshire Green Network within the CSGN.
3. Vision and Objectives for the Ayrshire Green Network.
4. Thematic sections on aspects of the Network e.g. Agri-environment, Integrated Habitat Network, Trees and Woodland, Coast etc.
5. A review of the locally relevant plans and policies.
6. A strategy for action detailing:
   a. Policies
   b. Proposals for action
   c. Governance structure
   d. Staffing
   e. Monitoring and evaluation
   f. Timescale
7. Conclusion
8. Appendices

This study can be the basis of the Ayrshire Green Network Plan.

The Ayrshire Green Network Plan could be produced as a quality published document and made available on an Ayrshire Green Network website. Although non-statutory it is recommended that a Plan is consulted upon as if it were. The Plan would also be referred to in local authority statutory plans hence giving its proposals, authority through the planning system.

Action Plan

The Action Plan would turn the Ayrshire Green Network plan into a series of deliverable actions. This is required to ensure that the Plan is divided into achievable and manageable components, most of which will be cost and time limited projects. The Action Plan is also the basis for monitoring and evaluation and also a valuable tool is ongoing publicity. Most action plans are in table format and identify:

- A project or on-going initiative.
- How that project or ongoing initiative relates to the Plan (in this case the Ayrshire Green Network Plan).
- Cost estimates.
- Timescale.
- Milestones which are especially important in long term projects.
- How the project will be managed and by whom (which partners, staff, consultants, contractors),
- Source of funds and whether these are: in place/pending/to be sourced/future activity.

Action Plans for programmes such as a Green Network normally have one year in detail and two or more further years in outline.

Partnership Structure

In support of the Ayrshire Green Network a partnership structure is required for the following purposes:

- Ensures that the Ayrshire Green Network is accountable.
- Draw in the collective and cumulative efforts of public, private and voluntary sector actors.
- Ensure that any staff employed in support of the Ayrshire Green Network have clear lines of communications.
- Helps to avoid parochialism.
- Ensure 'ownership' of the Ayrshire Green Network.

It is recommended that the Partnership structure operates at two levels:

Partnership management level: representatives of senior management from key stakeholders form a partnership 'board'.

This need not necessarily be an incorporated 'body' and can be constituted by a non-binding memorandum of agreement.

It would provide the governing forum for the Ayrshire Green Network.

It is optional whether this would include senior local Politicians as well as Officers; examples of both types can be found working successfully elsewhere.

Consideration should be given to having an independent chair perhaps drawn from the Voluntary Sector (such as a respected Chief Officer for a voluntary sector body) or Private Sector (such as a senior manager from a local business).

Key senior representatives would be required from the local authorities, FCS, SNH, SEPA plus others through invitation.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK

7.0 Recommendations

The partnership board would approve key documents such as the Ayrshire Green Network Plan and Action Plans, would resolve questions and issues in dispute, offer strategic level guidance and agree to be Ayrshire Green Network advocates back in their own organisations.

Partnership Delivery level: representatives from organisations with a key role in delivery would meet to plan the Action Plan and individual projects.

This level would have a key role in realising the Ayrshire Green Network on the ground.

Representatives of the main organisations in the area would be invited to participate.

The participants would cut across the public, private and voluntary sectors. The more important individual contributors are those who can make a difference on the ground. These are often budget holders in local government, project managers/officers, countryside managers, wardens, rights of way officers and other professionals.

Mechanism for delivery

The prime mechanism for delivery of the Ayrshire Green Network is through the partners. There are powerful reasons for this approach:

- It makes use of existing resources hence avoiding high start-up costs (such as staff recruitment, training, knowledge acquiring),
- It is more-likely to avoid duplication which might not otherwise be the case,
- Voluntary/NGO partners are in a strong position to draw in funding from programmes such as the National Lottery, who will generally accept volunteer time as matched funding,
- It allows development resources to be focused on the needs of existing groups as well as identifying gaps and filling these (for example the lack of capacity in Ayrshire in promoting Agri-environment schemes),
- It is close to the 'community'.

With the cross cutting nature of the Ayrshire Green Network it could be advantageous for the Ayrshire Partnership delivery Group to become the sole meeting point for a range of initiatives that are contributing to the Ayrshire Green Network; including the Ayrshire Biodiversity Action Plan the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Partnership, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

Staff Structure

A staff presence for the Ayrshire Green Network would soon become the engine room for the initiative. There is a compelling rationale to have a staff presence not least because of the success of staff in similar situations elsewhere. The key role(s) would be described as **'enabling and facilitation'** of the Partnership and would include:

1. Being the Focal Point
2. Secretariat for the Ayrshire Green Network Partnership Board and the Ayrshire Green Network Delivery Partnership Group,
3. Marketing and communications,
4. Liaison with key sectors notably
5. Voluntary sector
6. Private sector
7. Communities
8. Farmers and landowners
9. Preparing and 'owning' the Ayrshire Green Network Plan,
10. Acting as coordinator and principal author for the Action Plan and an Annual Report,
11. Raising third party funds,
12. Putting together projects and partnerships to deliver through the partnerships.

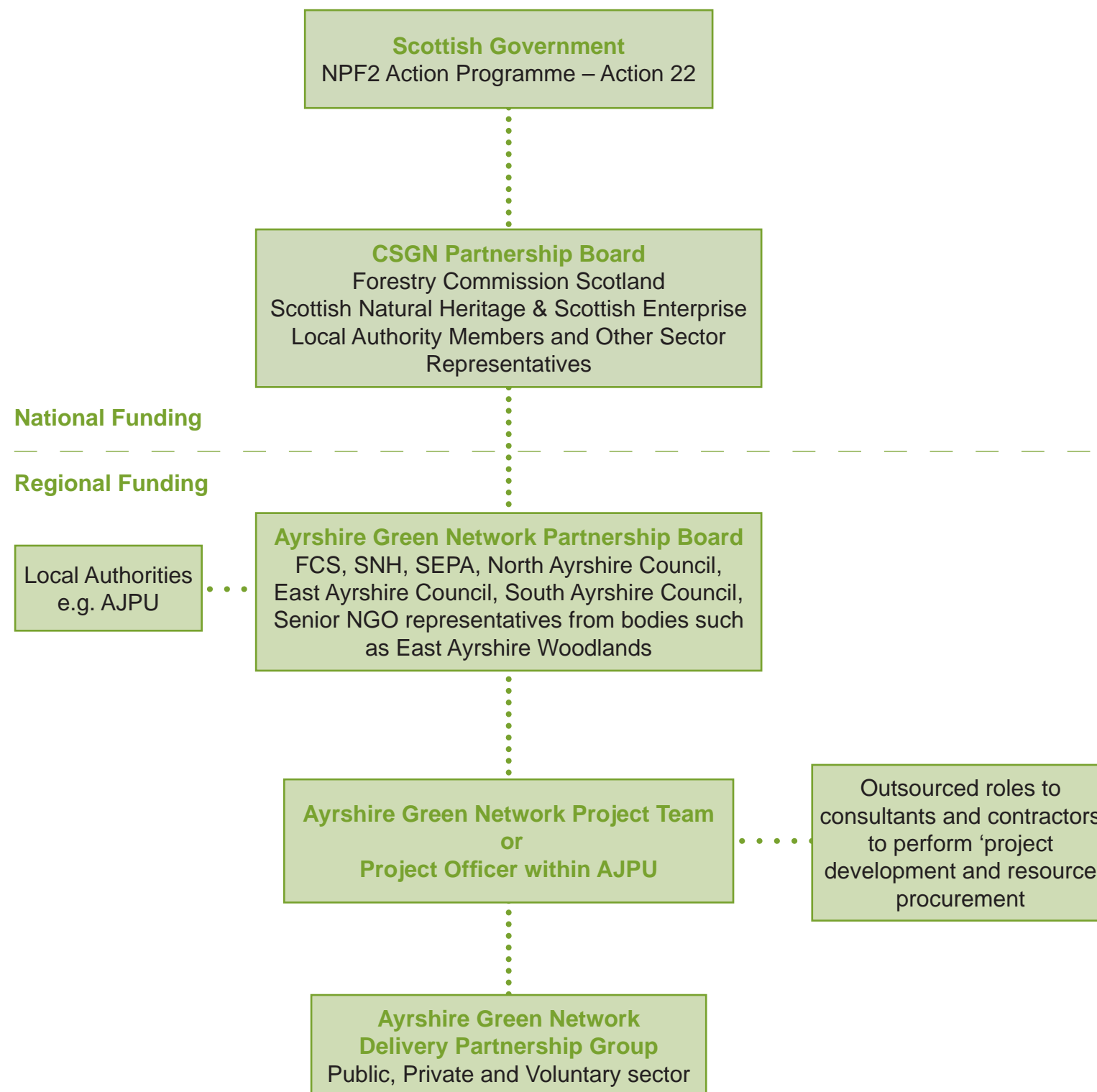| Option 1	Option 2
A single full-time Ayrshire Green Network Project Officer appointed to the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit	An Ayrshire Green Network Project Team of circa 3 - 5 people
Advantages	**Advantages**
• Low cost of a single post, • Can be highly focused if properly managed by the Partnership (i.e. less chance of mission drift), • Fits well with existing structures, • Realistic in a resource limited environment, • Clearly states the vital role of partners i.e. the staff cannot do it themselves.	• An ability to employ specialists, notably in communications, • Reflects well on the significance of the Ayrshire Green Network as an initiative, • Likely to have a much greater impact and success with both funders and decision makers, • Quicker response times due to greater human resources, • Commensurate with the scale of the delivery task • Less use of consultants and contractors to delivery key developmental roles
Disadvantages	**Disadvantages**
• Insufficient resource to achieve all possible roles to a high standard, • Lack of ability to specialise, • Undervalues the importance of the Ayrshire Green Network, • Seen as 'just another' project officer and unlikely to influence senior decision makers, • Unrealistic to expect an individual to attract major new resources, • Greater use of consultants and contractors to deliver key developmental roles	• Cost is difficult to sustain in the longer term • Up skilling and induction of a new team will take longer than a single post holder • Looks very like the Joint Planning Unit raising the question of whether this is actually one-role • Accommodation requirements

Two options are proposed for consideration:
In both options it is assumed that a local authority would act as employing agency and provide a budget management service.

7.0 Recommendations

Ayrshire Green Network – Proposed Partnership Structure

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Scottish Government           │
│  NPF2 Action Programme – Action 22   │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ┆
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│        CSGN Partnership Board        │
│      Forestry Commission Scotland    │
│ Scottish Natural Heritage & Scottish │
│              Enterprise              │
│  Local Authority Members and Other   │
│       Sector Representatives         │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
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National Funding

Regional Funding

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┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
│    Local     │   │ Ayrshire Green Network Partnership   │
│ Authorities  │┄┄│              Board                   │
│  e.g. AJPU   │   │   FCS, SNH, SEPA, North Ayrshire     │
└──────────────┘   │ Council, East Ayrshire Council,      │
                   │ South Ayrshire Council, Senior NGO   │
                   │ representatives from bodies such as  │
                   │        East Ayrshire Woodlands       │
                   └──────────────────────────────────────┘
                                    ┆
┌──────────────────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────┐
│  Ayrshire Green Network Project Team  │   │  Outsourced roles to     │
│                 or                    │┄┄│ consultants and          │
│   Project Officer within AJPU         │   │ contractors to perform   │
└──────────────────────────────────────┘   │ 'project development and │
                                            │ resource procurement'    │
                                            └──────────────────────────┘
                  ┆
┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
│       Ayrshire Green Network          │
│     Delivery Partnership Group        │
│ Public, Private and Voluntary sector  │
└──────────────────────────────────────┘
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7.2   Delivery and Timescale

A number of steps are required to apply the Vision of the CSGN to Ayrshire:

- Development of a Green Network Strategy for Ayrshire.
- Development of a realistic and achievable delivery timetable for both the strategy and implementation, not forgetting the long term nature of the CSGN Vision.
- Establishment of an Ayrshire Green Network Delivery Partnership as outlined above.
- Establishment of an Ayrshire Green Environmental 'Network', drawing together all the organisations with an interest in the environment.
- Immediate discussions with the Forestry Commission and Scottish Natural Heritage regarding funding and establishment of an Ayrshire Green Network Partnership.
- Review of CSGN development funding to establish the parameters for further strategic reviews and project development.
- Detailed stakeholder and community consultation as part of the development of the Strategy for a Green Network for Ayrshire.
- Liaison with and learning from established CSGN organisations – Glasgow and Clyde Valley GNP and Lothians and Fife Green Network.
- Establishment of a strategic vision for a Green Network but building on existing initiatives e.g. East Ayrshire Woodlands, Ayrshire Pilgrims' Trail, Irvine Development Company's Green Network and SEPA initiatives to maximise green network potential and enable delivery of demonstration projects.
- Recognition of the importance of targeted funding and projects to meet specific aims e.g. SRDP funding to improve the Green Network potential of the Ayrshire lowland farming arc.
- Work closely with the SRDP to maximise available grants and unlock the seeming complexity of the application process.
- Detailed examination of the new fast track SRDP grant opportunities.
- Detailed analysis of the GIS data for the Core Area and Investment Corridors but also recognition of the contribution of the whole of Ayrshire to the Green Network.
- Recognition of the importance of Green Network Champions in Ayrshire in both Private and Public sectors including the landowning and farming community.
- Detailed workshops with the District Councils to engage Members and Officers in the establishment of the Green Network and development of targeted projects..
- Recognition of the contribution and potential of Ayrshire's coast linking to Green and Blue Network objectives and with wider SEPA objectives.
- Ensuring that the Green Network Strategy for Ayrshire extends beyond the County boundaries and links with other networks and green initiatives e.g. Clyde and Avon Landscape Partnership, South Lanarkshire Mining Initiatives, Wind Farm Development etc.
- Learning from European wide exemplar projects, networking and best practice e.g. Milton Keynes financing and management of maintenance, Land Restoration Trust, Emsher Park and Freiberg in Germany and Malmö Sweden.

AYRSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
Document Information and Control Sheet

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Document Status and Approval Schedule

Issue	Status	Description	Prepared by Signed/Dated	Reviewed by Signed/Dated
V1	Final Draft	Ayrshire Green Network Consultancy Study	C. Davis 08.04.11	A. Gardner 08.04.11

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