



JUNE 2020

# **SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AGREEMENT**

## THE LEVEN PROGRAMME PARTNERSHIP

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### Between:

#### **Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)**

Corporate Office  
Strathallan House  
Castle Business Park  
Stirling  
FK9 4TZ

### And

#### **The Leven**

Strathearn House  
Broxden Business Park  
Lamberkine Drive  
Perth  
PH1 1RX

(each a "Party" and together the "Parties")

22 June 2020

## OUR PARTNERSHIP VISION

Our vision for the River Leven catchment is to help the region prosper within the limits of our one planet. Our vision is that by 2030, the Leven catchment will be a living, breathing example of inclusive growth, achieving environmental excellence whilst maximising social and economic opportunities.

Our vision aims to lead to the following outcomes by 2030:

- The area will have a natural environment that will support a diverse ecology and celebrate its social history.
- The area will support a network of paths and sustainable travel routes that will connect people, communities and business to each other and the environment.
- The area will become a 'go to' destination and sustainable tourism will become one of the area's key economic attractions, whilst not increasing carbon emissions or negatively impacting on biodiversity of the area.
- The area will be a dynamic hub for social enterprise, youth and education.
- The area will be able to attract and support business and industry and become a hub between the cities of Dundee and Edinburgh.
- Registered vacant and derelict land will be made productive for the benefit of communities in the region and in support of inclusive economic regeneration.



Figure 1: The River Leven catchment from Loch Leven to Levenmouth

### What are Sustainable Growth Agreements?

Sustainable Growth Agreements are voluntary, non-legally binding, formal agreements through which an organisation (or organisations) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) can explore new and innovative ways to improve environmental performance and focus on practical actions that deliver environmental, social and economic success.

### Why are we building our partnership through this Sustainable Growth Agreement?

This Sustainable Growth Agreement is the first in Scotland, involving multiple organisations working in partnership to achieve shared

outcomes across a river catchment. The partnership will use this agreement to help focus on the delivery of the ambitious vision for inclusive growth across the River Leven catchment area. Taking an innovative partnership approach is the most productive and efficient way for all partner organisations to achieve their objectives, whilst also building a strong ambitious platform to seek out and realise opportunities that go beyond their individual scope. The agreement creates a safe space for collaboration, identifying opportunities within the catchment for stakeholders to go beyond regulatory compliance and their individual remits to develop new and innovative ways of working, while delivering One Planet Prosperity.





Figure 2: River Leven at former creosote works site at Methil Brae

### What is One Planet Prosperity?

SEPA has chosen the phrase 'One Planet Prosperity' to reflect the challenge all nations, cities, businesses and communities face of reducing the over-use of the planet's natural resources. The challenges of the 21st century mean that an Environmental Protection Agency must also increasingly help its society to tackle diffuse sources of pollution, over-use of natural resources and major environmental challenges such as climate change. According to the ecological footprint measure, if everyone in the world were to live like the average Scottish citizen, we would need approximately three planet Earths to provide all their resources and absorb all of their waste. We only have one planet, and most nations around the world face the same dilemma of significantly over-using our one planet's capacity to support human activity.

### Why the River Leven catchment?

The River Leven catchment runs largely through the Mid-Fife area. The main stem of the river originates from tributaries around Loch Leven (with Loch Leven itself being situated in the Perth and Kinross Council area) and flows to the Firth of Forth through several towns and communities. Historically the catchment sustained several hundred mills and factories and was home to a proud population of miners and workers in manufacturing industries; it was the engine of Mid-Fife, towns and communities grew around and along it.

There are serious challenges in the catchment with multiple pressures and environmental impacts. SEPA has a responsibility to tackle and improve or remove these pressures, which include barriers to fish migration, water quality

issues and physical modifications to the rivers. The area has pockets of severe deprivation and much of it is economically stagnant. With a population often disconnected from the natural environment there are serious problems associated with poor health and well-being. The river has become a barrier between communities and disconnects people and towns from each other.

Working in partnership, we intend to achieve environmental improvements whilst maximising social and economic opportunities. This Sustainable Growth Agreement solidifies and formalises our strong partnership approach to the area's issues and has been identified as the most productive and efficient way for all organisations to achieve their objectives. This SGA is recognition on the part of partner organisations that we can achieve more and better outcomes working together in a spirit of co-operation.

The importance of reconnecting people and place will feature as a core characteristic of the project, developing a wide range of linkages between the catchment communities, the loch, the river and the coast.

## Delivering through projects

To deliver better inclusive growth outcomes, a series of projects will be undertaken to deliver this vision for the area. The first such project, the 'Connectivity Project', will focus on a 5km stretch towards the mouth of the river at Levenmouth. Levenmouth is one of the most deprived areas in Mid-Fife, with the community disconnected not just from the environment, but also from good public transport infrastructure and adequate economic opportunities. The connectivity project will deliver environmental improvements, develop a series of paths to connect the isolated communities to and along the river and unlock opportunities on the significant tracts of vacant and derelict land which within the catchment. It is hoped that by working with the community to capitalise on these opportunities, the area will be opened to new economic and health/well-being opportunities. Other projects will be identified over time and resources secured to work towards the programme vision to make the Leven catchment a living, breathing example of inclusive growth, achieving environmental excellence whilst maximising social and economic opportunities.

## WHO ARE THE PARTNERS AND WHAT ARE THEIR OBJECTIVES IN THE CATCHMENT?

### SEPA

Everyday SEPA works to protect and enhance Scotland's environment, helping communities and businesses thrive within the resources of our planet.

The River Leven catchment has multiple environmental pressures. SEPA is responsible for leading on tackling these pressures and aims to work in partnership with others to drive change at a scale which is appropriate to meet the fundamental challenges humanity faces in the 21st century.

### Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Enterprise is Scotland's national economic development agency. We're committed to growing the Scottish economy for the benefit of all, helping create more quality jobs and a brighter future for every region.

### Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Natural Heritage promotes, cares for and improves Scotland's natural heritage. We are committed to helping create a greener, healthier and more prosperous country for Scotland's people by ensuring that:

- more people across Scotland are enjoying and benefiting from nature;
- the health and resilience of Scotland's nature is improved;
- there is more investment in Scotland's natural capital.



## Fife Council

Fife Council is the local authority for the Fife area of Scotland. The 'Plan for Fife' (the Local Outcome Improvement Plan) has four main priorities of: Opportunities for all; Thriving places; Inclusive growth and Jobs and Community-led services, and is supported by the organisations in the Fife Partnership<sup>1</sup>. The Levenmouth Community Plan reflects the four priorities set out in Plan for Fife.

We have four key priorities for the Levenmouth and wider Mid-Fife area, including the River Leven catchment, which are:

- area investment and regeneration;
- health, well-being and environment;
- access to employment, education and training;
- environmental improvement, low carbon and renewable energy.

## Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle. We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. With support from Transport Scotland, we are working in partnership to create new, ambitious routes which reconnect the Levenmouth communities. We want to make it easier for the people of Levenmouth to walk, cycle and wheel and create inviting places for people to work, rest and play.

## Scottish Water

At Scottish Water we are always working to ensure we are providing effective and sustainable collection and treatment of waste water and help protect Scotland's water environment. We work with partners, regulators and customers to manage our assets and prioritise and deliver improvements, where these are identified, for the communities we serve.

## Fife College

Fife College offers inspirational learning experiences from essential skills to degree programmes. The college provides a dynamic, relevant portfolio of courses that encourages collaboration with local communities. In this project we plan to provide wide ranging expertise including design skills, video production, computer modelling and simulation, and many more. We will involve diverse student groups, benefiting from their expertise and enthusiasm to produce maximum community engagement and student real world experience.

## Forth Rivers Trust

The Forth Rivers Trust works in collaboration with others to conserve, maintain and improve the quality of river environments bringing benefits to both people and wildlife. It will:

- engage with others making connections which supports the physical improvement and awareness of the freshwater environment;
- provide an impartial ecosystem science based approach to river catchment management;
- gather, maintain and communicate relevant information, providing advice, and guidance on relevant ecological and conservation matters;
- provide training and learning programmes;
- deliver scientifically robust, deliverable and sustainable solutions.

## Central Scotland Green Network Trust (CSGNT)

CSGNT was created to help realise the vision for the Central Scotland Green Network. Our mission is to drive forward the delivery of the CSGN by being collaborative, inclusive and innovative; working with partners, stakeholders and communities. Our priorities are the remediation of vacant and derelict land, greening of active travel routes and delivering environmental improvements in areas of disadvantage. The Leven Programme contributes to all three of these, and is a flagship for the CSGN.

<sup>1</sup> [www.fifedirect.org.uk/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=committee.detail&servid=854A4CCF-CE24-3C49-325752C9298CE280](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=committee.detail&servid=854A4CCF-CE24-3C49-325752C9298CE280)

## Historic Environment Scotland

Historic Environment Scotland is the lead public body established to care for and promote Scotland's historic environment.

We lead on Scotland's first historic environment strategy 'Our Place in Time', which sets out how our historic environment will be managed, with a focus on how it is cared for, valued and enhanced, both now and for future generations.

We see the historic environment as everything that has been created by people over time: the tangible and the intangible. It can be a place, an object or an idea. The historic environment shapes our identity. It tells us about the past, the present – and even points the way to the future.

At Historic Environment Scotland, we want the historic environment to make a real difference to people's lives. A difference to our health, to our economy, to our culture and to our environment. We want heritage to involve everyone so that we all benefit and this is detailed in our corporate plan 'Heritage for All', which is our long term vision for the work and focus of the organisation.

## Zero Waste Scotland

Zero Waste Scotland exists to lead Scotland to use products and resources responsibly, focusing on where we can have the greatest impact on climate change.

Using evidence and insight, our goal is to inform policy, and motivate individuals and businesses to embrace the environmental, economic, and social benefits of a circular economy. We are a not-for-profit environmental organisation, funded by the Scottish Government and European Regional Development Fund.

## Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

The Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (FCCT) is the leading environmental conservation and countryside access charity in Fife. Working closely with Fife Council, FCCT manage, maintain, and enhance multiple sites and routes across the Kingdom including the Lomond Hills Regional Park, The Fife Pilgrim Way, and the Fife Coastal Path.

We work with communities to bring the benefits of time spent outdoors to all. We believe that

understanding leads to appreciation which in turn leads to care. We work to educate and encourage all in the ongoing care for Fife's extraordinary coast and countryside.

## The Coal Authority

The Coal Authority has been working to make a better future for people and the environment in mining areas for over 25 years. Our mine water treatment schemes protect and enhance the natural environment, treating 122 billion litres of water every year, preventing 4,500 tonnes of iron solids entering Britain's watercourses.

We recognise our mining heritage and that the past can help us shape the future, our schemes provide amenity and promote biodiversity, and our mission is to help the UK reach carbon net zero by 2050 by unlocking the potential of mine water heating networks.

Our passionate, knowledgeable teams work closely with partners, stakeholders and the public on a diverse range of vital programmes, always ensuring our thinking and decision-making is shaped by the needs of the communities we serve.



## Diageo

Diageo is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands, including Johnnie Walker, Smirnoff, Gordons, Tanqueray, Captain Morgan, Baileys and Guinness. Scotland is at the heart of Diageo's business with heritage dating back to 1627 and the Haig whisky dynasty. Producing around 50 million cases annually and exporting to 180 countries around the world, Diageo is Scotland's leading distiller, manufacturing exporter and Scotch whisky tourism operator. We employ around 3,000 people at 50 sites in communities across Scotland, including distilleries in some of the country's most remote rural areas.

## Keep Scotland Beautiful

Keep Scotland Beautiful is one of Scotland's leading environmental charities and provider of environmental, place making and behavioural change services. We campaign, act and educate on a range of local, national and global issues and our projects, programmes and activities help local communities to achieve better outcomes for our country. We have a trusted, credible, non-political and non-partisan reputation that assists partners to achieve their environmental, social and cultural ambitions.

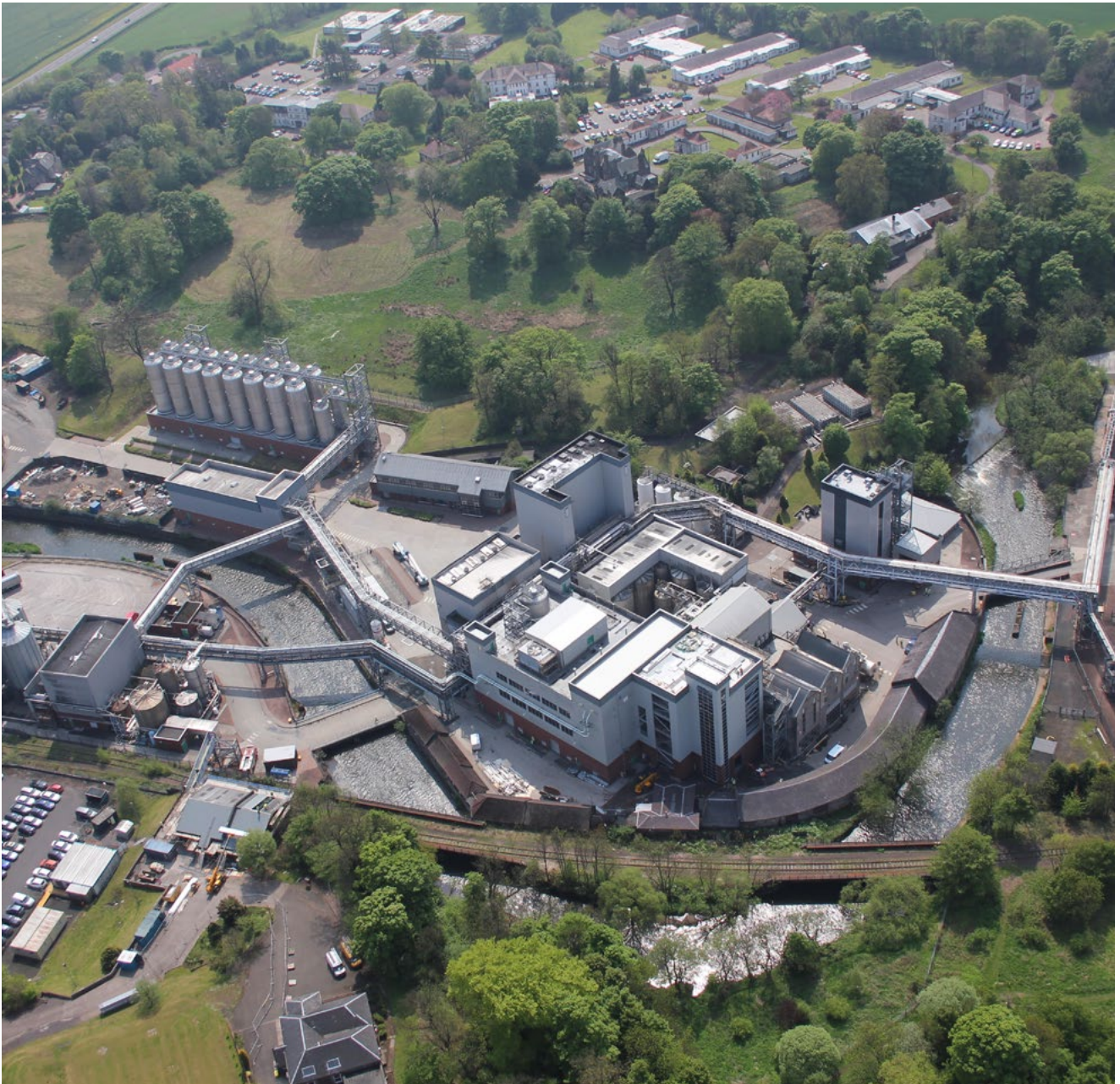


Figure 3: Diageo Cameronbridge distillery in Windygates, Leven



## WHAT WILL WE DELIVER IN THE FIRST THREE YEARS?



### CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

Inclusive growth project focused on the final 5km of the River Leven. This flagship project will deliver environmental river improvements, develop a series of paths to connect the isolated communities to and along the river and unlock opportunities on the vacant and derelict land. Feasibility, scoping and community engagement will all take place in 2019. This will be the partnership's priority deliverable over the next three years.



### ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY

Bring at least two vacant and derelict land sites within the catchment into productive use by 2022.



### LOW CARBON INNOVATION

Work with partners to realise low carbon innovation opportunities across the River Leven catchment area, and to integrate low carbon opportunities across all projects within The Leven Programme.



### THE LEVEN PROGRAMME VISION

Develop the vision, narrative and brand of the programme and partnership from July 2019 to help attract inward investment to the potential projects that will deliver the programme's vision. This will be developed utilising skills within the partnership and local communities (including local businesses) where appropriate.



### WATER INNOVATION

Consider surface water management and innovative ways to manage water across the catchment.



### PUBLICITY

Launch a strong communications campaign in 2019 to raise the profile of The Leven Programme, encouraging inward investment to the area and the communities the River Leven serves.



### PARTNERSHIP MODEL

Develop a Memorandum of Understanding by July 2019 which will clearly identify roles and responsibilities within the partnership and delivery programme. Explore with partners how a multi-organisation partnership model like this could be applied in other catchments/regions across Scotland where multiple benefits can be achieved for the environment, communities and the Scottish economy.



### SUB-REGIONAL MASTERPLAN

Develop a sub-regional masterplan which can deliver a cohesive planning regime with all partners to deliver green infrastructure improvements.



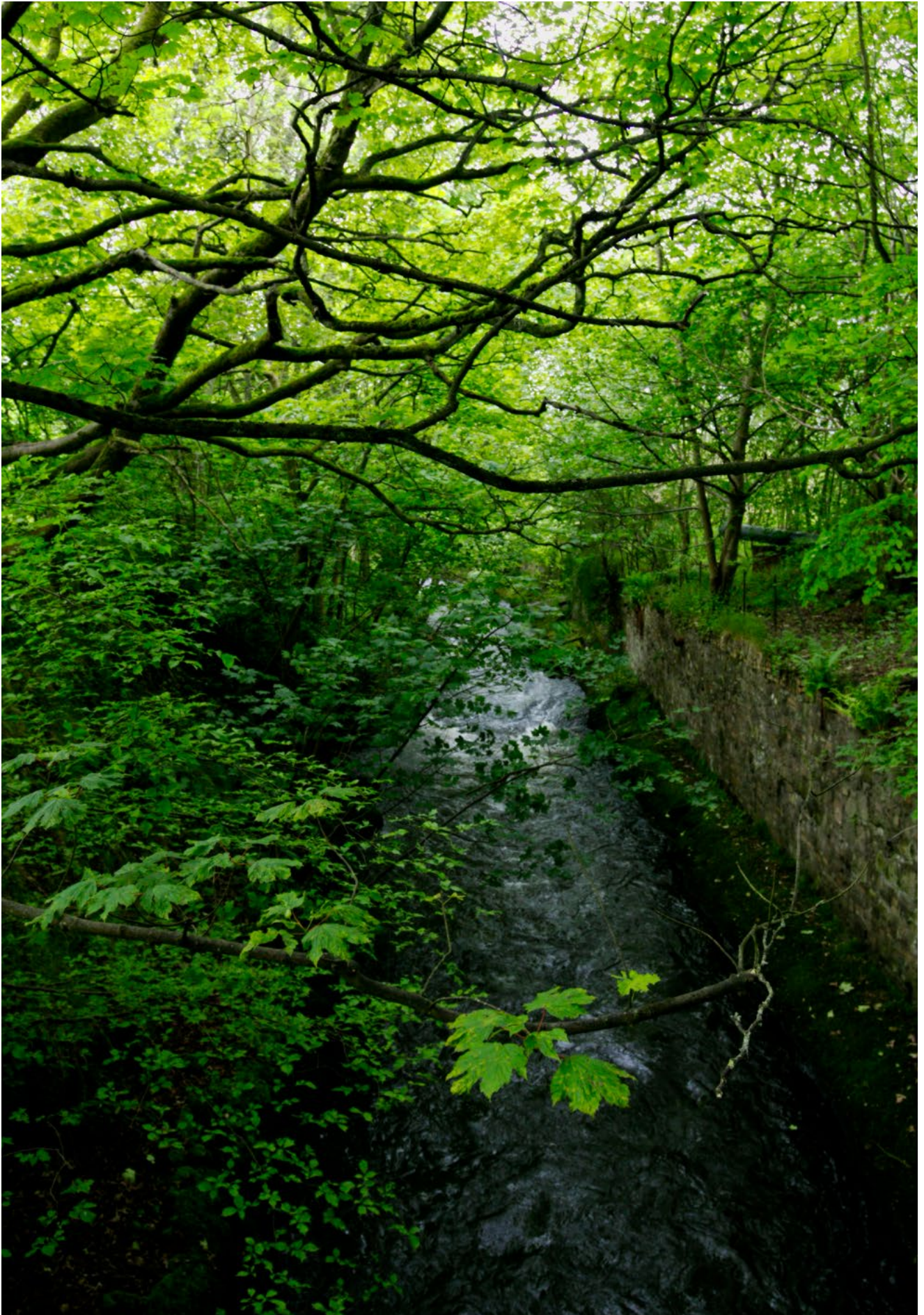


Figure 4: The River Leven at the disused Tullis Russell site in Glenrothes



## SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AGREEMENT MANAGEMENT

- All applicable laws continue to apply to each partner signing this agreement and nothing in this Sustainable Growth Agreement is intended to, or shall be deemed to: (a) establish any partnership or joint venture between the partners, constitute any partner as the agent of the other partner, nor authorise any of the partners to make or enter into any commitments for, or on behalf of the other partner; and (b) adversely affect or prejudice the ability of SEPA to act in its capacity as a regulator.
- The partners have agreed that this Sustainable Growth Agreement will remain in place for three years from the date of this Sustainable Growth Agreement.
- This Sustainable Growth Agreement is not legally binding and creates no legal rights or legal obligations between the partners. All partners are accountable and responsible for honouring their commitments in this Sustainable Growth Agreement.
- This Agreement will be made available to public by all partners (e.g. SEPA, Fife Council, Fife College etc. via websites etc).
- There will be a formal Annual Review and joint Annual Reporting by all partners to assess progress against the commitments set out in this Sustainable Growth Agreement and to assess success. The ongoing monitoring and management of progress will be undertaken by The Leven Programme Board, and by relevant Project Boards.
- SEPA and the Partners will assess the need for the appointment of a dedicated programme/project manager and if necessary, seek to secure the resources necessary to manage the delivery of the programme and projects.
- The Annual Review and joint Annual Report can also identify areas of focus for the following year, possible amendments to the Sustainable Growth Agreement and opportunities to promote the Sustainable Growth Agreement.
- In addition to the formal annual review, there will be an informal half yearly review to take stock of progress and identify any new opportunities, revise priorities and close or amend projects to maximise the impact of partnership resources.
- All partners reserve the right to withdraw from this Sustainable Growth Agreement if they believe it is no longer effectively promoting their aspirations and/or they are unable to further contribute toward achieving The Leven Programme vision.
- If any partner is considering withdrawal they will notify the partnership Board and Chief Executives of other partner organisations in writing of their intention. All Parties agree to work together to seek resolution wherever possible.
- Responsibility for the implementation of the Agreement lies with all Parties. The review of the Sustainable Growth Agreement and progress will be carried out by The Leven Programme Board.





## Signatories

### Signed For and On Behalf of The Leven Programme

**Steve Grimmond** Chief Executive,  
Fife Council

**Grace Martin**, Deputy Director, Sustrans

**Francesca Osowska**, Chief Executive, SNH

**Douglas Millican**, Chief Executive,  
Scottish Water

**Steve Dunlop**, Chief Executive,  
Scottish Enterprise

**Hugh Hall**, Principal and Chief Executive,  
Fife College

**Fen Howieson**, Chairman, Forth Rivers Trust

**Keith Miller**, Director, Diageo

**Derek Robertson**, Chief Executive,  
Keep Scotland Beautiful

**Keith Geddes**, Chairman,  
Central Scotland Green Network Trust

### Signed For and On behalf of SEPA

**Terry A'Hearn**, Chief Executive (SEPA)



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### Further Information

The Leven  
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Email: [theleven@sepa.org.uk](mailto:theleven@sepa.org.uk)

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