

**Glasgow City Council****Sustainability and Environment Policy and Development Committee  
3 February 2016****Report by Executive Director for Land and Environmental Services****Contact: Alastair M Brown****Ext: 76512****SUSTAINABLE GLASGOW - GREEN YEAR 2015****Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the delivery of Green Year in 2015 and to look at future opportunities for similar annual programmes.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Committee agrees to:

- note the positive experience of Green Year 2015;
- consider the merits of a potential future bid to be European Green Capital.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ✓consulted: Yes ☐ No ✓

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Glasgow held its first ever Green Year throughout 2015. It followed the city's submission for the European Green Capital 2015 award, when Glasgow came a close second to Bristol. The Council was determined not to lose momentum from the bid and therefore decided to host Glasgow's own Green Year in 2015. The banner headline for Green Year has been 'From steam to green', representing the transformation which Glasgow has experienced from being the centre of the Industrial Revolution to becoming a low carbon, sustainable city of the future.
- 1.2 Glasgow's Green Year 2015 was one of the twenty projects gathered under the Greener Legacy theme from the city's hosting of the Commonwealth Games. It built on the momentum created by the Games and showcased how people and partnerships are at the heart of sustainable development. The aim was also to build on the lessons learned from the European Green Capital application process and the jury panel's technical assessment, as well as to provide a series of activities across the year to showcase Glasgow's green ambitions.
- 1.3 Green Year has developed both strong partnerships and innovative work across a range of sectors. There is therefore a strong basis for the city applying for the prestigious European Green Capital award again and going one place better than the strong second position it achieved against Bristol last time.

## **2. Green Year 2015**

- 2.1 The overarching vision of Glasgow's Green Year 2015 was to work in partnership with communities and local residents, businesses and other public agencies. The key outcomes were aimed at:
  - Enhancing and promoting the city's activities to make Glasgow's urban environment healthier, cleaner and greener.
  - Encouraging and supporting greater participation in a range of sustainable activities.
  - Facilitating joint working and knowledge sharing to develop and raise the city's profile as a sustainable city, nationally and internationally.
- 2.2 Each month in 2015 was themed to focus on key messages and activities. These were developed from the twelve European Green Capital indicators and thereby helped to offer experience and material for any potential further bid. They are noted in Appendix 1 to this report. Members can also access the dedicated website and a full programme of events across 2015 at [www.greenglasgow.com](http://www.greenglasgow.com).

- 2.3 Glasgow's Green Year has received very positive publicity in both traditional and social media platforms throughout 2015. The Green Glasgow twitter account, for instance, has more than 3,400 followers and has been widely used by organisations and residents to promote local events.
- 2.4 Over the course of the year, Green Year activities have included a large number of public events and projects which have highlighted Glasgow's natural assets, celebrated the city's green science and innovation, and promoted action currently being taken to cut carbon emissions and adapt to climate change. Throughout the 2015 programme, contacts and links were forged with many organisations from various sectors at a local, national and international level. One particularly significant link has been with the United Nations, which has featured Glasgow's work around sustainability on its website and this has provided officer support at a number of events. Partnerships with the private sector were also a key element of Green Year, principally through the Green Business Network at Glasgow Chamber of Commerce.
- 2.5 Good links have been formed with the arts community across the city which continue across 2016 and beyond with strong engagement from the local arts community on issues around climate change. Glasgow Life also supported Green Year through events such as the Mela, the Merchant City Festival and the Turner Prize. These events had green strands running through their programmes to ensure the promotion of Green Year and sustainability.
- 2.6 Over 160 public facing events have been supported through Green Year, along with numerous internal events, conferences and workshops. Highlights of the year have included:
- a museum of water at Kibble Palace – reminding residents of the value of water and both its local and global significance in a changing climate;
  - various up-cycling and re-cycling events across the city, including a large scale campaign in St Enoch Shopping Centre in partnership with Zero Waste Scotland;
  - promotion of the city's ten designated Quiet Areas;
  - a Green Maze on George Square, which attracted more than 10,000 visitors;
  - a focus on improving air quality through active travel campaigns and promotion of the 'Drive Less, Live More' campaign;
  - partnership working with RSPB to deliver over 75 free public events in the city's parks; and
  - workshops run in collaboration with the United Nations to support discussions around its Sustainable Development Goals.

### 3. Future annual green programmes

- 3.1 An initial overview from Green Year suggests that there is a strong basis for the city to continue with a green programme, which builds on the resources and partnerships developed across 2015 and adds value to existing work. Feedback from local partners clearly indicates that there is an appetite for the city continuing to do so. In this light, an initial list of activities which can be drawn together to form a green programme for 2016 is noted in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 The European Commission will publish a call in June 2016 for bids to be European Green Capital in 2019. Bristol was the title holder for 2015, with Ljubljana in Slovenia being the current Green Capital this year. The deadline for full applications will be in October this year for the 2019 title. Given the strong partnerships and innovative work which have been developed for Glasgow's Green Year across 2015, there is a strong basis for the city to apply for this prestigious award again and to go one place better than the good position it achieved last time.
- 3.3 There are significant potential economic benefits from hosting the European Green Capital. Bristol received £7 million from the UK Treasury to support it as host of the 2015 European Green Capital, with the local private sector match funding that amount. An analysis of the impact of the year for Bristol has estimated that it will generate an additional £215 million in economic activity for the city and region. Glasgow therefore stands to build a strong legacy of sustainable business growth from a successful bid to be 2019 European Green Capital.
- 3.4 It is therefore proposed that the Council leads a bid with key local partners for the title of European Green Capital in 2019.

### 4. Policy and Resource Implications

#### Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Work for a green programme in 2016 and the bid process for the European Green Capital award for 2019 will be managed through existing budgetary resources.
<i>Legal:</i>	None.
<i>Personnel:</i>	A European Green Capital application would be completed through existing staff resources.
<i>Procurement:</i>	None.

**Council Strategic Plan:** This work strongly supports the Council's aim to be one of the most sustainable cities in Europe. In particular, the intention to bid for European Green Capital status significantly raises the profile of

Glasgow on a European and international scale as a vibrant and world class city.

**Equality Impacts:**

*EQIA carried out:* No.

*Outcome:* N/A.

**Sustainability Impacts:**

*Environmental:* The European Green Capital bid process and subsequent award will help add momentum to work which is aimed at making Glasgow a greener and low carbon city.

*Social:* Sustainability and social justice can be at the heart of Glasgow's 2019 bid and there will be a specific focus on how projects can deliver social benefits for all Glaswegians.

*Economic:* The status of Green Capital can offer a significant boost to green economic growth and help to develop a more sustainable economy.

**5. Recommendations**

5.1 It is recommended, therefore, that Committee agrees to:

- note the positive experience of Green Year 2015;
- consider the merits of a potential future bid to be European Green Capital.

## **Appendix 1**

The twelve monthly themes for Glasgow's Green Year 2015 (in bold), linked to the twelve categories of the European Green Capital bid process:

- January – Energy performance – **Improving energy efficiency**
- February – Sustainable management – **Buying fair and local**
- March – Climate change – **Becoming climate resilient**
- April – Water consumption – **Using water wisely**
- May – Acoustic Environment – **Being sound smart**
- June – Waste production and management – **Reducing waste impact**
- July – Biodiversity – **Looking after biodiversity**
- August – Local Transport – **Using more public and active transport**
- September – Eco-innovation and employment – **Growing a green economy**
- October – Green urban areas – **Creating quality green spaces**
- November – Local ambient air – **Improving air quality**
- December – Waste water management – **Managing urban water**

## **Appendix 2**

### **Initial Green Glasgow programme plan for 2016**

The following events and activities provide each month with a key focus on a particular aspect of sustainability for residents and visitors. The initial programme for Green Glasgow in 2016 draws on an existing schedule of themed approaches and planned events, whilst maintaining an openness to additional activities as they arise. The digital resources which were developed for Green Year, including the website, Twitter account and app, will be re-focused as means of communicating key messages about the city's work on sustainability and promoting events in which residents can take part.

February – Fair Trade Fortnight, Glasgow Youth Film Festival

March – Climate Change Week, Pass it On, Earth Hour

April – City centre project for residents and visitors in the school holidays to follow up on the success of the green maze in 2015

May – Noise Action Week, All-Energy exhibition & conference

June – Recycling Week, Bike Week

July/ August – RSPB Wildlife festival, Merchant City Festival

September – Green Jobs Fair, Zero Waste Week

October – Land Art Generator Initiative

November – VIBES awards (Vision in Business for the Environment of Scotland), European Week for Waste Reduction