



**Avoch from Ormonde Hill (Photo by Gisela Reid)**

## **Avoch and Killen Nature Plan**

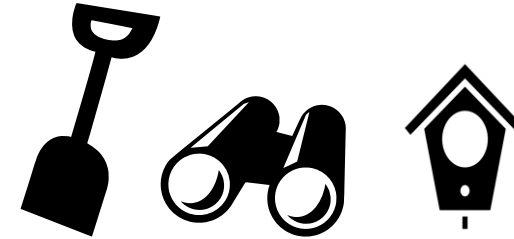
**May 2025**

**AVOCH & KILLEN**  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Firstly, thanks for taking an interest! This nature plan has been written under the umbrella of the Avoch and Killen Community Council, to help us to share what we know about nature in our patch and to encourage more action.

**If you are just interested in action**, you could:

- **Make more space for nature in your garden.**
- **Join with others to do something practical.**
- **Share your knowledge of nature with others.**
- **Learn more about nature.**



See [here](#) for options and ideas.

**If you are interested in finding out more or getting involved in delivery**, please read the plan. Please send comments/ ideas/ offers of help to [avochnature@gmail.com](mailto:avochnature@gmail.com). As this is the first Nature Plan for Avoch and Killen, there will undoubtedly be omissions and errors, so please do get in touch if you spot any.

Avoch and Killen Community Council will only use your contact details for the purposes implementing this Nature Plan and will not share them with any other body or individual.

**Acknowledgements:** This plan has been compiled by Caroline Eccles (local resident and volunteer), with help from many people in the community and beyond, whose input is much appreciated.

# Think global act local: Nature plan for Avoch and Killen

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## What is this plan for?

This Plan is for everyone in the Avoch and Killen Community Council area. It aims to benefit nature and people, and ease the impacts of climate change by:

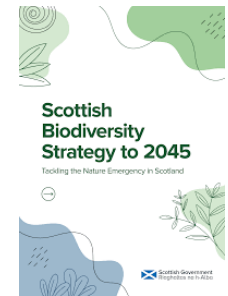
- creating a shared awareness and understanding of our local environment and encouraging enjoyment of it, with all the associated health and welfare benefits;
- encouraging and supporting good decisions on management and use of our environment;
- encouraging and supporting more action for nature.

The plan focuses particularly on areas and actions where we as individuals and a community can make a difference. There are already some individuals making a big difference, but more are needed, including “champions” and co-ordination for different areas and themes.

## Why do we need a plan now?

Here in Avoch and Killen we have some special places for nature and opportunities to see interesting wildlife, which many of us appreciate and enjoy. We could however be doing more to allow more wildlife to thrive here and to make both the wildlife and ourselves more resilient to climate change. Across Scotland and beyond, biodiversity (nature) is in crisis, with many species and habitats in decline and under threat. This Ecological Emergency is intertwined with the Climate Emergency caused by climate change, with each reinforcing the other. This puts the wellbeing and future of ourselves and other species at risk. There are things we can all do in Avoch and Killen to address this. **Everyone can do something and everyone can benefit.**

To address the Ecological Emergency, The Highland Council has recently published an [Ecology Strategy and Action Plan](#) in response to the [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy](#). Their plan demonstrates the action the Council will take to address the Ecological Emergency on their own estate and where they have influence. It also highlights the importance of communities in effecting change – it’s not going to be enough to just rely on action by governments, local authorities and others.



At a more local level, a [Local Place Plan](#)<sup>1</sup> was recently created for the Black Isle, following a major public consultation exercise. This vision for the future includes four calls to action on: *Community Infrastructure, Think Global Act Local, Getting About, Affordable Homes for All*. The *Think Global Act Local* strand is defined as “climate-focussed action to achieve a net zero, biodiversity rich, ecologically coherent, resilient and sustainable community.” This plan for Avoch

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<sup>1</sup> Local Place Plans were introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and allow communities to put forward their ideas for future land. Although they are not a statutory document, they may be taken into account when a new Local Development Plan is produced.

and Killen addresses that by providing an overview of what is special in our environment currently and identifying what action can be taken by us as individuals and as a community. It has been written under the umbrella of the Avoch and Killen Community Council.

## What we have and why it is special

The Avoch and Killen Community Council area has a wide range of different land uses and habitats: built-up areas, the coast, farmland, forestry and woodlands, grassland, rivers and burns. These are all mixed up to give a mosaic, and this mosaic is of great value for wildlife, much more so than if the area were dominated by one particular habitat. The area just off the coast is of international value (see below). Whilst this is the only part of the area that is of such significance, we nevertheless can enjoy a wide range of wildlife here, some of which is much less common elsewhere in the UK.

All of our area has been influenced by people to some extent, but the most natural part is the coastline, which is of international significance for its birds, the dolphins and the habitats (see more below). Without the coast, Avoch and Killen would be a very different place, not least because it is visible from so much of the area, but also because of the recreational opportunities it provides. It is also an easy place to see nature, with regular sightings of birds such as Herons, Oystercatchers and [Wigeons](#) (ducks). During the summer we can also see (and hear) the terns making use of the rafts in Avoch Bay.



**Munlochy Bay** (Photo: Gisela Reid)

Inland from the coast the main land uses are forestry and farming. The farmland is a mix of arable and grazing land, with much of it falling into the prime agricultural land category. Large areas of the farmland were previously heath and rough ground, and were enclosed and drained in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the then owners of Rosehaugh Estate. Most of the farmland is intensively managed, with a small wet meadow along the road between Killen and Wester Templands being a notable exception, and some small areas planted near Killen to promote pollinators (bees and so on) and birds.

[Brown hares](#) are a welcome but infrequent sight, as they have declined across the UK in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since the 1970s, many species of [farmland birds](#) have decreased significantly across the UK, due to more intensive agricultural practices. We are lucky in our area still to be able to see a wide range of farmland

birds, including Yellowhammers, Skylarks, Chaffinches, Siskins, Greenfinches, Reed buntings, Linnets and Tree sparrows, some of which also visit our gardens. We may take our Yellowhammers for granted, but elsewhere in parts of the UK they are now a rare sight. These farmland birds need both food (such as seed left in the stubble and insects) and nesting places in adjacent hedges, hedgerow trees and scrubby bits.

Skylark nest on the ground in arable fields or on unimproved grassland, and have declined significantly across the UK. Their song is still a welcome and evocative sign of the arrival of spring around Avoch. Lapwings are another bird that nest in arable field or short grassland, but are a less common sight in the area and are no longer thought to breed locally. Some coastal birds, particularly Oystercatchers and Curlews, can be seen roosting and feeding on farmland at high tide.



Rooks are a very visible farmland bird, particularly as they roost and nest (along with jackdaws) in some areas of Avoch, but unfortunately their numbers are [declining](#) significantly nationally. Other very visible birds are the Greylag and Pinkfoot geese, providing an impressive and sometimes noisy spectacle as they move to and from their night time roost on Munloch Bay to fields across the area, where they feed during the day. Most of the geese are visitors, moving north to breed in the summer, although some are here all year round. Numbers are highest in spring and autumn, as geese move through on their way to or from wintering grounds further south.

**Knockmuir, early morning** (photo: Gisela Reid)

Forestry and woodland cover a large part of the area, including the policy woodlands in Rosehaugh Estate, along the old railway line to Fortrose, by Munloch Bay, the plantations to the east of the Mount Eagle mast, and several deep wooded gorges. We are lucky to still have red squirrels in our woodlands, as well as badgers, pine martens, deer and other wildlife. The trees and woodlands are important not only for their wildlife value, but also for their landscape value and for providing some of the best walks in the area. Their value in stabilising slopes is also becoming more evident in these times of increased and heavier rainfall, as is their value in storing carbon. There are more trees in the village itself than in the past.

Some of the trees and woodlands are covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), because of their particular landscape or wildlife value. This does not always mean however that areas without the designation are not significant, as the designation has often come about because of a particular threat in the past. Most of the woodland in our area is included in the [Ancient Woodland Inventory](#), either because it was shown on old maps (either the 1750 Roy maps or the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1860) as being of semi-natural origin (such as Craig Wood and Darroch Bog Wood) or it is a long established plantation. Woods on the inventory are likely to hold more nature interest than more recently established woodlands.

Of particular note are the raptors (birds of prey) in our area, including good numbers of Red Kites, Buzzards, Sparrowhawks and Ospreys, that especially benefit from the good mix of habitats. We also have outstanding numbers (compared with other parts of the UK) of thrushes (Redwings, Fieldfares and sometimes Waxwings), passing through in the Autumn on their way from Scandinavia and Iceland, to spend the winter on the Iberian Peninsula. They are attracted by the large numbers of berry bearing trees in the area, particularly rowans, but can also be seen feeding in the fields. In some Autumns we also have large

numbers of Blackbirds passing through, making use of the rowans and honeysuckle.

The most obvious water course in the area is the Avoch Burn as it joins the sea. This is however just the end point of a wide network of burns, including the Rosehaugh Burn, which can be seen from the Avoch to Munloch road, the Shaltie Burn and the Killen Burn. There are very few wetlands in the area. There is a large loch in Rosehaugh Estate, which was originally much smaller and was extended some years ago following a flood in Avoch, to reduce the flooding risk downstream.

Within the built-up areas, gardens and amenity areas are an important resource for wildlife, and are also the area where as individuals and a community we could improve the opportunities for wildlife (and people's enjoyment of it) most easily.

The plan primarily covers land over which individual householders or the community can have a direct influence, but some other areas are also included because they are so significant as places where people living in Avoch and Killen can enjoy nature. These include for example Rosehaugh Estate (and other land managed by Broadland Property Limited), the old railway line and the grassland area at Avoch Harbour, where we hope to continue to work with the land managers.



**Weeding the vegetable beds, Avoch Primary School** (photo: Sarah Byham)

## Challenges



- Heavy rainfall events are causing flooding and rapid runoff leading to flooding of some houses and gardens, landslips and erosion.
- It can be challenging to find a balance between keeping the built-up areas and gardens “tidy” and also allowing wildlife to thrive, with people having different views on what level of management is acceptable.
- Herbicides and pesticides have been used for many years for amenity and garden management, although it is now recognised that there are costs to humans and wildlife. The Highland Council now has a policy of using chemical control of vegetation as the “option of last resort”.
- We often don’t like change.
- There has been an increase in non-native species in our area, including in particular the very invasive Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed. Giant hogweed (which is very invasive and causes skin burns) was found near the industrial estate in 2018 and removed.
- Occurrence of diseases. Some areas have already been devastated by Dutch elm disease, with big landscape impacts. Ash dieback is currently affecting ash trees. Bird flu seriously affected the Avoch Bay terns in 2022.
- For much of the area, we don’t know the detail of the wildlife using it, and surveys would be useful to increase our knowledge and inform management, for example butterflies, bees, amphibians, bats.
- Habitat data is limited, and there could be small pockets of interest that we are not aware of. There is some [survey data](#) from 1996 but this has not been fully analysed.
- Litter and dog poo are ongoing issues that need tackling in Avoch and can spoil people’s enjoyment of nature. If you don’t see much litter, it’s probably because someone else has picked it up.

- Space needs to be found for large amounts of vegetation after management work.

**Recent landslide up the Den** (photo: Caroline Eccles)

## Opportunities for and benefits of managing nature

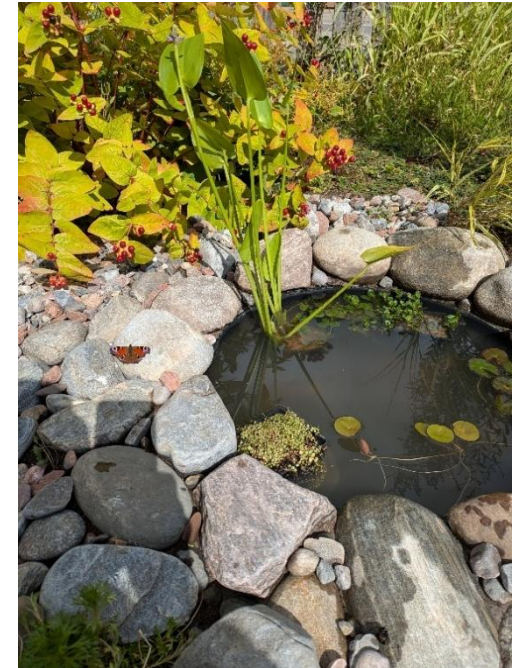
- Many people are interested in and enjoy wildlife.
- There is often funding available for wildlife and climate change related projects.
- There are already people in the village who voluntarily manage some areas for wildlife. There are also lots of keen gardeners.
- There is potential to introduce and improve management in some areas, benefiting nature and easing the impacts of climate change, for example trees and vegetation stabilise slopes and take up water.
- Connections to nature, getting active in nature, and even just knowing there are green spaces, are all good for people's health and well-being.
- More survey and monitoring information would allow us to target our efforts better.
- The "Making space for nature: creating corridors and networks on the Black Isle" report by P. James and P. Young (2004) may help with planning habitat creation.
- We have a good network of local footpaths where people can enjoy nature.
- Working together is good for the community as well as for nature.
- This Plan reflects the policies and proposals in the Highland Council's Ecology Strategy.
- This Plan is a contribution to delivering the Black Isle Place Plan , which encourages communities to develop Local Place Plans. This Plan covers the nature parts of the "Think Global Act Local" strand that can be delivered at a community level.
- Pollinators (species such as bumblebees, hoverflies and solitary bees) are species we enjoy seeing and also play a key role in supporting farming. There is guidance available on how to promote pollinators both on [farmland](#) and in [gardens](#).



**Mini-meadow in garden in MacKay Terrace. Small is beautiful!** Photo: Anna Bell-Higgs

## Principles for management

- Encourage management that supports more wildlife, especially introducing less common habitats such as ponds and meadows, and helping species under threat such as butterflies and toads.
- Wildlife like things to be “messy”. Wildlife thrives where things are not uniform, for example grassland where there are lots of species and different lengths will have more insects living in it. Go wild!
- Avoid the use of herbicides and pesticides unless as a last resort.
- Undertake tree and shrub management between January and mid-March.
- Retain trees and allow natural regeneration of trees.
- Create habitats near other similar habitats to allow movement of species and because bigger areas are more resilient.
- Report and where appropriate remove non-native species.
- Use [NatureScot guidance](#) when planning or commenting on new developments. The focus of this Guidance is on measures enhancing nature, which can also bring wider benefits and improve where we live and work.



**Water feature recently added to Community Garden** (photo: Stuart Smyth)

### **Abbreviations used in inventory below:**

AKCC: Avoch and Killen Community Council

AAA: Avoch Amenity Association

BPL: Broadland Properties Limited

RSPB: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

SAC: Special Area for Conservation


SPA: Special Protection Area


THC: The Highland Council

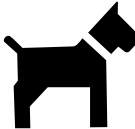
TPO: Tree Preservation Order

## Inventory of what we have and current/ potential management

### Amenity areas



| Area  | Existing or potential value  | Current management   | Issues  | Aspirations/ actions for community and individuals   |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Gardens</b></p>  | <p>The gardens in Avoch and Killen provide a massive existing/ potential resource for wildlife and also bring great benefits for people. In the Avoch “streeties”, pots along the streets make a valuable contribution. Gardens are where people are most likely to encounter wildlife. There is scope however to increase the value of many gardens significantly. Bats, swifts, Swallows and House martins all depend on insects for food, and are seen regularly feeding over gardens. Some lucky householders already have House martins nesting on their houses. Find out more about <a href="#">swifts</a> here.</p> | <p>Some gardens are managed more for wildlife, but more could still be done. Many people are rightly very proud of their gardens! Gardens Open event held in past, plus Virtual Open Gardens during Covid.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hedges, trees and shrubs are sometimes cut during the bird breeding season; whilst the trees/ shrubs are not dormant; or whilst berries are still present.</li> <li>• Herbicides and pesticides may be used, which is bad for wildlife, people and water quality.</li> <li>• Swift and House martin numbers have declined dramatically across the UK, but we love to see them.</li> <li>• Seagulls can be a nuisance during nesting season when they nest on roofs, but all gull species in Scotland are protected by law, making it an offence to destroy nests which are in use or being built, take or</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage more wildlife friendly gardening, for example small ponds, <a href="#">leaving areas of grass unmown</a> to allow flowering (good for insects), planting flowers that are good for bees and other pollinators, planting berry bearing shrubs and trees, feeding birds.</li> <li>• Increase food growing.</li> <li>• Encourage those with gardens, especially those that have wildlife features, to allow others to learn from them e.g. hold open afternoons.</li> <li>• Put up Swifts and House martin nesting boxes; allow House martin nests where these occur naturally.</li> </ul> |

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|  |   |  | <p>destroy eggs, or take or kill adults and chicks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard surfaces sometimes used to replace gravel or grass and contribute to faster water runoff/ flooding.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net chimney pots to discourage nesting. See more info on <a href="#">gull management</a>.</li> <li>• Share stories on wildlife that occurs in our gardens, including what we see with wildlife cameras.</li> <li>• Ensure non-natives such as Himalayan balsam are controlled in gardens.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Avoch Community Garden</b></p>  | <p>On site of former petrol station, which for many years was derelict and an eyesore. Community garden created by AKCC in 2016, led by Mary Smyth.</p>   | <p>Privately owned. Managed by AKCC volunteers (mainly Roddie MacPherson, Stuart Smyth). Main aim is to create year round colour and enjoyment for both locals and visitors. Includes pollinator plants for bees and others. Any costs covered by AKCC and voluntary contributions.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No formal agreement with the land owner.</li> <li>• Enough volunteers currently, but will eventually need succession of volunteers.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider increasing wildlife value and using it to demonstrate/ promote wildlife friendly gardening.</li> <li>• Consider whether to seek more formal arrangement with site owners.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Lazy Corner/ picnic area</b></p>   | <p>This comprises a paved area of Caithness flag sandstone with a sails sculpture, benches and boat-shaped bus stop, which was redeveloped by the AKCC as part of the Highland 2007 Year of Culture. There is a steep grassy bank above this. As part of the 2007 Project, a native hedge was planted</p> | <p>Lazy Corner and grassy bank above owned by The Highland Council. Hedge planting was undertaken on understanding that Council would be unable to manage the hedge. Hedge was cut to ground level in 2024 by volunteers. Picnic area is owned by Broadland Properties Limited (BPL). There is a management schedule for artworks. THC cut</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hedge requires management to ensure it does not block footpath.</li> <li>• Litter accumulates on bank.</li> <li>• Benches need regular treatment.</li> <li>• Grassland needs mowing after end of July to ensure tougher grasses</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain picnic area as quiet area where people can enjoy nature. Could it be made more attractive for picnicking?</li> <li>• Trim hedge where it overhangs path as needed, and cut back to about 1m high every 10 years or so, ideally not all in one year. Work should</li> </ul>                    |

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|  | <p>along the top edge of this bank adjacent to the path, and daffodils were planted on the bank. Bulbs were also planted in the picnic area, picnic bench installed (although rarely used) and base for Christmas tree. Fruit trees were planted by AKCC in picnic area.</p> <p>Grassland areas have a range of plant species in them.</p> | <p>the grass in picnic area. Volunteers have occasionally treated benches.</p>   | <p>and scrub don't take over.</p>  | <p>be done during January to mid-March when shrubs are dormant to allow best chance of recovery/ when birds have made best use of berries and shelter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion needed to maintain area.</li> <li>• Allow grassland to grow long over summer to benefit flowering plants, insects, birds. Ensure grassland areas are mown after the end of July.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Coronation football field</b></p>                        | <p>Amenity grassland managed for football, with steep rough slope on one side and terraces on one side with naturally regenerating trees, including sycamore and birch. Created in 1953 to mark Queen's Coronation. Used by Avoch Football Club, plus informal use (including sledging!).</p>  | <p>Pitch intensively managed by THC and leased to Avoch Football Club for matches. Trees have periodically been cleared from terraces.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower terrace needs to be kept open for football spectators.</li> <li>• Dog poo an issue (also in other amenity areas).</li> <li>• Recent slippage on one slope demonstrates need to retain trees.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain trees on upper terraces for wildlife value and to stabilise slopes.</li> <li>• May be scope for introducing more species of trees or wildflowers (needs discussion with THC).</li> <li>• Consider ways of tackling (!) dog poo (this applies throughout amenity areas).</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Old bowling green, tennis court / multiuse pitch</b></p> | <p>For many years tennis courts were derelict, they were redeveloped in 2019 by AAA. Former bowling green is now used for out of school</p>  | <p>Owned and managed by AAA. AAA plan to create artificial surface on half of former bowling green. Small flower</p>                       |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flower beds could be used as demonstration for others e.g. of planting flowers that attract pollinators.</li> </ul>   |

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|  | football sessions. Important amenity areas.   | beds by Pavilion maintained by volunteers.   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve nature value of areas around the edge.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Avoch playpark and adjacent playing field; MacKay Terrace and Mannsfield Place playparks.</b> | Main playpark and playing field is an important amenity area/ “lung” of open space within the village. Playing field at risk of flooding.   | Avoch playpark and playing field owned and managed by THC. All mown by THC and litter pick done weekly.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dog poo an issue</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure retained as open space.</li> <li>• May be scope for some improvements for nature around the fringes, e.g. fruit tree planting, or wildflowers – ideas needed and discussion with THC . Opportunities to use as demonstration areas, particularly where very visible e.g. Mannsfield Place.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Roadside verges/ rough corners and grassland in built-up areas</b>                            | These areas will have existing and potential value for wildlife, as well as helping to reduce water flow/ absorb water in times of heavy rainfall. An example is the track to the sewage works. Lots of green space around Mannsfield Place development, and a notice board about local nature. | Some were more regularly managed in the past by THC but less so now due to funding issues. Most verges will be owned by THC, some areas likely to be Broadland Properties. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A balance is needed between allowing nature to go wild and ensuring the area looks cared for.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity in some places to increase wildlife value.</li> <li>• Retain tree and shrub cover.</li> <li>• Find out more about what we have, for example which verges have plants and birds of interest.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Avoch Harbour Picnic area and “Rubbery garden”</b>  | Amenity grassland with picnic benches; also interpretation panels installed by AKCC in 2017. “Rubbery garden” is based on old tyres; was originally started by Harbour Master,  | Owned by Avoch Harbour Trust (AHT) since 2002. Grassland regularly mown by AHT. Rubbery garden managed and funded by volunteer (Liz MacKinlay).                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaflet dispenser lets in water in high winds.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure public access is maintained.</li> <li>• Ensure interpretation panels are updated/ replaced when required in future.</li> <li>• Replace leaflet dispenser.</li> </ul>  |

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|  | <p>Brown Owl and the Brownies. All on reclaimed land. Well used by both locals and visitors. Important opportunity for people to enjoy the coast/ beach. Flock of wigeon (a duck) regularly use the grassland at high tide.</p>   | <p>Walks leaflet dispenser stocked by volunteer (Roddie MacPherson).<br/>Dog poo bag dispenser (made by Men's Shed, initiated by AKCC, stocked by Roddie MacPherson; 1 of 5 around village).<br/>Adjacent harbour is managed by AHT – done considerable works since 2002 including dredging, installing pontoons, reclamation. Dredging is continuously needed – AHT can dredge without permission, but cannot deposit material below MHWM without engaging Marine Scotland.</p> |  |  |
| <p><b>Avoch Primary School Grounds</b></p> | <p>Sensory garden was created several years ago to support environmental learning; 35 fruit trees were planted two years ago, bee posts and 50 to 60 bird and bat boxes installed, benches and vegetable growing beds. Wooded area with boardwalk. Large area of playing fields behind former Community Centre. Hedge was planted alongside</p> | <p>School actively engaging pupils in surrounding environment. Weekly after school Gardening Club for an hour from mid-February onwards. Champion for this work is Sarah Byham <a href="mailto:avoch.primary@highland.gov.uk">avoch.primary@highland.gov.uk</a></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges with drainage of grassy areas and playing fields.</li> <li>• Woodland trail very muddy, not all accessible for all abilities.</li> <li>• Any tree or landscaping work has to be done by approved contractor.</li> <li>• Flood lighting is on all night – <a href="#">light pollution</a> has serious impacts on invertebrates – two thirds are partially or</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers needed to help weed the sensory garden and vegetable beds, especially in summer holidays.</li> <li>• Volunteers needed to help with the Gardening Club.</li> <li>• Volunteers needed to prune fruit trees (when they are a bit bigger!).</li> <li>• Engage pupils in practical activities in the village.</li> </ul> |


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|  | playing fields to celebrate Millenium.  |   | wholly nocturnal. Not known if there are other affected areas in village e.g. industrial area.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider whether creating a wetland area in the playing fields would improve drainage of the remaining area.</li> <li>Investigate whether lighting regime can be changed. Investigate whether other areas of village are lit all night.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Church of Scotland graveyard and new cemetery</b> | Extensive hedges in new cemetery and notable tall trees in graveyard.   | Managed by THC.<br> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Important to retain and manage the features of value of nature, but may be challenges in increasing nature value whilst keeping an orderly appearance.</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Allotments</b>                                    | Other villages on the Black Isle have established allotments in recent years, allowing people to grow their own food. |                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not known if there is a demand for allotments or whether there is a suitable area.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify if there is a demand for allotments/ if there is any suitable land.</li> </ul>  |


## Footpaths within and around Avoch


| Area  | Existing or potential value   | Current management  | Issues  | Aspirations/ actions for community and individuals   |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Steps from Braehead; steps from Mill Road to school; path along burn from main road to</b> | Important for access on foot, link to other footpaths beyond village, enable people to experience nature. Survey of all paths within and around | Some paths are managed very informally by volunteers e.g. sweeping steps, cutting back brambles. Footpath leaflet available in dispensers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Braehead Steps are in poor condition.</li> <li>Any management of footpaths is ad hoc.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish whether a volunteer champion is needed to keep each path clear and if so, recruit.</li> </ul> |



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| <b>school; back path from harbour to Braehead.</b> | Avoch was done by AKCC some years ago and footpath leaflet created. Bike shelters at top of school steps are to encourage cycling to primary school, including from Fortrose. | at harbour, Lazy Corner and at No.19 café; distributed by volunteer (Roddie MacPherson) . | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike shelters look very uncared for.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tidy up bike shelters, and consider bulb planting in this area to cheer it up (some bulbs at bottom of steps).</li> </ul> |
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## Woodland and trees

| Area                                 | Existing or potential value  | Current management  | Issues   | Aspirations/ actions for community and individuals   |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Behind Ormonde Terrace, Avoch</b> | The steep bank between the houses on Ormonde Terrace and the flat fields above is an important landscape feature of mixed deciduous woodland, important both within the village and also when approaching from the Fortrose direction. The steepness of the site means there is no formal access and public use is thought to be low. Elm trees dominate. Standing dead wood is good for wildlife (e.g. bats, birds, fungi). | Some privately owned by adjacent houses, majority owned by BPL. Some clearance of dead trees taken place.<br><br><br><b>Woodland behind Ormonde Terrace</b> (photo: Caroline Eccles) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some areas have become appropriated into gardens and may have been built on (boundary unclear).</li> <li>• Landslip has occurred in one area, not know if other areas are vulnerable to this.</li> <li>• High proportion of trees have died from Dutch elm disease; much standing or fallen dead wood; unknown whether elm will regenerate or whether other species will come in.</li> <li>• Clearance of dead trees may cause instability of slope.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland should be retained along the bank, to reduce risk of landslip, ensure area retained for nature and for landscape benefits.</li> <li>• Consider whether planting is needed or whether natural regeneration is occurring.</li> </ul> |
| <b>The Old Railway line</b>          | Woodland extends in a narrow strip along the old railway line (operational from 1894 to 1960,  | From the Avoch end, up to the end of Braehead, railway path owned by BPL. Beyond that, up   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on weather, path can be in poor condition.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A management plan would be beneficial.</li> </ul>   |


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| <p><b>and Craig Wood</b></p>  | <p>track lifted late 1960s), and down the steep slope to the Avoch/ Fortrose road. On the upper side of the railway line there are also some more extensive woodland areas with old mature beech trees over carpets of woodrush. Important cycling and walking route, with significant levels of usage. Public Right of Way, identified as a <a href="#">Core Path</a> by The Highland Council. Woodland is important haven for wildlife, including owls, bats, foxes, pine martens and red squirrels.</p> | <p>to houses in Fortrose, the path and adjacent woodland is owned by one individual. There is no management plan, although Highland Council Access Manager has put together list of priority tasks, in recognition of it being a Core Path. Private owner of majority of path does not carry out any path maintenance work and has agreed that the path and immediate surrounds can be maintained by others, although has indicated they will themselves clear trees that fall over path. Management such as ditch clearance, clearance of mud off path and removal of fallen trees has primarily been done by a few committed volunteers (including Michael Armitage, Stefan, Barry Adams and others), though not in a co-ordinated way. In past year Highland Council Access Ranger did some practical work. Recent co-ordination between the Access Ranger, the ROGS group in Fortrose and AKCC led to work party (March 2025); others are proposed.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are many trees immediately adjacent to the path, and these fall regularly across the path.</li> <li>• Elm trees are widespread and these have been killed over the last 10 years by Dutch elm disease, causing a lot of standing dead wood.</li> <li>• Railway line is on a steep slope and drainage is an issue – ditches become blocked with debris from the trees and also sediment from the fields above; tree roots weakened by waterlogging. If ditches are not maintained, the path becomes waterlogged and muddy, and so not always suitable for cycling or even walking.</li> <li>• In past, mudslide from fields above crossed the railway line into gardens on Braehead. Significant sediment comes from the fields (and occasional bales!).</li> <li>• Bales are a hazard.</li> <li>• In 2025 major landslip caused blockage of road</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify role of Highland Council and what management they will undertake.</li> <li>• More maintenance/ volunteers/ work parties are needed. Path should be maintained in a way that encourages more people to use it, but without compromising the rural character and of the route or impacting the wildlife.</li> <li>• Maintain trees where possible as these help to stabilise the slopes, key in these times of more extreme weather, as well as being important for wildlife.</li> <li>• Hold an event to share knowledge on the wildlife.</li> </ul> |
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|   |   |  | <p>between Avoch and Fortrose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have been proposals to surface path in past. Would need to be in character with rural area. Would encourage more to use the route, particularly school pupils.</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>Gallow Hill</b>  | <p>Area of mature trees above Cemetery Brae covered by Tree Preservation Order HC105. Significant landscape feature. Mature beech trees dominate.</p>   | <p>In private ownership. No current management.</p>  |  |   |
| <p><b>The Den</b></p>  | <p>Trees alongside the road out of Avoch towards Corrachie, including oak, beech and elm. Significant landscape feature; regularly used walking route to and from Ormonde Hill and surrounding area. Good bird populations.</p> | <p>Roadside areas owned by BPL. The Den land slip areas have been replanted twice already, twice with Hawthorn mix . The removal of the larger dead trees left the bank less stable.</p>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landslips have occurred in recent years following periods of heavy rainfall, blocking the road.</li> <li>• Significantly affected by Dutch elm disease over the last 10 years. Unclear whether elm will return, other scrub species have grown up.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain tree and shrub cover – this will aid slope stability and reduce the likelihood of landslips, as well as maintaining the wildlife value.</li> <li>• Consider whether new planting is needed or whether natural regeneration is happening.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Avoch Fishertown Conservation Area</b>   | <p>The <a href="#">Conservation Area</a> covers the historic centre of the village south of the main road, including the harbour area and Henrietta Bridge area.</p>  | <p>In recognition of the important contribution of trees to the character of the Conservation Area, any proposals to manage or remove trees in the area have to be approved by <a href="#">Highland Council</a>.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many people will be unaware that consultation is required for tree management in the Conservation Area.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote awareness of the Conservation Area and the requirement to consult the Council on tree management.</li> </ul>   |

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| <p><b>Trees and woodland around Ladyhill/ Knockmuir View</b></p> | <p>Woodland and individual trees adjacent to Ladyhill View, Rosehaugh High Road and Knockmuir View are covered by Tree Preservation Orders (respectively orders HC80, HC32, HC40).</p>   | <p>Any proposals to manage or remove trees have to be approved by THC.</p>  |  |  |
| <p><b>Roadside trees and Cherry trees in Avoch</b></p>           | <p>Ornamental cherry trees are a notable feature of the village, along the Avoch Burn, at the entrance to the Football Field and adjacent to MacKay Terrace; some were planted in 1953 to mark the Queen's coronation and were sponsored by individual families (with plaques on individual trees originally). Mature lime trees along Long Road. Huge amenity value, as well as having key value in taking up water and stabilising slopes and for wildlife. Long Road lime trees host rookery (with jackdaws).</p> | <p>On Council owned land. Council will on occasion manage the trees if required.</p>  <p><b>Long Road lime trees</b> (photo: Caroline Eccles)</p> | <p>Some of trees are now getting quite old.</p>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the trees wherever possible, prioritise pruning rather than removal to extend life of trees.</li> <li>• Where possible replace trees where they have died.</li> <li>• Consider interplanting with smaller shrubs that are good for wildlife.</li> <li>• Consider whether older cherry trees need replacement programme.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Shaltie Burn</b></p>                                       | <p>A large area of woodland in a steep gorge adjacent to Lady Hill View. Dominated by sycamore and birch of a similar age. An important landscape feature from some parts of the village. Regularly used footpath runs along one side of it. Will have an important role in</p>  | <p>Owned by Broadlands and covered by a Forest Plan. Thinning is proposed.</p>  |   |  |


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|                                  | retaining and slowing water in times of heavy rain.                           |   |  |   |
| <b>Hedges and hedgerow trees</b> | Important landscape and wildlife feature in farmland around Avoch and Killen. | Most hedges cut regularly by land managers. | Some hedges removed in recent years. No obvious replacement of hedgerow trees. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support replacement of hedgerow trees and retention/ replacement of hedges.</li> </ul> |


## Freshwater

| Area  | Existing or potential value  | Current management   | Issues   | Aspirations/ actions for community and individuals   |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Avoch Burn</b>  | <p>The Avoch Burn is an attractive feature of the village, as well as being important for wildlife, including birds, fish and river side plants. Particularly important for sea trout (migrating up river to spawn), brown trout and eels; occasionally get salmon. Burn is tidal to weir by playpark. Flounders (a sea fish) are found in the burn. Kingfishers are occasional visitors, as are the shy Red breasted merganser. Moorhen and mallards breed and bats will feed along it. Used by children for informal play. Rookery in scrubby area</p> | <p>Comes under the Ness District Salmon Fisheries Board's (DSFB) <a href="#">Management Plan</a>. Their staff monitor fish numbers; each Autumn they clear any items from the Burn that may prevent fish migration; manage and promote control of invasive non-native species. In 2024 significant Himalayan balsam removal was carried out as part of the <a href="#">Scottish Invasive Species Initiative</a> involving local volunteers and BLP. Ness DSFB have also been controlling Japanese knotweed using herbicide in the Autumn.</p> <p>Smaller items of woody debris are left by Ness DSFB as they</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Himalayan balsam has invaded and taken over large areas. Dense stands exclude native species. Dominates riverbanks and in the winter when it dies back its shallow root system does not stabilise the bare bank, which is then at risk of erosion. Dense stands can also impede water flow when high rainfall, increasing likelihood of flooding. Seeds only persist in soil for around 18 months, so populations of balsam can be removed after 2 or 3 years of consistent control and native plants will recolonise. However for</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain tree cover as this will stabilise banks and provide homes for wildlife.</li> <li>• Control any invasive species. Himalayan balsam should be pulled out between May and July/ August (before seed pods ripen), preferable taking out the roots. Encourage local volunteers for this.</li> <li>• Remove major trees that fall into the burn, as this inhibits water flow and fish passage. Leave other woody debris.</li> <li>• Survey upper reaches of Avoch Burn and Killen Burn to check for Himalayan balsam.</li> </ul> |


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|  | <p>by the burn, just west of the main road through Avoch.</p> | <p>create diversity of habitats for invertebrates, cover for fish, slow water flow.</p> <p>AKCC is pulling together information on flooding issues across the village, in conjunction with the Highland Council, to inform a flood plan.</p>  <p><b>Mouth of the Avoch Burn</b> (Photo: Caroline Eccles)</p> | <p>successful eradication, must ensure that all plants upstream have been removed first, otherwise seeds will float down river and quickly re-infect areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flooding – in recent years houses and gardens adjacent to the burn have been flooded. Burn does not have capacity to take silt laden water from all agricultural drains that flow into it.</li> <li>• Sediment coming from fields can smoother fish spawning areas.</li> <li>• Some thickets of Japanese knotweed upstream of Avoch. Non-native invasive that reduces biodiversity. Not as extensive as Himalayan balsam.</li> <li>• Large items of flood debris can be barrier to fish passage</li> <li>• Mink have been spotted in past.</li> <li>• Beavers may come in future – impacts not fully known, but generally considered to have nature conservation benefits.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of invasive species (both on the burn and elsewhere) and encourage people to report sightings (e.g. mink, hogweed).</li> <li>• Volunteer with SIS to check <a href="#">mink traps</a>.</li> </ul>  <p><b>Himalayan balsam</b> (Photo: Trudi Clarke)</p> |
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## Mixed habitats

| Area                              | Existing or potential value   | Current management   | Issues  | Aspirations/ actions for community and individuals.   |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Rosehaugh Estate</b>           | Grounds of the former Rosehaugh House, demolished in 1959. <a href="#">Designated Garden and Designed Landscape</a> . Mix of policy woodland (planted, ornamental), open grazing fields, a loch and commercial forestry. Small boggy and heathy areas within woodland and forestry. Very important amenity resource for local community and beyond. Also important for wildlife due to relative lack of disturbance and large area. | Privately owned and managed by Broadland Properties Limited (BPL), who support responsible public access. Dutch elm disease had major landscape impact. Significant numbers of dead elms removed, likewise ash trees killed more recently by ash dieback; replacement planting with different species taken place. There is a full Forest Plan in place over the whole estate. |  <p><b>Looking across to Rosehaugh Estate</b> (Caroline Eccles)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more information on the wildlife for walkers.</li> <li>• Hold an event to share knowledge on the wildlife, think about how we can engage new audiences.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Ormonde Hill/ Munlochy Bay</b> | Forested area and open hilltop (Ormonde Hill) which was site of Ormonde Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument). Important walking route both for locals and visitors, with great views of  | Owned and managed by BPL, as part of a Forest Plan. Significant areas of the commercial forested area will be either felled or thinned between now and 2034. The Forest Plan   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrub growth on the hilltop would lead to loss of special grassland species and damage archaeological interest.</li> <li>• Visitors cannot always find Ormonde Hill walk.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install sign at end of Ormonde Terrace to enable visitors to find walks.</li> <li>• Ensure scrub does not take over grassland on Ormonde Hill.</li> </ul>                  |

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|  | <p>the Black Isle, the Firth and across Munloch Bay. Interesting wet woodland area adjacent to path that links Ormonde Hill to Munloch Bay. Open hilltop on Ormonde Hill includes areas of unimproved grassland (not altered by intensive agriculture) which is unusual in our area; has a wide range of plant species and lots of butterflies. Ormonde Hill is also an important landscape feature when viewed from the village.</p> | <p>indicates that the castle site requires to be kept open. Some clearance of castle site done as part of archaeological survey in recent years.</p> |  <p><b>Speckled wood butterfly – regular sight at Munloch Bay</b><br/>(photo: Sally Lawson)</p> |  |
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## Coast


| Area or species   | Existing or potential value  | Current management   | Issues  | Aspirations/ actions   |
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| <p><b>Outer part of Avoch bay (below low water)</b></p> | <p>Included within the Moray Firth Special Area for Conservation (SAC) due to the Bottlenose Dolphins, and subtidal sandbanks and their associated species. Also has much wider benefits for wildlife, as well as social and economic benefits. Part of the UK's national network of sites of European importance.</p> <p>Since 2017, following marine mammals have been noted</p> | <p>NatureScot has published <a href="#">Conservation and management advice</a> for the Moray Firth SAC, which gives more detail on both the interest and management of the area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disturbance to dolphins. It is an offence to disturb or harass marine mammals.</li> <li>• Siltation from e.g. the Avoch Burn/ agricultural runoff, dredging</li> <li>• Marine pollution</li> </ul> |  <p><b>Avoch Bay from the Harbour</b><br/>(Caroline Eccles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report instances of disturbance of dolphins (and other cetaceans and seals) to</li> </ul> |

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|  | between Chanonry and Kilmuir: bottlenose and harbour porpoise frequently, common dolphins - fairly often, long-finned pilot whales (2017), orca (2019), humpback whales (2023 and 2024), sperm whale (2020), fin whales (at least 3 different individuals), common and grey sealsschool.  |   |  | <p>local Wildlife Crime Officer by phoning 101.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For injured or live stranded cetaceans and seals, call BDMLR on 01825 765 546 or SSPCA on 0300 999 999; for dead cetaceans and seals, call SMASS on 07979 245 893.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Outer part of Avoch bay (below low water)</b> | The outer part of Avoch Bay (below low water) is part of the Moray Firth Special Protection Area ( <a href="#">SPA</a> ) which has been designated to protect 10 species of inshore wintering waterfowl <sup>2</sup> , non-breeding and breeding European shags, and their supporting habitats. Part of the UK's national network of sites of European importance. Of the wintering bird species included in the designation, Common goldeneyes and Red-breasted mergansers are regularly seen off Avoch, and occasionally Long-tailed ducks. | NatureScot has published <a href="#">conservation and management advice</a> for the Moray Firth SPA, which gives more detail on both the interest and management of the area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Siltation if work happens elsewhere e.g. dredging and from agricultural runoff.</li> <li>Marine pollution</li> <li>Disturbance</li> </ul> |  |

<sup>2</sup> Great northern diver, Red-throated diver, Slavonian grebe, Common eider, Common goldeneye, Common scoter and Velvet scoter, European shag, Greater scaup, Long-tailed duck, Red-breasted merganser.

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| <p><b>Avoch beach and Shore birds</b></p> | <p>As well as the species of wintering birds included in the SPA designation, other wintering birds include Redshank, Oystercatcher, Curlew, Heron, Little grebe. Numbers of waterfowl increase in the winter as birds migrate here from colder climes and enjoy the food provided by the mudflats. A flock of wigeon (a type of duck) are regularly seen in winter in Avoch Bay and grazing on the picnic site at the harbour. Herons roosted on trees beyond water treatment works in past. Year-round, carrion crows and hybrid carrion/ hooded crows forage amongst the seaweed and rocks.</p> <p><a href="#">Curlew</a> are on the Red list of the UK Birds of Conservation Concern as both their breeding numbers have wintering numbers have declined dramatically. Curlew and oystercatchers roost in nearby fields at high tide. Osprey can sometimes be seen feeding in the bay. Otters can also sometimes be seen. mink</p> | <p>AKCC installed discrete signs to discourage dumping on the beach in around 2008.</p> <p>Beach cleaning equipment has recently been provided through a partnership between the Highlands and Islands Climate Hub and The Moray Firth Coastal Partnership. In wooden box at end of “the front” by junction with industrial estate road.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shore birds depend on food such as small shellfish and snails. If these food sources are lost, for example due to siltation, then the birds are impacted.</li> <li>• There was a significant die off of mussels two winters ago (perhaps due to siltation) and consequently fewer shorebirds are now seen feeding in the Bay.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Slipper limpet</a> has been recorded recently in Fortrose, the first record in Scotland. Elsewhere this species has spread rapidly to detriment of native species.</li> <li>• Litter on the beach.</li> <li>• Dumping of garden waste on the shore has been an issue in the past.</li> <li>• Large amounts of silt enter the bay from the Avoch Burn due to runoff from fields; very evident as plume. Impact of this is not known.</li> <li>• The beach has changed significantly in shape in recent years, presumably in relation to climate change.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure signs to discourage dumping are retained/ replaced as needed.</li> <li>• Remove Slipper limpets and destroy.</li> <li>• Share knowledge about the birds on the shore</li> <li>• Keep dogs on lead where possible.</li> <li>• Take part in or organise/ promote beach cleans.</li> </ul> |
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|                   | The beach is used for informal recreation. Path to the waste water treatment works is great place to see both shore and farmland birds, including goldfinches and yellowhammers.  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disturbance to birds from dogs/ walkers can be an issue.</li> <li>• Disturbance to cetaceans and seals.</li> <li>• Marine Pollution.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Tern rafts</b> | Rafts were repurposed from the former Avoch Bay fish farm so that terns can nest with reduced risk of disturbance and predation. The two rafts are now one of the few places left in the Moray Firth where terns successfully nest and produce young that fledge mostly as a result of disturbance issues at other nesting sites. Common terns are a designated feature of the Inner Moray Firth Special Protection Area and are amber listed on the UK Birds of Conservation Concern List. Roughly 300-400 pairs of Common terns have used the rafts in recent years although numbers were reduced significantly in 2023 due to bird flu with only 100 pairs recorded in 2024. | Owned and managed by RSPB staff and volunteers. Management includes regular raft maintenance, monitoring bird numbers, checking electric fencing (reduces risk of predation from otters and mink). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining/repairing/replacing rafts is expensive, and funding in particular for maintenance/repairs can be hard to find.</li> <li>• Bird Flu – no bird flu was recorded on the rafts in 2024, but there is still a chance it could reappear in future years and impact numbers further.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain at least two rafts at Avoch.</li> <li>• Encourage local volunteers to help with maintenance/repair/survey work (contact <a href="mailto:alison.phillip@rspb.org.uk">alison.phillip@rspb.org.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:nsro@rspb.org.uk">nsro@rspb.org.uk</a>) for further info.</li> </ul> |

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| <b>Munlochy Bay</b> | Munlochy Bay is adjacent to the west side of the AKCC area. It is part of the Inner Moray Firth SPA and Ramsar site for its coastal bird interest. | See <a href="#">NatureScot website for more information</a> |  |  |
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What you could do:

*These are just ideas for starters...*

### Make more space for nature in your garden

- Leave areas of grass [unmown](#) to allow flowering – great for insects.
- [Plant flowers](#) that are good for bees, other pollinators, [butterflies and moths](#).
- Make your garden more [insect friendly](#).
- Plant berry bearing shrubs and trees.
- [Feed the birds](#).
- Put in a small [pond](#) – great for dragonflies, frogs, newts.
- Put up [Swift](#) and [House martin](#) nesting boxes.
- [Grow food](#) in your garden – try starting with lettuce or runner beans.



**Unmown grassland in an Avoch garden** (photo: Caroline Eccles)

### Learn more about nature

- Go along to local nature or gardening events.
- Talk to people who know more than you do!





## Join with others to do something practical

- Join with others who pick up litter. See Black Isle Litter Pickers Facebook group.
- Volunteer to be a “champion”/ adopt an open space or path (e.g. Lazy Corner, the playing field) keeping an eye on any work that needs doing.
- Volunteer to join a work party on the railway line, at the school, or elsewhere.
- Pull out flowering Himalayan balsam along the Avoch Burn and elsewhere – join a work party.
- Volunteer to plan where we might improve areas for nature and wildlife.
- [Volunteer to monitor a mink trap.](#)
- Take part in or organise a [beach clean](#).
- Find others in the area who are keen on your favourite species (e.g. swifts) and promote action for this species locally.

**Himalayan balsam control** (photo: Trudi Clarke)

## Share your knowledge of nature with others

- Run an event (are you a toad or bat expert for example?), put information on social media, write a leaflet, design a poster.
- Record wildlife locally and share your findings e.g. [pollinator monitoring](#).
- Share your garden and knowledge of gardening and food growing – on social media.
- Join in with or organise an open gardens event.
- Add your own ideas in here...



## Annex 1: A plan for action for 2025

- Railway line path maintenance – joint sessions with ROGS group in Fortrose: March and September.
- Himalayan balsam control and monitoring – May to July/ August.
- Support school with garden maintenance and vegetable growing.
- Village tidy up – but leaving space for nature
- Garden open event focusing on wildlife gardening – one or more gardens potentially.
- Events to learn more about nature – bat talk and walk, Avoch Burn fish event, Rosehaugh Estate walk, marine talk (winter).
- Beach clean in September.
- Start to plan actions that increase space for nature in Avoch and Killen.
- Develop a flood plan for Avoch in a way that is in harmony with nature.
- Encourage more interest and support for nature and climate issues and activities in Avoch and Killen.



**Weeding the vegetable beds, Avoch Primary School**

(photo: Sarah Byham)

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