



DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN

2018-2023

November 2017

Contents

Background	1
Legislation	1
Outcomes	1
Dundee City Council Aims	1
Dundee Woodlands	2
Deer in Dundee	4
Deer Management	6
Related Documents	7

Background

Wild deer are present throughout Scotland, providing food, recreation and important ecological functions. There are four species of wild deer in Scotland: roe, red, sika and fallow. Muntjac deer are potentially present too. Dundee has only roe deer present on its land. Deer occupy wooded and grassland habitat from upland areas to urban areas. Deer are regarded as an asset but they can adversely affect the natural environment and public safety when not managed appropriately. Although Dundee City Council (the Council) does not own the deer present on its land, as a land manager, the Council has a responsibility to manage deer numbers sustainably.

Legislation

The Council has a statutory duty to sustainably manage deer on its land under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (WANE Act) and the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996. Section 5A of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 includes the Code of Practice on Deer Management. This Code was developed by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and it outlines recommended practice for land owners. The Code is based on a voluntary approach to deer management and it is not an offence to breach the code. However, if deer are not managed sustainably, SNH can decide to intervene in the Council's deer management and they will refer to the Code when making this decision. As a land manager, the Council wishes to show good practice and comply with the code.

Outcomes

Dundee will have a healthy and sustainable urban deer population with a public better educated on deer and their habits. This will result in less Deer Vehicle Collision's (DVC's); a healthy woodland habitat where trees are not at risk from deer and woodland regeneration is thriving; safer roads and a low public health risk.

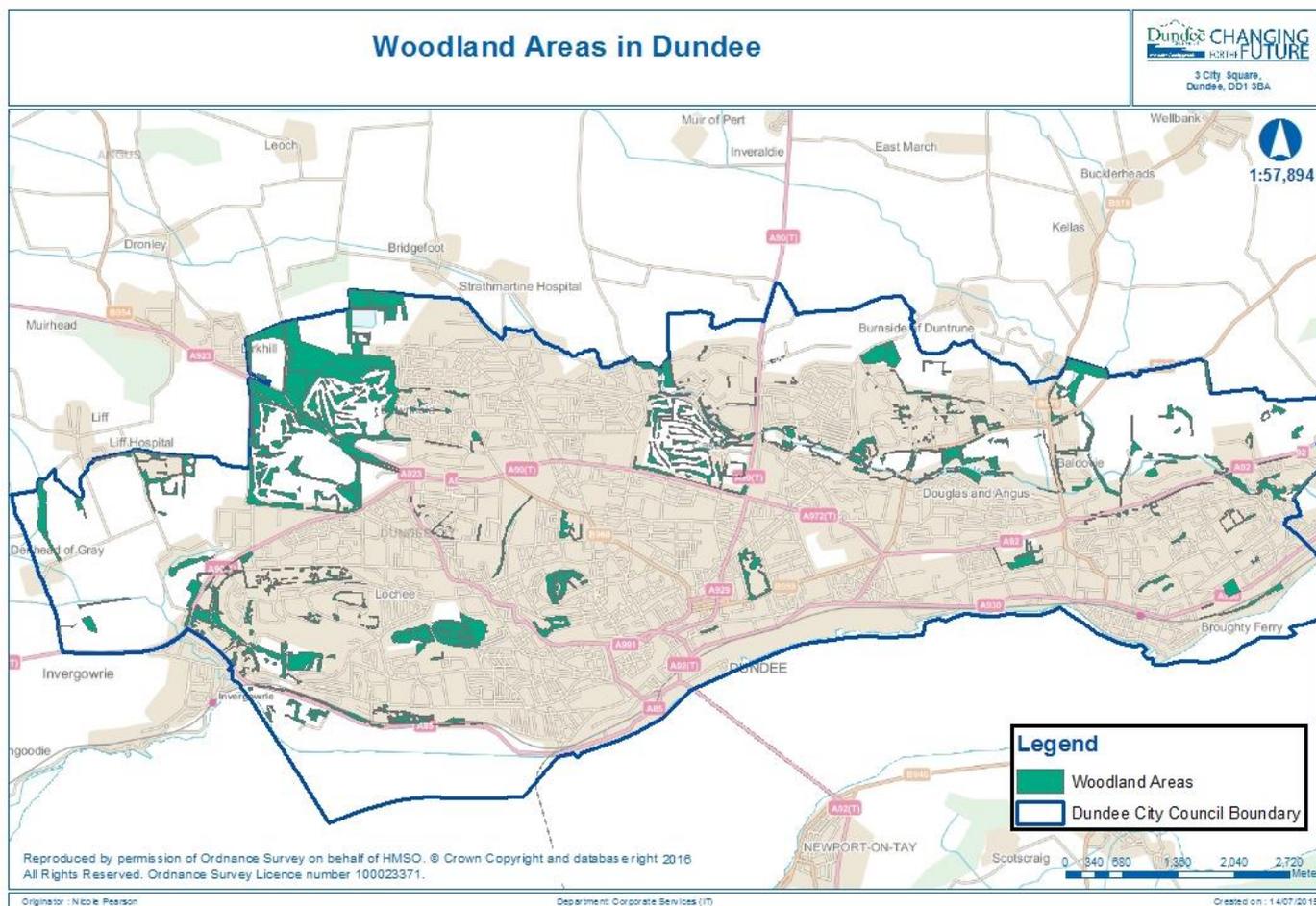
Dundee City Council aims:

- To safeguard deer welfare on Council managed land.
- To commit to long-term deer management on Council managed land for the benefit of the public, deer, the environment and biodiversity.
- To review the plan annually and to update the plan after 5 years.

To achieve the above the Council will work in partnership with the community and relevant organisations.

Dundee Woodlands

The City of Dundee covers 6515 Ha, with approximately 379 Ha of woodland (not including private gardens). It is Scotland's fourth largest city with many greenspaces and woodlands throughout. The tight administrative boundaries of Dundee mean that the surrounding hinterlands are mainly farmland from neighbouring Angus Council. The Council manages approximately 367 Ha of all the woodland in Dundee. The main woodlands include Templeton Wood, Camperdown Country Park, Clatto Country Park, Balgay Hill, the Law, the Dighty Valley, Middleton Wood and shelterbelts



throughout parks and urban areas. The map below (Figure 1) shows the distribution of woodlands throughout Dundee.

Figure 1: Distribution of major woodland areas in Dundee

Dundee's woodlands are an important resource for the public, allowing places for walking and relaxation, and they are hugely beneficial for biodiversity. In addition, they help mitigate the effects of flooding, noise and pollution. Dundee has a variety of woodland types: from estate woodlands to recent plantations.

Greater Camperdown

Old estate woodland can be found in Camperdown Country Park, with many trees dating back to the 19th century and a variety of specimen trees, including the Camperdown Elm. Camperdown, and associated woodlands including Templeton Woods and Clatto Country Park, has more woodland

than any of the other parks in Dundee and it is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Deer are often found in Camperdown due to the variety of species, mostly mixed broadleaves, and relatively thick, mature woodland on the northern and western perimeter of the park. Camperdown Park is situated immediately south of Templeton Wood and Clatto Country Park, together the three form an important haven for wildlife. Templeton Wood is a mosaic of plantation conifer, deciduous woodland and naturally regenerating birch. It is very good roe deer habitat due to the diversity of species and structure. Clatto Country Park borders Templeton Woods and it is surrounded by mixed woodland, including conifer plantation and deciduous woodland. There is a section of young woodland (Admiral Duncan Wood) connecting Templeton to Clatto that is currently covered by deer fencing. The fencing is being considered for removal. Admiral Duncan Wood will act as a good wildlife corridor when the deer fencing is removed.

Greater Balgay

Greater Balgay includes Balgay Hill, Balgay Cemetery, Lochee Park and Victoria Park. Balgay Hill and cemetery are largely wooded. The cemetery has a mixture of broadleaved and coniferous trees providing a large amount of canopy cover. There is little regeneration, although some is apparent where there are no graves. Balgay Hill consists of mature wooded areas, with a mix of broadleaved and coniferous species mostly planted in the 18th century. There is substantial natural regeneration in some areas. Deer are likely present but the location of this park in the middle of the city would likely limit their usage.

Dundee Law

Woodland on the Law includes areas of mixed conifer woodland dating back to the 1970s and early 1980s, with older plantings of mixed broadleaved species, including birch, rowan, sycamore, maple and cherry. The Law is situated close to the city centre and though the habitat is good for deer, there are no obvious wildlife corridors so deer are expected to use the Law infrequently.

The Dighty Valley

The Dighty Valley is a wildlife corridor through the city that has woodland planted along much of its margins and the majority of trees are mature broadleaved species. The main wooded areas include Trottick Ponds, a Local Nature Reserve and a good wildlife corridor connecting surrounding countryside. Trottick consists of beech, sycamore, ash and Wych elm, with the occasional larch, Norway spruce and Corsican pine. Mill of Mains, Finlathen Park, Drumgeith Park, Baldovie and West Pitkerro contain a mixture of shelter belt plantations and parkland. These sites contain a mixture of broadleaved species and coniferous species, with a mix of natives and non-natives. Some sites, in particular Baldovie and Drumgeith, have areas of natural regeneration. Panmurefield consists of mainly mature, even-aged woodland, with mature ash and beech and sycamore. There is also a well-developed understory. The south side of the burn features broadleaved plantations at Panmurefield. Caird Park is not directly on the banks of the Dighty burn but it does feature the Gelly Burn that flows into the Dighty. Caird Park is a mixture of older woodland and golf course plantations.

Throughout the Dighty Valley, deer are often found on the wooded stretches as the mosaic of different habitat is perfect for grazing and sheltering.

Middleton Wood

Middleton Wood is situated on the northern boundary of Dundee, immediately adjacent to farmland in neighbouring Angus. The woodland was first planted in 1993 and many trees have been added over the years. Scots pine is the dominant species but there is also a mix of broadleaved species, including oak, hawthorn, hazel, ash and willow. Deer are found here regularly as the mosaic of grassland, farmland and woodland provides the perfect environment for them.

Shelterbelts

There are numerous shelterbelts and plantations throughout the city, varying in size from large areas such as the plantations at South Road Park to smaller areas such as the shelterbelts along sections of the Arbroath Road. Shelterbelts are thin strips of trees or shrubs usually planted along roadsides or around the edges of parks. They can aid deer moving around the city. In addition, plantations are usually small woodland blocks planted in parkland and they can also serve as cover for deer and other wildlife.

Deer in Dundee

Roe deer are the most widely distributed species of deer in Scotland and the only deer species found in Dundee. This species is often found in urban and surrounding areas, particularly woodland and farmland. Much of Dundee's hinterlands are farmland or woodland, providing the perfect environment for roe deer. Although a welcome addition to the biodiversity of the area, roe deer can present issues for road safety; public health through ticks and diseases; damage to parks, greenspaces and cemeteries. Excess deer numbers also present problems for deer welfare where numbers are unsustainable and the population unhealthy. In addition, there are occasional incidences of poaching in Dundee and likely more that are not recorded. This is an issue that has to be tackled in the interest of deer welfare and public safety.

The need for management is based on the level of habitat damage by deer, the condition of the deer and the number of Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVCs). Dundee has recognised hot spots where roe deer frequent, including Coupar Angus Road, Middleton Wood and the Dighty Valley. This is shown in the map below (Figure 2). In addition, roe deer often cause additional problems in cemeteries, in particular Pitkerro Grove, which is situated on the northern boundary of Dundee, adjacent to farmland. These areas are recognised as hot spots from data on DVCs, anecdotal evidence of poaching and complaints from cemetery visitors. Between April of 2015 and March of 2016 there were 16 incidents of deer on roads around Dundee that the Council dealt with. In addition, the Council has had to control 6 deer in cemeteries. It is recognised that further DVCs where the Council are not informed are possible, for example where members of the public call the Scottish SPCA, Bear Scotland or Police Scotland, or where no one is informed. Therefore the actual number of road traffic accidents is likely higher than 16.

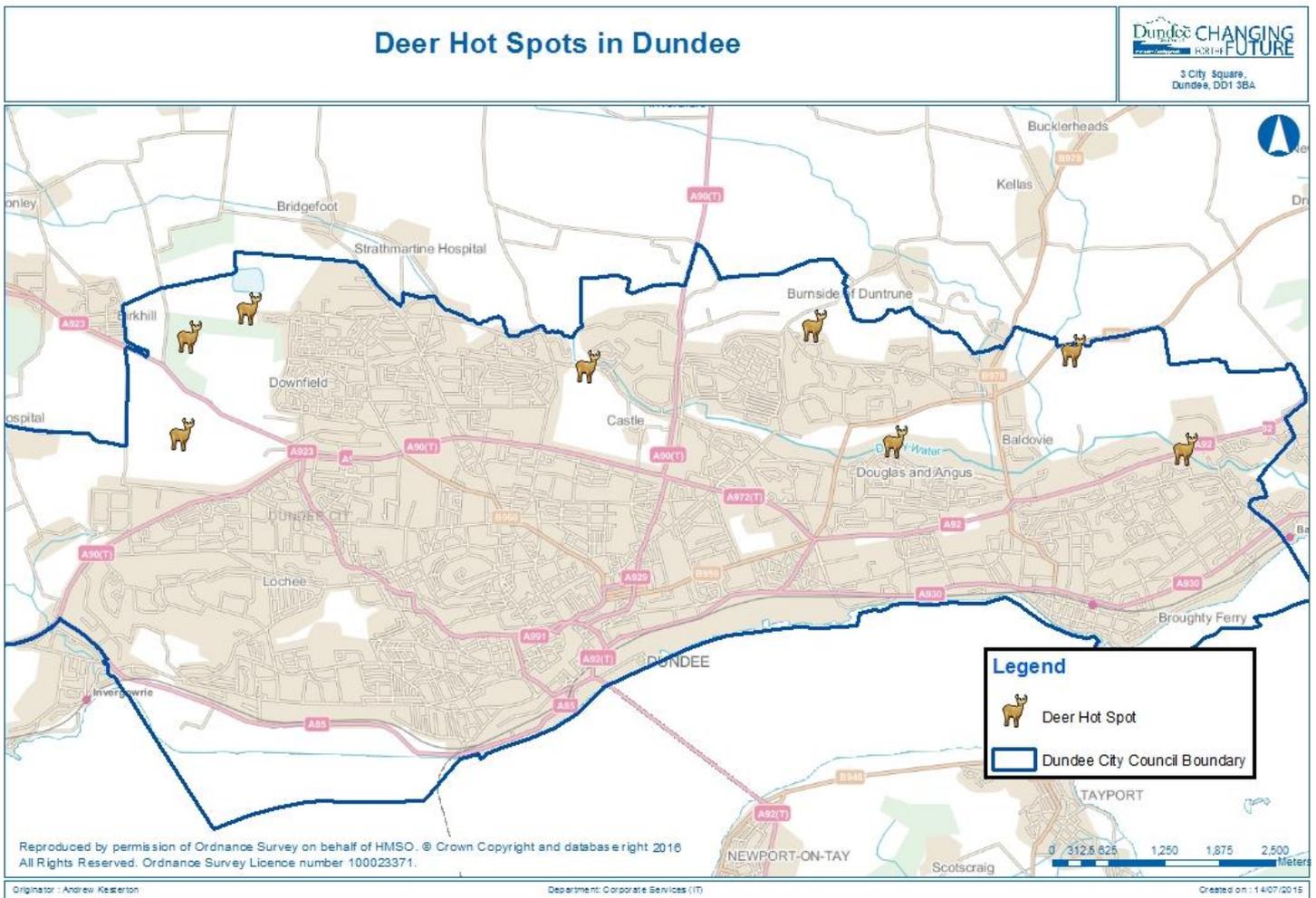


Figure 2: Areas regarded as deer “hot spots” due to the number of DVCs or complaints.

No data exists on the seasonal nature of the DVCs recorded but it is common for more accidents to occur during periods when deer move around. This includes the time of day that deer are active (dawn and dusk) and the time of year when they are more likely to move around, such as in May when young roe bucks disperse to find their territories. In addition, many accidents take place when the clocks change as dawn and dusk will then coincide with rush hour. Public awareness of these times is crucial. In addition, the Dighty burn is a wildlife corridor and it is likely that deer use this corridor for passage through the city. There is anecdotal evidence of deer elsewhere in Dundee, such as various sites in the West End area and reports of deer on the beach at Broughty Ferry and in smaller woodland areas such as Broughty Ferry Local Nature Reserve. Some locals claim to have seen roe deer swimming from Tentsmuir Beach in Fife to Broughty Ferry beach, across the River Tay.

Habitat damage rarely takes place and it is not recognised as a significant problem in Dundee. Lack of woodland regeneration is often a sign that there is a large deer population. There is little woodland regeneration in most areas of Dundee but it is an urban authority where many of the parks are managed. Thus, woodland regeneration is not a good indicator for deer numbers in Dundee, although there is natural regeneration at some of the larger woodland sites, such as Templeton Woods. Therefore, in some areas, deer do not have a significant negative impact on woodland areas in Dundee. In addition to eating young shoots, deer can damage trees in other ways

by fraying or bark stripping. Most fraying or bark stripping tends to take place in poor winters when the food supply is limited. There are some signs of fraying and bark stripping though the problem is not widespread.

Deer Management

The main reasons for deer management in Dundee are to satisfy public health concerns, wildlife welfare, road safety and habitat protection. A managed deer population reduces the likelihood of DVC's, provides safe wildlife watching opportunities, little adverse effect on woodland habitat and a healthy population of deer with enough resources to easily sustain them. It is considered from current population data that a cull is not required in Dundee but the Council should still proactively manage the deer population.

Deer on Council land are currently managed by Neighbourhood Services. Within Neighbourhood Services, both Forestry and Pest Control have an active role in managing deer. The Pest Control team will control deer in cemeteries when they pose a significant problem and the Forestry section are responsible for erecting and maintaining deer fences that protect sensitive areas. To prevent fraying or bark stripping, young trees are protected by tree guards or deer fencing. This level of management is deemed appropriate given the level of damage to the environment. However, the continued upkeep and observation of the protective measures should be adhered to. Some of the deer fences which were erected in the 1990s have fallen into disrepair and these should be reviewed to determine the necessity of these older fences.

This management plan utilises existing members of staff from Neighbourhood Services. In addition, there are plans to organise a deer density count with staff from SNH, the results of which will inform of any further management strategies required. DVC's will continue to be monitored by Pest Control. Deer fencing and damage to trees will be monitored and assessed by the Forestry Section and fences will be repaired or removed as required. Other employees of Neighbourhood Services, including the Countryside Ranger Service, Greenspace team and Operations staff, should alert Forestry staff if there is any damage to deer fences or tree guards.

In summary,

- The Council will review the plan in 5 years
- The Council will continue to work with internal and external stakeholders
- Fencing repair and maintenance is already in existence
- A population density survey is to be carried out
- A steering group will meet bi-annually to discuss implementation of the plan

The Council continues to take a proactive role in deer management citywide for the benefit of deer welfare, the environment and the public.

Related Documents

There are a number of publications that are available for land owners to make use of when creating a Deer Management Plan.

Document	Further Information
Scotland's Wild Deer: A National Approach. Action Plan 2015-2018	http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A2003405.pdf
Scotland's Wild Deer: A National Approach. Including 2015-2020 Priorities	http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1594721.pdf
Scottish Natural Heritage Code of Practice on Deer Management	http://www.snh.gov.uk/land-and-sea/managing-wildlife/managing-deer/code-of-deer-management/
Deer (Scotland) Act 1996	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/58/contents
Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (WANE Act)	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/6/contents/enacted
The Deer Initiative Management Plans	http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/uploads/guides/112.pdf

For further information contact:

Email: environment@dundeecity.gov.uk

Tel: 01382 434000