

National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 16

Annual Progress Report on Climate Change Action Plan



Paper for noting

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present Members with the annual progress report on the National Park Authority Climate Change Action Plan 2018-19.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Board members are asked to:

- (i) **Note** the annual progress report Climate Change Action Plan 2018/19.
- (ii) **Discuss** opportunities and actions for tackling climate change across the National Park and within the National Park Authority organisation, including the operation of Board business.

3. Contribution to National Park Partnership Plan and Our 5-year Plan

National Park Partnership Plan:

Outcome 1: Natural Capital
Outcome 3: Climate Change
Outcome 4: Land Partnerships
Outcome 5: Recreation Opportunities
Outcome 8: Visitor Management
Outcome 10: Placemaking
Outcome 11: Sustainable Growth
Outcome 12: Sustainable Population

Our 5-Year plan:

Priority 3: Sustainable Organisation
Priority 5: Placemaking & Sustainable Communities

4. Background

- 4.1 On 12th March 2018 Board were presented with the first Climate Change Action Plan for the National Park. The plan lays out the actions we will take to help tackle climate change, both at a corporate level and across the National Park.
- 4.2 The action plan aims to make a contribution to the targets set by the Scottish Government's Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. In 2017 the Government

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proposed a new Climate Change Bill with a more ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of up to 90% by 2050, and in 2018 the third report on the Climate Bill set interim emissions reduction targets of 56% by 2020, 66% by 2030 and 78% by 2040. Currently emissions in Scotland have been reduced by 49% from 1990 levels.

- 4.3 As the National Park Authority, we have both a moral obligation and a statutory duty to tackle climate change, and we have been identified by Scottish Government as a major public body player in fighting climate change. We recognise that climate change will have far reaching effects on Scotland's economy, its people and its environment and we are determined to play our part in rising to this challenge. We aim to promote sustainable land use and management practices that better capture and sequester carbon and help mitigate against climate change. By taking an integrated approach to land use planning, we can also help deliver significant adaptation to and resilience against climate change for our communities and wildlife.
- 4.4 As a public body, we are also under a statutory obligation as part of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act to report annually to Scottish Ministers on how we are complying with our climate change duties.
- 4.5 Our National Park Partnership Plan and 5-Year Plan set strategic outcomes and priorities related to climate change. The National Park Partnership Plan shows our focus on collaborative land and water management projects which capture and sequester carbon and reduce flooding impacts. Within our 5-Year Plan, we aim to be a sustainable, low carbon organisation, reducing our use of plastics, being powered by renewable energy and maximising the use of electric vehicles.
- 4.6 This first annual progress report shows how we have performed against our Climate Change Action Plan.

5. Action Plan – Appendix 1

- 5.1 The plan is structured into four delivery areas; our three organisational themes of Conservation & Land Management, Visitor Experience and Rural Development, plus Corporate Services and Governance.
- 5.2 As this is our first year of delivering the Climate Change Action Plan there are still areas where we do not have fully formed methods of measuring outcomes or impact, such as flood mitigation and levels of waste produced and recycling compliance. This will improve as we progress in subsequent action plans.

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5.3 As a small organisation we have very limited financial and staff resources to focus on climate change action and therefore moving forward we need to identify potential sources of external funding and support to help delivery. To date we have been actively involved in the [Scottish Sustainability Network](#).

5.4 Detail of delivery is found in appendix 1, but members are asked to note key headlines from 2018/19:

Positive trends include -

- Led by the Climate Change Group, we successfully submitted our annual report on climate change activity to Scottish Government;
- This group also led a 'Climate Change Awareness Month' for staff in November, including events such as tree planting, peatland restoration, a waste and recycling survey of the bins at Carrochan and expert talks including '[The Energy Trilemma](#)' by Dr. Robin Hoyle of Glasgow Science Centre;
- Colleagues in Forestry Commission Scotland have approved grants to create over 300 hectares of new tree planting in the National Park. In time these trees would be expected to sequester approximately 400+ tonnes of carbon per year;
- Funding from Peatland ACTION and led by our Peatland Officer is projected to result in approximately 100ha of restored peatland by the end of the financial year. This restoration could be preventing the carbon equivalent of approx. 134 tonnes of greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere per year;
- Our Education and Engagement Team have developed a [climate change case study](#) as part of the national Curriculum for Excellence, and now include climate change as part of the John Muir Award and Junior Ranger programmes;
- Led by the Facilities Team there was a decrease in electricity use (60,000kWh) in 2017/18 due to energy-saving investment in more efficient lighting and better management of computer monitors. This figure is calculated retrospectively for annual reporting to the Scottish Government. The saving equates to approximately 6000 average UK household days of electricity usage or the equivalent of 1000 computers being used for a year.
- Our Finance and Procurement Team have acquired six new electric/hybrid vehicles and three new charging points, meaning our road fleet is now approximately 25% electric or hybrid;
- We have stopped the purchase and regular use of single use plastic cups and cutlery.

Areas where improvement is required -

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- Greater use of more sustainable forms of transport, both at an organisational level and across the National Park, there needs to be greater use of public transport and electric vehicles;
- Our Development Planning & Communities Team have begun monitoring all new build development applications to assess the level of 'climate friendly design'. Early results show that less than 50% of applications consider climate change in their designs and therefore we are encouraging greater uptake through supporting information;
- In terms of waste production we wish to decrease levels of food waste and non-recyclables and increase levels of recycling;
- Aiming to significantly reduce our paper use.

And to further develop in the coming year –

- Enabling progression of grants for small scale tree planting. As well as direct carbon sequestration benefits, this also empowers people to take positive action at a personal and local level;
- Working with external partners and linking with the work of our new Litter Prevention Manager to decrease levels of food waste and non-recyclables and increasing levels of recycling;
- Broadening the base of potential users of our excellent climate change education resource, by online linkages;
- Looking for ways to work with partners, volunteers and the public to capture select biodiversity data regarding the impact of climate change on some of the Park's wildlife, especially high risk species, such as Dwarf willow and Brown trout, and use this to raise awareness.

5.5 An updated Climate Change Plan will be produced for 2019/20 and this will be reported to Board in March 2020.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The first Climate Change Action Plan for the National Park Authority has seen encouraging first steps in helping to tackle this global issue at an organisational and local level. Much more can and needs to be done and Board Members are invited to note and support the progress summarised in Appendix 1 and discuss other potential mechanisms and actions to tackle climate change moving forward.

Appendix 1 – National Park Authority Climate Change Action Plan 2018-19

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