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What is Active Park, Healthy People?
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park is an amazing place. Its wonderfully varied landscapes combined with its accessibility to such a large proportion of Scotland’s population make it the ideal place for everyone to enjoy the outdoors and connect with nature.

There are a huge range of benefits that this can bring, from one person’s first outdoor adventure opening them up to a lifelong love of the outdoors, to playing a major part in the national efforts to make Scotland a healthier, greener nation.

Building on the National Park’s previous Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013–17, Active Park, Healthy People sets out our collective ambitions for supporting and improving recreation opportunities for everyone, and improving people’s health and wellbeing by getting outside into nature and tackling the Global Climate Emergency through supporting a further shift towards active travel and tourism.

You will see throughout this plan that it is underpinned by these commitments to:

- **Inclusion**
- **Health and wellbeing**
- **Efforts to tackle the Global Climate Emergency**

**Inclusion**

**Health and wellbeing**

**Efforts to tackle the Global Climate Emergency**

Significant steps have been taken in these three areas in recent years and the national policy landscape has never been more focused or ambitious. This plan will not only build on those successes but learn from previous experience to test and learn new innovative approaches to establish the National Park as a model of best practice in active, sustainable lifestyles.
Active Park, Healthy People is a positive and progressive delivery plan with more activity, by more people, more often, at its heart.

Why do we need a plan?

While the National Park Authority is not required to have a plan for outdoor recreation, we believe the National Park offers a unique opportunity to bring partners together to undertake innovative and ambitious work which helps deliver on national policies and strategies related to recreation, health and wellbeing - using a place-based approach.

The plan offers a focus for this work to guide the many organisations and partners who share our ambitious vision for recreation and active, sustainable lifestyles.
Who is it for?

Active Park, Healthy People supports everyone to enjoy the National Park.

While outdoor recreation covers a vast range of activities, this plan particularly focuses on self-propelled mass participation activities such as walking, cycling, paddle sports and swimming to achieve the greatest health and inclusion gains. While the plan does not cover other activities such as fishing and boating, we recognise the role and value that all outdoor recreation has in encouraging people to spend time outdoors.

The plan will be specifically used by the National Park Authority and all of its partners and stakeholders who have a role to play in supporting recreation, health and wellbeing to guide partnership projects over the next five years.

It also sets out the key areas we want to focus on together to get more people from all backgrounds and abilities out enjoying active recreation activities in the National Park.

Who will deliver the plan?

The National Park Authority is just one of a number of organisations who work to provide a landscape to be enjoyed and cherished by everyone. From national organisations to community groups, specific outdoor recreation interest groups and land managers, the National Park can only be the place we all want it to be if there is a shared vision with shared values. ‘We’ are all of the delivery partners. Specific delivery partners are referenced under the relevant themes.

How has it been created?

As well as reviewing the previous Outdoor Recreation Plan, the National Park Authority has developed this plan through engagement with key stakeholders across a diverse range of interests from health professionals, public bodies, interest groups and businesses with specific interests in areas of recreation.

This engagement reflected the value that many see the National Park providing across inclusion, health, tourism and rural transport. There was also consensus around the opportunity that the National Park presents as a leader in innovation and as a special place close to where many people live, where visitors can develop a love and appreciation for outdoor activity, healthy lifestyles and sustainable transport choices.
The Big Picture

Visionary and ambitious national policies are now in place that recognise the value of outdoor recreation and activity.

This includes the National Performance Framework as well as specific policies and strategies around recreation and health.

The National Park Partnership Plan 2018-2023 also sets out the overarching vision for developing the visitor experience in the National Park, including clear outcomes on recreation.
Active Park, Healthy People is guided by and delivers on both the national context and the National Park Partnership Plan and outlines how these can be brought together into one focused area to effect real change.

Specific action plans will be developed by partners to deliver on the ambitions set out in this plan.
Key themes

Reflecting the national mood and policies, the plan outlines where cumulative efforts can be focused to bring the most benefit under six overarching themes:

- A Park for All
- Active and Vibrant Places
- Happy and Healthy People
- Connecting Places
- Exploring Further
- Coasts and Water
This map illustrates the areas of focus within our Key Themes and provides a high level indication of what could be achieved.

* A Park for All applies throughout
Inclusion and equality are at the heart of what the National Park Authority and its partners do, and we are committed to creating an outdoor recreation landscape that is as inclusive, accessible and well maintained as possible.

The landscape of the National Park will always provide natural physical barriers to some, whether through steep slopes or large expanses of wilder land and water. Therefore, it is important that people have all the information they need to make informed decisions on where they want to go and what they want to do.

But barriers to enjoyment of the outdoors come in many forms. These can be poor quality or poorly maintained paths, locked gates, path feature designs such as stiles and bridges which don’t work around mobility issues, signage, information or marketing materials which are not inclusive. With sufficient resources and good design these man-made barriers can and should be overcome.

We will work together to ensure a co-ordinated approach to remove physical and confidence barriers to enjoyment of the National Park landscape. In removing barriers for one person within a wider group you also open up the landscape and path network to everyone with them, creating an even broader benefit.
Where we will focus our efforts

The priority initiatives below outline the key areas we will focus on to create a National Park for all.

1. Promote and protect the public’s right to responsible access and remove barriers where they exist.

As an Access Authority, the National Park Authority has statutory responsibilities to uphold public access rights under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. We take this responsibility seriously and invest significant resources into delivering against those expectations. However, the National Park Authority is not solely responsible for ensuring people can enjoy their access rights. Other stakeholders, particularly land owners, have a key role to play in managing public access, removing historic barriers and addressing issues and potential solutions when they arise.

We will showcase examples of well-managed public access and celebrate some of the best access legislation in the world. Under this initiative we will also seek to remove barriers by further developing the Parkmobility programme which began under the previous Outdoor Recreation Plan. The programme provided mobility scooters in Balloch, Callander and Aberfoyle and there are opportunities for further expansion. This could be in the form of new locations as well as new projects such as accessible boats, known as Wheelyboats, or accessible cycling and other projects which could be integrated into the wider programme.

Delivery partners
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, Local Authorities, Trossachs Mobility, Clyde Shopmobility, Forestry and Land Scotland, Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust, FABB, Lake of Menteith Fishery, Local Access Forum, Landowners, Scottish Land & Estates, National Farmers Union Scotland, Ramblers Scotland, Mountaineering Scotland, Scotways

2. Promote a National Park Access Panel and Ambassador Programme

Access Panels currently work within most Local Authority Areas to improve physical access and wider social inclusion in their local communities. They are made up of a wide range of local volunteers to help improve all aspects of accessibility across all protected characteristics including the built environment; roads, paths and place making schemes; employment; education; health; transport; the countryside and recreation.

This initiative would look at the potential to bring together key stakeholders from across the National Park to create an Access Panel to fully consider all of these aspects, particularly at the early development phase of any key projects, across this unique landscape.

We will also look at an Ambassador Programme, driven in partnership, which could create a public-facing team of ambassadors from diverse backgrounds, ages and of diverse characteristics, including the National Park Youth Committee. The aspiration is that this team could connect with all who currently, or could, enjoy and value outdoor recreation in the National Park and can help stakeholders celebrate the National Park, promote new initiatives and help share successes and challenges far and wide.

Delivery partners
Disability Equality Scotland, Local Authority Access Panels, Young Scot, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Youth Committee, Local Authorities, Sustrans Scotland, Ramblers, Mountaineering Scotland, Forestry and Land Scotland, Backbone

National Performance Framework

International  Health  Environment  Human Rights  Communities

Children and Young People  Health
3. Creative, effective and sustainable path monitoring and maintenance programmes.

With the value of path networks now widely recognised for the environmental, tourism and health benefits they can provide, more funding has been made available to support the development of these networks, focusing on the creation of new paths.

However, at the same time budget pressures can affect the ability to properly monitor and maintain existing path networks. To protect these paths we need new approaches to monitoring and maintenance, similar to those which have proved successful through The Mountains & The People project, to ensure they can continue to provide these long term benefits and avoid barriers emerging through neglect. While modern designs can help minimise maintenance issues, a certain level of maintenance will always be needed. The path network within the National Park also requires careful design that is appropriate for its location.

Successful projects such as The Mountains and The People provide a legacy to develop sustainable monitoring and maintenance regimes using modern technologies, shared resources and a mix of voluntary, specialist staff and contractor work. Varying levels of path monitoring and maintenance tasks can also be integrated into health, skills and employment development initiatives.

Delivery partners
Forestry and Land Scotland, Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland, Sustrans Scotland, Ramblers Scotland, Mountaineering Scotland, Local Authorities, Paths for All Partnership, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Case study
The Mountains & The People
This five-year project produced an innovative ‘Adopt a Path’ monitoring scheme alongside a maintenance programme which mixed volunteers and professional skills.
4. ‘Step into the Park’ initiative to develop, promote and celebrate entrance-level outdoor recreation opportunities.

This initiative ties into the wider inclusion work happening throughout the National Park and is aimed at anyone who would like to start to enjoy the National Park but lacks the knowledge or confidence to do so. Through this initiative we will celebrate and promote entry-level outdoor experiences which take less than half a day and do not require any specialist equipment.

Through a partnership approach we will promote attractive, well-designed and well-signed short walking and cycling routes close to where people live and work. Examples will be set in the Callander area as part of the Callander Landscape Partnership, making Callander Crags, Coilhallan Wood and the Falls of Leny more accessible from the town centre.

We will ensure that the National Park’s Core Paths Plan delivers the local access network that local communities want and support communities on path network development plans and projects which create active places connected to the wider network. Individual projects and actions will fall out of Community Action and Place Plans and through community path groups.

This initiative also seeks to bring partners together to shout about where paths exist, particularly through online marketing materials and campaigns. For example, Mapping Scotland’s Paths, an online mapping project led by Ramblers Scotland, and building on the success of National Park communications campaigns such as ‘Wee hills with big views’ and other national campaigns. All working towards building awareness, confidence and encouraging responsible behaviour and sustainable travel choices.

### Delivery partners

Backbone, Local Authorities, Schools, Community Groups, Ramblers Scotland, Forestry and Land Scotland, Woodland Trust, RSPB, National Trust for Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Paths for All Partnership, Sustrans Scotland, Local Access Forum, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Youth Committee

### National Performance Framework

- **Health**
- **Environment**
- **Human Rights**
- **Communities**

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**A Park For All**

Every built development or land management operation offers an opportunity to remove barriers to the enjoyment of the outdoors.

Signage and path promotion will follow and promote national shared use standards and use time as well as distance at busy sites.

All access projects will consider innovative and effective communication tools to increase awareness of outdoor opportunities for both residents and visitors.

A path network is only as good as its worst element and only a safe continuous network will bring the desired outcomes around inequalities and active, low-carbon lifestyles.

All work must be based on a clear principle that there should be equal opportunity for all to participate in outdoor activities regardless of gender, age, disability or cultural background.

Emerging projects with a focus on innovation, creativity and co–designed with young people are encouraged.
The National Park is central to helping Scotland become an active nation in more ways than one. It is geographically at the heart of the country with over half of Scotland’s population living within an hour’s drive and the towns and villages of the National Park are the starting point for many of the area’s outdoor activities and adventures.

Like many other places in Scotland, these towns and villages are currently dominated by cars and other motorised vehicles. Tyndrum, Lochearnhead, Arrochar and Tarbet, among others, are severed by busy trunk roads while large car parks and on-street parking dominate the streets and public spaces of Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander.

Through National Policies and research we now understand the need to better design settlements and streets to create places which prioritise walking and cycling which are proven to bring improved health and happiness.

**OUR VISION**

The National Park’s towns and villages are designed to allow people who live, work and visit here to enjoy and promote active lifestyles.

**A Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities**

*Public Health Priorities for Scotland*
Well-designed streets can also be crucial components in Scotland’s drive towards sustainable development and responding to climate change. Attractive and well-connected street networks encourage more people to walk and cycle to local destinations, improving their health while reducing motor traffic, energy use and pollution.

*Designing Streets Policy, Scottish Government*

This shift in line with national policy not only improves the physical and mental wellbeing of everyone, it is also more inclusive and fair and is another tool to shift behaviour which can help tackle the Global Climate Emergency.

The research base, national policy context and stakeholder visions are now in place and the National Park is an ideal location to re-shape towns and villages reflecting this shift in design focus. This would not only help these places function better for local people, but also showcase and celebrate this new approach to the millions of visitors they attract.

Alongside the work within the towns and villages, this theme also spreads into the surrounding areas with opportunities around active tourism and how we can better merge healthy, active and low carbon decision-making into our tourism offer. The Trossachs in particular offers a landscape which can be enjoyed more actively if supported by infrastructure in Callander, Aberfoyle, Strathyre and other villages and towns.
Where we will focus our efforts

The priority initiatives below outline the key areas we will focus on to support Active and Vibrant Places.

5. Develop Aberfoyle and the Trossachs as an internationally recognised Active Tourism destination

Aberfoyle, Strathard and the Trossachs has the potential to be an active tourism destination in the same way that Peebles and Glentress are the go-to destinations for mountain biking.

The emerging interest in gravel riding and the growing profile of Aberfoyle and Callander as places to live and holiday destinations with activity at their heart, offers exciting opportunities for that area around active tourism and the creation of sustainable and resilient communities.

The Scottish Mountain Bike Strategy for 2019–2025 highlights Aberfoyle under its theme ‘A World Class Network’ and we believe that partners can also deliver the themes ‘Tackling Scotland’s issues of Health and Wellbeing’ and ‘The International Destination of Choice’.

The area offers several advantages, including:

- The vast public forest estate providing miles of forest road, perfect for gravel riding - the fastest growing type of off-road cycling.
- Cycling events, such as The Dukes Weekender, which celebrates these routes and brings hundreds of cyclists to the area.
- The Lodge Forest Visitor Centre above the village with a host of activities and attractions on its doorstep.
- Aberfoyle is signposted from the middle of Glasgow (a legacy of its historical importance) and is less than an hour from the city by car.
- It is on the route of both the NCN7 and the Rob Roy Way, is at the foot of the Dukes Pass and is close to another iconic link to Glasgow, the Loch Katrine aqueduct.

Partners will collaborate to develop a masterplan for Aberfoyle and the Trossachs which will include walking, on and off-road cycle routes and water based activities for all abilities and audiences, as well as public realm transformation of the village centre into an active tourism hub.

Delivery partner
Forestry and Land Scotland, Bike Trossachs, Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland, Strathard Community Council, Strathard Community Trust, Local Businesses, Scottish Government, Event Scotland, VisitScotland

National Performance Framework

| Health | Environment | Communities |
6. Promote a National Park Active and Sustainable Travel Forum

Community Action Plans and research clearly show that well-designed schemes which prioritise walking and cycling reduce short car journeys and bring multiple benefits across inclusion, health and wellbeing and the Global Climate Emergency. They are also known to reduce congestion problems and increase spend for many businesses through increased footfall and dwell time.

For example, formal speed reductions establish clear values and priority and allow different designs which in turn create spaces which are more enjoyable for walking and cycling.

There are a wide range of organisations who have a role to play in improving active and sustainable travel in the National Park, from service delivery and infrastructure through to behaviour change. An Active and Sustainable Travel Forum could bring these key people together to ensure more joined up working and policy development.

Members will represent walking and cycling groups, disability groups, transport operators, local authorities, community councils and development trusts. Forum members and delivery partners will work to deliver projects that prioritise people and place before traffic movement schemes at Balloch, Drymen and Balmaha, Lochearnhead, Aberfoyle, Callander and Arrochar and Tarbet.

Delivery partners

Sustrans Scotland, Transport Scotland, Local Authorities, Transport Operators, Regional Transport Partnerships, Scotrail, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Youth Committee, Community Councils and Trusts, Local Businesses, Scottish Government

National Performance Framework

Health  Environment  Communities

7. Develop the first ‘Bike and Hike Life’ assessment of cycling and walking development within the National Park

Bike Life Reports are city-based bike assessments carried out by Sustrans Scotland and partners looking at cycling development including perceptions, infrastructure, travel behaviour, satisfaction, the impact of cycling, and new initiatives.

The reports provide a key evidence base to support further investment in cycle infrastructure and behaviour change programmes.

We aim to carry out a similar innovative assessment on both cycling and walking across the whole National Park, called ‘Bike and Hike Life’. This would be a first for a National Park and a rural area and the first to include walking. It will include the impact of existing developments, levels of use and aspirations and will be used to prioritise investment in the future.

Delivery partners

Sustrans Scotland, Transport Scotland, Local Highway Authorities, Community Councils and Trusts, Local Businesses, Cycling Scotland, Cycling UK, Ramblers Scotland, Paths for All Partnership, Scottish Natural Heritage, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Youth Committee

National Performance Framework

Health  Environment  Communities
8. Support the development of outdoor activity hubs at key locations

The value of Community Sports Hubs has been recognised by SportScotland and other organisations for a number of years and opportunities exist to use a similar model to provide high quality ‘hubs’ at key locations in the National Park. Examples from nearby West Dunbartonshire show that these facilities improve opportunities, particularly for young people, to engage with a wide variety of outdoor activities which will hopefully last a lifetime.

These ‘hubs’ pool resources and place various interest groups under one roof to help each group grow, better use and animate a building or a space. This can include visitor information but the focus should always be physical activity, health and inclusion.

This initiative will look at the best partners to take forward potential projects such as a watersport hub at the south end of Loch Lomond, use of Balloch Castle, opportunities at McLaren Leisure Centre in Callander and established sailing clubs across the National Park.

**Delivery partners**
SportScotland, West Dunbartonshire Leisure, Active Stirling, LiveArgyll, West Dunbartonshire Council, Balloch Community Council and Trust, Local Businesses, Royal Yachting Association Scotland, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

**National Performance Framework**

- **Health**
- **Environment**
- **Communities**
- **Education**

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**Active and Vibrant Places**

All projects will be co-designed and co-produced with local communities.

Projects which reallocate road space in favour of walking and cycling through a well-considered and evidence backed process will be supported.

The introduction of 20mph zones in villages where it is requested by local communities will be supported.

All projects will take account of inclusive design, such as the latest visual impairment and dementia-friendly design elements. They will reflect the refreshed Access for All Standards and Walkability Tool currently being developed by Paths for All.

Initiatives which focus on low-level walking around towns, villages and transport hubs will be prioritised.

The 2023 World Cycling Championships in Scotland presents opportunities to further develop and promote the opportunities in the Trossachs for active lifestyles and recreation.
MAP 3
Active and Vibrant Places

Areas of focus

- Active and Vibrant Places
- Cycling opportunities
- Walking opportunities

Active Park
Healthy People
Theme 2
Active and Vibrant Places

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Ordnance Survey 100031883
Data source: Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority
The Scottish Government’s national ambition is for a more active and healthy nation where daily physical activity plays a key role within the public health system which delivers effective whole system preventive care.

The National Park’s location, environment and recreation opportunities mean it is an ideal location where new partnerships can be formed to work with the health sector to achieve this.

We aim to build on successful initiatives already underway within the National Park and across Scotland, to deliver innovative best practice in this area and support improving the general health and lifestyle choices of those who most need support. We see the National Park as becoming an exemplar in how best to include outdoor activity and credible health programmes in protected landscapes.

In line with Scotland’s Physical Activity Delivery Plan, our focus will be on encouraging and enabling the inactive to be more active and we will target resource on those who face the greatest health challenges.

A Scotland where we have good mental well-being

Public Health Priorities for Scotland
Much of this work can build upon the ‘our Natural Health Service’ and Green Health Partnership work across the country.

Although part of this work will focus on improving health through physical activity, the National Park is also a place where people could be referred as part of social prescribing initiatives. This is where a GP or healthcare professional prescribes an activity such as a walking group instead of or in addition to medication. For example, Macmillan’s ‘Improving the Cancer Journey’ and ‘Older Adults with Long Term Conditions’.

National Park stakeholders should be part of the discussion as partners develop systems change and Public Health Scotland begins to develop a more holistic approach to health care with outdoor activity at its core.

It should be noted that the value of blue health – the connection between water and wellbeing – is recognised and features within the Coast and Water Theme.
Where we will focus our efforts

The priority initiatives for supporting Happy and Healthy People will be:

9. Vale of Leven Outdoor Health Partnership

Four Green Health Partnerships have been created across Scotland to improve links between primary health services and the outdoor environment. A similar partnership would see the National Park support improved health of people living in the Vale of Leven corridor.

The National Cycle Network Route 7 (NCN7) and Balloch–Glasgow train line provide an existing transport corridor along which interventions and programmes can be created. This corridor also provides an opportunity for partners such as the National Park Authority, Sustrans Scotland, Scotrail and others to work with primary health services to develop an innovative partnership project. This would be to develop effective interventions to overcome barriers around transport and access to the outdoors. Such a partnership would be well placed to develop social prescribing pathways and evaluations but also to also merge with opportunities and benefits around volunteering and skills development for green jobs.

Delivery partners

Scottish Natural Heritage, Sustrans Scotland, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, West Dunbartonshire Council, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust, Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board, Public Health Scotland

10. Promote National Park sport, recreation and lifestyle partnerships

Across the National Park, bodies such as West Dunbartonshire Leisure, Active Stirling, LiveArgyll and others provide excellent opportunities for young people to engage with sport.

In light of the new national and regional policy direction it is essential that we pool resources and experience to provide a joined up approach. We will improve partnership working which better delivers National Park wide projects and better links sport with outdoor recreation and healthy lifestyle choices for all. The group will particularly look at the culture change required for women and girls to have opportunities and feel empowered to be physically active throughout their life.

Delivery partners

SportScotland, West Dunbartonshire Leisure, Active Stirling, LiveArgyll, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Youth Committee, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

National Performance Framework
11. Continued development of the Walk in the Park programme

The celebrated Walk in The Park programme now supports over 100 walkers in six different communities across the National Park. It is one of the most successful health walk initiatives in the country and we are committed to supporting this flagship project to reach new audiences and be used as an effective model of health walks for others to follow.

Further strides can be made around primary care provider referrals, social prescribing and academic research and evaluations. Success over the next five years will be to maintain the essential services which are already developed and to work with new audiences and health professionals to increase the influence of the project and provide new services to isolated communities and individuals who most need support.

Delivery partners

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust, Paths for All Partnership, Active Scotland, Public Health Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Local Authorities, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, Local Businesses, Forestry and Land Scotland, RSPB

National Performance Framework

Case study
Walk in the Park

What our walkers say about Walk in the Park:

“This walking group has helped me a lot since I had my stroke. I am not as able as I used to be and find it difficult at times. The group as a whole and especially the walk leaders have been a lifeline to me. I can come out for a walk with confidence and enjoy the company.”

“Walk leaders give me confidence to extend the length of my walks and take me on routes I would not normally do on my own.”
12. National Park Daily Mile Programme

A More Active Scotland: Scotland’s Physical Activity Delivery Plan sets out a vision of Scotland becoming the first ‘Daily Mile Nation’. While several schools and institutions within and around the National Park already take part in this initiative, we will work towards further roll-out, promotion and celebration of this inspiring programme across the National Park to support the national goal.

There is an opportunity to link this work with the ‘Step into the Park’ initiative and with the priority initiatives under the Vibrant and Active Places theme.

Delivery partners

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, Active Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Local Authorities, Local Businesses, Forestry and Land Scotland, RSPB

National Performance Framework

Healthy and Happy People

Innovative measuring and monitoring programmes, such as Walkability Studies, will be supported which help us better understand behaviour and barriers to physically active lifestyles.

Partnership initiatives will be focused on under-represented groups and the socially isolated.

The emerging whole system approach to improving public health from Public Health Scotland is strongly supported.

National health improvement campaigns, such as ‘Take the Balance Challenge’ and the ‘400 yard Challenge’ will be supported as opportunities arise.
Connecting Places

The National Park has a connected network of strategic paths and waterways to be explored and enjoyed by all.

OUR VISION

The Programme for Government 2020–2021 is strong in its focus on addressing the Global Climate Change Emergency. The National Park Authority is equally committed to tackling this challenge.

Within the National Park we can most effectively play our part by promoting and celebrating the multiple benefits of active and low-carbon journeys within the rural environment of this special landscape.

The National Park Partnership Plan 2018–2023 sets out the clear ambition of fewer journeys being made into and around the Park by car and the area is ideally positioned to try innovative and exemplary partnership projects which connect different modes of transport.

To achieve this, there needs to be a functioning network of active and public transport options which complement each other and provide viable and attractive alternatives to coming by motorised vehicle.

People will be able to make travel choices that minimise the long-term impacts on our climate and the wellbeing of future generations.

Draft National Transport Strategy 2
Current national policy and funding positions make it possible to consider a number of potential high value path development projects which would greatly enhance the National Walking and Cycling Network from which we can develop behaviour change initiatives and promote active and sustainable travel itineraries.

Some other popular locations, such as Balmaha, are unfortunately now suffering from negative peak period issues associated with high volumes of visitors arriving by car. It is crucial that places and transport infrastructure are designed to offer active and low carbon options to cope with increased numbers and protect the environment.

We know that integration and innovation are essential if we are to deliver our connected vision for the National Park and to reduce car journeys into and within it. Further improvements are particularly required on the key links in and out of the National Park with Glasgow, Stirling and Gourock. The West Highland Line train stations also offer exciting opportunities within the network, particularly as Scotrail launch the new modified active tourism carriages.

Case study

**Strathyre - Kingshouse path**

This 3.5km off-road path, cost £1.5m, was completed in 2014, giving cyclists and walkers an alternative to using the busy A84 trunk road.

The path connects residents to local amenities, such as the school, village hall and food and drink destinations and is now a key asset to the area.

“It is a great facility for both local people and visitors to the area to use with lovely scenic views to take in. Its completion now means that cyclists can travel on a traffic-free stretch of the National Cycle Network all the way from Callander to Killin.”

*John Lauder – Sustrans Scotland*
Where we will focus our efforts

These are the priority initiatives we will focus on to better connect places around the National Park.

13. Continue to develop the National Walking and Cycling Network within and around the National Park

Obvious infrastructure gaps in the non-car travel network around the National Park, such as Tarbet to Crianlarich and Glen Dochart, create barriers to safe active travel and active tourism.

We are committed to delivering strategic projects which will enhance the local and national path network such as the A82 between Tarbet and Crianlarich, the Glen Dochart corridor between Tyndrum and Killin and the Loch Earn Railway Path which will link NCN7 east to St Fillans and beyond into Perthshire.

Other connections within the National Park should be further enhanced to allow people to actively explore with confidence. For example the West Loch Lomond Cycle Path between Balloch and Tarbet, Tarbet to Arrochar, and NCN7 between Balloch, Drymen and Aberfoyle.

Connections at key National Park travel gateways such as Balloch, Callander and Dunoon will also be an area of focus with significant progress having already been made on a new path link between Stirling and Callander. Better connections can be created from Dunoon and investment is required into the NCN7 between Balloch and Glasgow where short sections of poorer quality surface present a barrier to some.

Delivery partners


National Performance Framework

Environment  Health  Communities  Human Rights

14. Enhanced public transport hubs and services that connect with active travel and tourism networks around the National Park

A well-designed strategic path network across the National Park can only provide a basis for behaviour change if that network has a strong relationship with the public transport system, allowing itineraries to be created and promoted with confidence.

Balloch train station provides a fantastic opportunity for an attractive transport hub where onward travel options and opportunities are inspiring and clear. Balloch and Callander bus stations also have the potential to be greatly improved with better design, promotion and new cycle friendly bus services.

Scotrail has begun work to add new innovative carriage designs to their fleet and these are planned for the West Highland Line for Summer 2020. The aim is that they will provide exciting new cycle, golf and snowsport travel opportunities at Helensburgh, Tarbet, Ardlui, Crianlarich and Tyndrum and help drive active tourism itineraries along the key transport corridor. Key delivery partners have contributed to early design discussions but further work is required to encourage public awareness and use of this exciting new initiative.

Delivery partners


National Performance Framework

Environment  Health  Communities  Human Rights
16. Develop a Mobility as a Service pilot programme providing single ticket journeys and itineraries across the National Park

We know that planning a journey into or around the National Park using public transport can sometimes mean a complex process of calculating different transport options and the separate costs of each. This is a barrier to people making active and low carbon travel choices, as a car journey may seem easier with more predictable costs. To tackle this we need to offer more appealing alternatives.

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) offers an exciting opportunity for the National Park to showcase innovative technology to make low carbon journeys easier within a highly visited, car dominated rural area. This initiative will combine, promote and reward active and low carbon journeys with an easy to navigate website and application, so that anyone can easily plan a journey and explore the National Park with a single payment which can cover train, bus, e-bike and waterbus along with other options.

**Delivery partners**


**National Performance Framework**

- Environment
- Healthy and active
- Communities
- Skills
- Respect
Connecting Places

All strategic path projects will be designed to be enjoyed by walkers, leisure cyclists and horse riders whilst being appropriate for each particular location.

Within any new road corridor developments, designs should prioritise everything from safe walking and cycling up to multi-day leisure cycling. These roadside paths should not be designed for sport cyclists who will be catered for within the primary carriageway design.

All path and place design will future-proof infrastructure for predicted trends in behaviour and technology as far as is reasonably possible.

Projects will be supported where it is clear that they will improve the public’s enjoyment of the National Park path network and be designed to the best standards possible.

Projects which show innovative designs that can overcome difficult barriers to active exploring of the National Park are to be welcomed and encouraged.
The National Park provides an exciting range of outdoor activity opportunities for everyone to learn about, experience and value our wild landscapes.

As well as providing great recreation opportunities in and around popular towns and villages, it is important to also support those who wish to confidently explore further and enjoy different experiences.

There are areas of wild land within the National Park which are accessed by many thousands of people every year and, in particular, a huge range of hill walking routes for all levels of ability. Many people have fallen in love with hill walking thanks to iconic hills in the National Park like Ben A’an, Conic Hill and the Cobbler. These hills and others are to be valued and protected so they can continue to be enjoyed by future generations.

Our forests and woodlands also offer different experiences for anyone who wants to get away from it all for some peace and tranquillity.

Six of Scotland’s 29 ‘Great Trails’ pass through the National Park and are another valuable opportunity for people to gain confidence in more remote areas. Like munros, they are becoming something of a ‘ticklist’ adventure, providing the ideal pathway from day-walks to challenging end-to-end expeditions, and are an important part of the active tourism product.
All six trails are key elements of the recreational offer of the National Park and need to be protected and enhanced where appropriate.

Scotland is also criss-crossed by a myriad of ancient tracks, roads, paths and ‘lost ways’. These include coffin routes, used by people to carry their dead for burial in the consecrated ground of the local church; drovers’ roads used to move livestock from one place to another; and old military roads, constructed in the Highlands by the British Government in the 18th century attempting to bring order to the Jacobite rebellion. The National Park contains three of these military roads at Tyndrum to Fort William, The Rest and Be Thankful, and Tarbet to Crianlarich. These routes have rich and storied histories, adding genuine heritage to a day’s exploration and make for great walking and cycling – away from more popular areas.

This theme also recognises the value of the more unusual experiences available including hill loch swimming, bouldering, foraging, bush craft and survivor skills, and dark sky exploration. Better promotion of these could create new opportunities without the need for significant infrastructure investment which would otherwise change the experience.
Where we will focus our efforts

These are the priority initiatives we will focus on to encourage people to explore the National Park further.

17. Protect and improve Scotland’s Great Trails within the National Park

The West Highland Way, Three Lochs Way, Great Trossachs Path, John Muir Way, Loch Lomond and Cowal Way and the Rob Roy Way routes are a vital part of the national recreation offer. We are committed to improving path condition, accessibility, promotion and maintenance to ensure that these assets are managed in a way that is sustainable and effective.

Partners with an interest in the West Highland Way are developing new governance, monitoring and maintenance systems and capital investment programmes. Lessons learnt here can be shared with other route stakeholders to ensure all of the routes are protected and meeting public expectations of Great Trail status.

This initiative also links into Priority Initiative 4: Creative, effective and sustainable path monitoring and maintenance programmes.

**Delivery partners**


18. Reconnect people with cultural heritage through historic glen routes, coffin roads, drovers and pilgrim routes and hill lochs.

Over the past 10 years, Scotways (Scottish Rights of Way & Access Society) have been gathering information and descriptions, identifying 22 known heritage routes in the National Park.

We will work together to encourage greater awareness and appreciation of these heritage routes through the production and promotion of online information. There is also an opportunity to re-establish new heritage routes in the National Park where they link into the wider recreation network.

We also believe that there is a project and story to be told around the Aqueduct path which follows Glasgow’s water resource from Loch Katrine to Milngavie and could celebrate the incredible engineering achievement that it represents, whilst providing a fun, interesting and valuable link between the heart of the Trossachs and Scotland’s largest city.

**Delivery partners**

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, Scotways, Landowners, Scottish Outdoor Recreation Association, Scottish Water, Forestry and Land Scotland, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Youth Committee, Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum

**National Performance Framework**

Environment  Health  Communities  Education  International
19. Develop a suite of full-day route cards and itineraries

Unlike the ‘Step into the Park’ (Priority Initiative 3), this is aimed at those who have more confidence and are looking for full day experiences for walking, cycling or horse-riding to explore more of the huge range and variety of landscapes the National Park offers.

The production and promotion of route cards and itineraries provides a helpful guide for people to choose and enjoy a different experience or area, perhaps for the first time. We will use a collaborative approach to ensure consistent messaging around responsible behaviour and advice on how to safely enjoy and respect different outdoor environments.

We will also look at promoting ‘micro-adventures’ – short, local and low-cost adventures into wilderness areas – in the National Park.

**Delivery partners**

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, Mountaineering Scotland, Ramblers Scotland, Scotways, SportScotland, Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland, British Horse Society, Forestry and Land Scotland, Landowners, Business Associations

**National Performance Framework**

- Environment
- Health
- Communities
- International
20. Woodland and forests which maximise the opportunities for exploration and escape

Trees and woodlands are integral to the scenery, recreation and quality of life for those who live, work in and visit the area and form a vital part of our recreational resource. Many core paths, long distance trails, community path networks, cycle routes and upland paths are within the woodlands of the National Park. The wooded loch shores are also hugely popular for both day visitors and camping, and contribute significantly to the overall appeal of the National Park.

Well-designed and strategically managed productive timber areas such as Queen Elizabeth and Argyll Forest Parks can offer full and multi-day experiences. These would celebrate the health and environmental benefits of our forests and woodlands and support the towns and villages in Cowal and the Trossachs.

This initiative links into Priority Initiative 5 – Develop Aberfoyle and the Trossachs as an internationally recognised active tourism destination.

**Delivery partners**
Forestry and Land Scotland, Woodland Trust, RSPB, National Trust for Scotland, Communities, Business Associations

**National Performance Framework**

- Environment
- Health
- Communities
- International

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**Exploring Further**

Promotion of wider opportunities beyond hubs should be focused around itineraries which link to public transport services.

Network development and promotion should always consider long-term maintenance and legacy impacts.

All promotion and communications should include clear messages around self-responsibility, SOAC and other nationally accepted codes of conduct.

Promotion and network development should always consider responsible land management operations and any potential negative impacts on natural and cultural heritage.
The National Park Partnership Plan 2018–2023 sets out a clear ambition to develop more opportunities for everyone to enjoy water-based recreation and sporting activities across the National Park’s lochs, rivers and coasts.

We aim to raise the infrastructure standards on and around water so that we can celebrate the National Park’s lochs, rivers and coasts and encourage new audiences to enjoy them safely and responsibly.

World-class paddlesports and boating opportunities are available throughout the National Park but many don’t know where to look or lack confidence and resources to enjoy them. Consequently the investment into infrastructure so far and the health and economic benefits this offers have not reached their potential.

Loch Lomond Watersports Association is a good example of separate clubs and organisations combining resources and working towards the creation of a Watersports Hub which works in each of their interests and helps them all become more sustainable and inclusive.
Open water swimming is one of the fastest growing recreation activities in the country. The National Park boasts some of the most accessible and best locations to enjoy swimming safely in the UK and we want to see this trend continue. In particular we want people, especially young people, to see open water swimming as a safe, fun activity and not necessarily just for high-achieving athletes. The success of the Great Scottish Swim and Go Swim Loch Lomond in Balloch showcase the interest in this activity and are to be encouraged. With 2020 as the Year of Coasts and Waters, it is a chance to reflect the national focus on watersports within the National Park.

The southern basin of Loch Lomond is particularly busy with a wide variety of interest groups, from ferry operators through to local triathlon clubs, and continued dialogue and open discussions are essential to allow each to thrive in this busy and accessible area. We are clear that safe, open water swimming and paddlesport opportunities are a key element of the Balloch and Lomond Shores offer. These locations can provide suitable venues for large new audiences to experience and become interested in watersports.

Elsewhere Loch Ard, Loch Long, Loch Venachar, Loch Lubnaig, Loch Earn and Loch Eck offer fantastic opportunities for activities in different conditions and environments. There is ongoing work here to improve infrastructure and to promote opportunities to allow more people to be more active but also to relieve the existing pressures on busy honey pot sites.

The Coasts and Waters theme cross references others within this plan including: A Park for All, Vibrant and Active Places, and Happy and Healthy People. It is important that work on and around water does not develop in isolation from land-based themes.

Case study
Loch Long Jetty

This 50-metre pontoon was built by the Loch Long Jetty Association in summer 2019.

“I think this will be a stunning addition to Arrochar, to the local economy, to the fabric of the community”.

MSP Jackie Baillie
Where we will focus our efforts

These are the priority initiatives we will focus on for the coasts and water of the National Park.

21. Promote a National Park wide “Into the Water” infrastructure programme

Many formal groups and experienced paddlesport or boating enthusiasts already enjoy the water recreation the National Park has to offer but they do so despite some of the current infrastructure, not due to it.

This initiative works towards the delivery of infrastructure improvements at key sites across the National Park. Potential projects will include supporting new pontoon developments like the recent community project in Arrochar, accessible gate arrangements and access improvements, toilet and changing facilities, and on-site signage to promote opportunities to new audiences.

The intention is that these projects will remove barriers to participation, improve opportunities for all water recreation interests, focus activity around key areas and exemplify best practice which reflects the quality of the landscape and the environment.

The aim is that key waterbodies across the National Park have world-leading infrastructure which compliments Scotland’s world-leading access rights and can be duly promoted and celebrated.

**Delivery partners**

Scottish Canoe Association, Royal Yachting Association Scotland, SportScotland, Loch Lomond Association, Forestry and Land Scotland, Community Development Trusts, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, Landowners, Local Businesses

**National Performance Framework**

Health  Environment  Communities  International

22. Develop and promote high quality paddlesport and boating itineraries

Few other locations can offer the breadth of sea loch, inland loch and river adventures that the National Park offers. Following on from the success of the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail, this initiative supports the development of a suite of high quality itineraries that appeal to those who wish to hire a guide to learn a new activity and explore the landscape from a new vantage point. These would also support the more experienced audience who wish to enjoy micro-adventures across the National Park.

Digital initiatives such as Route ‘n’ Aboot Scotland 2020 led by Royal Yachting Association Scotland can also help develop awareness of opportunities and identify gaps in provision, such as accommodation and portage.

Partners will work collaboratively to promote destinations and create jobs around active water tourism. We will also work together to promote responsible access and behaviour in line with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

**Delivery partners**

Royal Yachting Association Scotland, Scottish Canoe Association, SportScotland, Loch Lomond Association, Destination Groups, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, Local Access Forum, VisitScotland

**National Performance Framework**

Health  Environment  Communities  International
23. Promote integration of open water swimming lessons into Active Schools Programme

This initiative builds on the growing interest in open water swimming and the successful delivery of free open water swimming lessons for hundreds of school children in Loch Lomond in recent years through Active Schools. Partners have shown that they can deliver high quality sessions with free equipment provision which combine healthy lifestyle and water safety messages, so that children love and respect the natural water environment.

This work can be further developed to reach new audiences and other areas of the National Park, with Loch Venachar being another opportunity.

Partners will also work to build upon the success of large-scale swim events for more children and families to be able to try open water swimming in more locations for free, in a safe environment which can lead to a lifelong love for the activity and appreciation of water safety.

Delivery partners
West Dunbartonshire Leisure, Active Stirling, Sportscotland, Scottish Swimming, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

National Performance Framework
24. Development of blue space and blue health projects

Many people enjoy simply sitting or walking beside water and may not even be aware of the direct health and wellbeing benefits that this brings.

Historically, Loch Lomond and the Clyde have provided escapism and health benefits to people from Glasgow for several generations, but the terms ‘blue space’ or ‘blue health’ are a new way of describing the benefits of large waterbodies.

There is a presumption that everyone has the opportunity to access and savour the lochs and rivers of the National Park but sometimes that connection is severed, for instance Lochearnhead has very little attractive public access to the loch shore.

Projects coming from this initiative will create new well-designed public spaces immediately adjacent to water. These will most likely come through Community Action Plans or Place Plans and use the latest academic research to inform the designs and measure success.

The international BlueHealth Project is a research initiative investigating the links between environment, climate and health which can help all stakeholders understand the value of certain locations and how to maximise the benefits that they can bring to everyone.

Delivery partners

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, BlueHealth Project, NHS, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust, Clyde Marine Partnership, Community Partnership

National Performance Framework

Health  Environment  Communities  International
How will we measure success?

All partners are committed to pooling monitoring tools and resources to track and report on the key indicators which show that this Delivery Plan is achieving its commitments under the National Park Partnership Plan and other national priorities.

It is also important to note that whilst the plan drives forward participation and inclusion, parallel indicators will enable all partners to evaluate the potential impacts of larger numbers of people enjoying the National Park and avoid any negative impacts on nature, landscape and public experience.

The number of people participating in an activity can be a misleading measurement of success and can potentially even lead to an increase in inequality. This plan is committed to helping the inactive to become active and the indicators on page 49 will ensure that we deliver for under-represented groups and new audiences.
Indicators

National Park Partnership Plan Indicators around increased opportunities and participation:

5. Proportion of people travelling to and around the National Park by public or active transport
   - Reduce proportion arriving by car from 2015/16 Visitor Survey baseline of 85%
   - Reduce proportion exploring by car from 2015/16 Visitor Survey baseline of 62%
   - Increase proportion exploring by foot, water and bike from the 2015/16 Visitor Survey

6. Proportion of people taking part in active recreation
   - Increase from 2015/16 Visitor Survey baselines of 24% for active sport and 49% for low-level walking

12. Number of projects delivering well-designed, sustainable places
    - Delivery in 3 communities per year of the Plan

13. Number of community-identified projects delivered
    - Delivery of 3 projects per Community Action Plan by 2023

National Park Partnership Plan Indicators around potential impacts:

3. Percentage of designated sites in favourable condition
   - Increase from 2017 baseline of 76% of designated site features to 80% by 2023

4. Percentage of water bodies achieving at least good ecological condition
   - Increase from 2016 baseline of 44% to 59% by 2023

8. Reported public experience of the Park’s settlements and landscapes
   - Increase in proportion of people reporting a good quality experience

The National Park Visitor Survey runs every five years and is the primary source of data behind Indicators 5 and 6. The Visitor Survey is a year-long, National Park-wide survey to gather visitor profile and behaviour information, visitor feedback and trends from a sample of 2,400. Within intervening years, information on some proxy measures can be considered including:

- Number of cyclists and pedestrians using national walking or cycling networks
- Travel by personal vehicle to our camping permit areas
- Number of passengers travelling by train
- People counters at key paths and peaks
- Walk in the Park group walkers

In addition to the measures above it is also important that we work with emerging national indicators such as the Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Indicators from the Active Travel Framework.
## Appendix 1 – Potential Delivery Partners

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<th>AccessAble</th>
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<td>Active Stirling</td>
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<td>Helensburgh and District Access Trust</td>
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<td>Clyde Marine Partnership</td>
<td>John Muir Trust</td>
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<td>Lake of Menteith Fishery</td>
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<td>Local Recreation Providers</td>
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<td>Destination Groups</td>
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<td>Loch Lomond Watersports Association</td>
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<td>Event Scotland</td>
<td>Long Distance Routes Forum</td>
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<td>FABB</td>
<td>Love Loch Lomond</td>
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Mountaineering Scotland
National Farmers Union Scotland
National Trust for Scotland
Native Wood Cooperative Scotland
NHS Forth Valley
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland
Paths for All Partnership
Perth & Kinross Access Panel
Perth & Kinross Council
Physical Activity for Health Research Centre
Pilgrims Routes Association
Public Health Scotland
Rambiers Scotland
Regional Transport Partnerships
Royal Yachting Association Scotland
RSPB
Sailing Clubs
Scotrail
Scottish Canoe Association
Scottish Environment Protection Agency SEPA
Scottish Forestry
Scottish Government
Scottish Government - Active Scotland Division
Scottish Land & Estates
Scottish Natural Heritage
Scottish Orienteering
Scottish Outdoor Recreation Association
Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum
Scottish Sports Association
Scottish Swimming
Scottish Water
Scotways
SportScotland
Stirling Council
Stirling Cycle Hub
Strathard Partnership
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
Strathfillan Community Council
Sustrans
Tactran
Transport Operators
Transport Scotland
Trossachs Mobility
Vale of Leven Mental Health
VisitScotland
West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC)
WDC Access Panel
WDC Health & Social Care
West Dunbartonshire Leisure
Wheelyboat Association
Woodland Trust Scotland
Young Scot
Appendix 2 -
National strategies and policies

National Strategies which have influenced this Delivery Plan include:

National Performance Framework
A More Active Scotland: Scotland’s Physical Activity Delivery Plan
Public Health Priorities for Scotland
National Walking Strategy
2030 Active Travel Vision
Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017–2020
Scottish Mountain Bike Strategy for 2019–2025
Awakening the Giant: A Strategic Framework for Scotland’s Marine Tourism Sector
Clyde Regional Marine Plan
Scottish Canoe Association 2017–2021 Strategic Plan
Tourism Scotland 2020
National Planning Framework
Scotland’s Forestry Strategy 2019–2029
A Connected Scotland: Our Strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger connections