

**Annual Operational Plan 2020/21: Progress to August 2020**

Complete	On Track	Behind Schedule	On hold due to COVID-19	Cancelled due to COVID-19
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**Bold items** = COVID-19 recovery priority

AOP Activity	AOP Deliverable	YTD progress	Rating
<b>1. Taking and inspiring action to address the global climate emergency and nature crisis</b>			
1.1 We will maximise our role and action in the climate and nature emergencies.	<b>Create a Mission Zero Route Map for our own activity and that within the National Park</b>	Work, although slowed, continues to focus on gathering data and setting overarching values and principles to inform the creation of targets and actions to move us towards Net Zero. We are working to identify what climate benefits from COVID19 remote working and reduced travel can be retained. Further progress on confirming the NPA estate feasibility study is underway.	On track
	Develop a system to prioritise and record activity based on climate impact	On hold due to other COVID-19 priorities	On hold due to COVID-19
	Seek opportunities to actively participate in the UN's COP26 in Glasgow and use the event to showcase our work	Planning for the now delayed event is continuing and we are active members of the relevant groups. Ready to action when plans are revisited post Covid-19.	On hold due to COVID-19

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1.2 We will support our communities, land managers and businesses in the transition to zero carbon.	Deliver the National Park Grant schemes to assist our communities and land managers to deliver local actions that help address the global climate emergency and nature crisis	The grant schemes were launched in July and applications closed in late August.	On track
	Support community organisations to increase momentum in community led partnerships or programmes, including seeking access to wider regional funding or capacity opportunities.	The Community Partnership administered the Scottish Government Supporting Communities Fund with grants made so far to 34 communities to help them during the pandemic. The Forth Environment Link led application to the Climate Challenge fund was unsuccessful. An EOI was submitted in July 2020 by the NPA and Forth Environment Link for the National Park to pilot a regional hub to facilitate community climate action..	On track
1.3 To support habitat management and improvement, we will work with partners to better manage land for climate and nature within the National Park.	Provide advice and support to landowners, partners and communities to establish new woodlands, and tackle invasive non-native species	A number of Wild Park actions have been able to progress, despite some delays including INNS treatment. COVID has delayed recruitment and landowner engagement.	Behind schedule
	Deliver peatland restoration projects. Develop a programme approach to increase the scale of project delivery in line with Scottish Government ambitions	Direct funding of Peatland ACTION money to us has been agreed, after some delays due to COVID. Peatland restoration work at two sites is lined up to commence imminently. A third site is in planning stages for this year.	Behind schedule

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	Complete the Strathard Framework project which will pilot an approach to local development planning that also integrates land use planning	Work is continuing to take the Framework forwards, with further engagement planned for late September.	On track
<b>2. Enhancing our visitor experience, volunteering, and active living opportunities</b>			
2.1 We will continue to promote ways to get active in the outdoors.	Finalise our 'Active Park, Healthy People' plan	Timeline being revised so that new plan can consider COVID-19 implications.	On hold due to COVID-19
	Progress key aspects of our Active Park, Healthy People plan such as developing new health projects.	New timeline and task list being created with provisional target of December Board 2020.	On hold due to COVID-19
	Support the delivery of Go Swim Loch Lomond in summer 2020, increasing participation from last year.	Event cancelled for 2020 in conjunction with delivery partner and sponsors. Marketing in place for Go Swim Loch Lomond 28 August 2021.	Cancelled due to COVID-19
	Explore new opportunities to promote outdoor swimming and water safety throughout the National Park	Water safety programme 2020 cancelled due to Covid-19. Water safety signage and new Public Rescue Equipment progressing for NP sites in line with RoSPA report.	Behind schedule
2.2 We will celebrate and leverage national themes and campaigns such as Scotland's Year of	Create and deliver a programme of events and campaigns for the Year of Coasts and Waters	SG planning to run Year of Coasts and Waters into 2021 on reduced scale.	On hold due to COVID-19

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Coasts and Waters, and the West Highland Way's 40th Anniversary.	Work with partners on bringing investment for the future sustainability of the West Highland Way	Activity and timeline revised. £70K LEADER grant retained to Dec 2020 towards business development. 40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary marketing campaign launched August to generate profile to support commercial activity in Q3 & Q4.	Behind Schedule
2.3 We will continue to develop and deliver volunteer, education and outreach opportunities, to ensure people from a wide range of backgrounds are enjoying, valuing and helping to manage the National Park.	Embed climate change and nature crisis education in all of our outdoor learning activities	Plans agreed and work underway for further online resource creation, training and support for schools to get active within their local areas within the NP.	On track
	Continue to support our Junior Ranger, Youth Committee, educational travel grant and volunteer programmes	Volunteer activity has started with a focus on supporting Car Park information gathering, litter collection, WHW path surveying and INNS projects. Youth Committee holding regular meetings and cross-organisational sharing being enabled with delivery partners across the NP. Two schools have indicated they want to run a Junior Ranger programme in the Autumn term, so preparation underway for this.	On track
	Partnership delivery of over 1800 John Muir Awards	Partnership activity focussed on online training and resource creation, ready for return to school in August.	On track

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2.4 We will support the delivery of the Callander's Landscape Partnership to improve the natural and cultural heritage of the area	<b>Progress and complete projects under each of the four themes: Restore, Explore, Heritage, and Engage</b>	Match-funding aims are being met, engagement targets exceeded and the scope of several projects expanded. Key challenges remain around some capital works including the Falls of Leny Visitor Destination, future management and legal arrangements. Due to Covid-19 delays, the extension to the programme is being discussed with National Lottery Heritage Fund and partners to ensure completion of projects	Behind Schedule
<b>3. Addressing the changing challenges posed by substantial visitor numbers</b>			
3.1 We will complete a Visitor Survey to identify visitor types, behaviour, and tourism market trends	Complete a Visitor Survey that informs our efforts to work with partners to provide services that enable visitors to enjoy the National Park in a responsible and sustainable way	11-month report at draft stage. Total sample of 2,265 instead of target 2,400 due to Covid-19 stop on data collection across the 23 locations. We are undertaking a re-analysis of data from the 2015/16 wave of research to be able to ensure valid comparisons between the surveys.	On track
3.2 We will continue to develop effective approaches to the sustainable management of visitor pressures in the National Park with a focus on traffic management	<b>Work with partners and communities in the East Loch Lomond Visitor Management Group to sustainably reduce visitor pressures along the route from Drymen to Rowardennan, with a view to public transport provision and litter reduction</b>	During the reopening a joint response to operational visitor management has been coordinated with the NPA, Police Scotland, Stirling Council and Forestry and Land Scotland. This has included traffic management measures, temporary toilet provision, live car park capacity updates and parking enforcement. Momentum from this partnership will be used to reengage the VMG to focus on implementation of solutions for the 2021 season.	Behind schedule

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3.3 We will continue to deliver commitments within the Camping Development Framework	Assess the barriers to camping for people with disabilities	Cancelled due to the importance of user testing and the reprioritisation of the programme to focus on the reduction of future visitor management pressures for the expected continuation of 'staycations' in the 2021 season.	Cancelled due to COVID-19
	Work with partners to increase low cost camping and motorhome facility provision at gateways to the National Park including West Loch Lomond and Callander	Planning work will continue with the Local Authorities and Forestry and Land Scotland to ensure that there is an increase in sustainable overnight parking opportunities for motorhomes and campervans for the 2021 season.	Behind Schedule
	<b>Ensure that campsites and permit areas are reopened safely in time for Phase 3 of the SG Routemap. Consider implications of likely staycation focussed recovery on demand for camping and camper van provision and facilitate others where possible.</b>	Campsites and permit areas opened July 17 <sup>th</sup> in line with government guidance. Strong engagement with other camping and motorhome providers such as FLS occurring.	On track
3.4 We will work with partners on litter and waste prevention to minimise the environmental impact of litter and waste and improve the experience of those visiting, working in, and living in the National Park	Establish a National Park wide litter prevention steering group	The enhanced partnership working on visitor management during the Covid-19 lockdown also covered litter and flytipping, and the development of the specific steering / action group for litter will be a natural progression. Proposed to draw together as part of the end of season review.	Behind Schedule

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	Work with partners to develop and test litter prevention initiatives	Due to the acute pressures, partnership working this season focused predominantly on responding to effectively cleaning litter from across the National Park (below). More proactive work will be developed from the learnings this season.	Behind Schedule
	<b>Ensure the resumption of co-ordinated litter management with local authority partners and develop a litter prevention focussed strand to unlocking visitor campaigns and tie in with national campaigns.</b>	Love it Like a Local litter campaign launched. West Loch Lomond litter partnership with Argyll & Bute Council reconfirmed in June. New trial process across Land Operations, Rangers and Volunteers.	On track
<b>4. Continual improvement in delivering our core functions, including how we plan and use our resources, and meet our statutory requirements and duties</b>			
4.1 We will support place making at regional and local community level	Undertake preparatory work (monitoring, evidence gathering, early engagement / training) to support the next Local Development Plan.	Some slippage in this work programme due to reduced staff capacity during summer months including 2019 Monitoring Report and update to Action Programme.	Behind Schedule
	<b>Explore opportunities from the Government's focus on regional approaches to strategy, policy and delivery.</b>	Work has progressed well towards preparing an indicative Regional Spatial Strategy.	On Track

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	Support communities in developing Community Place Plans	All communities contacted to identify support needs. Discussion is still ongoing however so far we have confirmed we will work with one community (Balquhidder, Lochearnhead and Strathyre).	On track
4.2 We will implement changes introduced by the Planning Scotland (Act) 2019	Review our internal processes to ensure they are compliant with the new legislation and identify any new opportunities the new legislation presents.	We have continued to engage on arising issues and opportunities, through Scottish Government and Heads of Planning Scotland liaison.	On track
4.3 We will identify ways to supplement our core funding to help sustain and improve the services we deliver	Implement car park charging at some additional sites	Current resources are focused on other priorities coming out of lockdown. Timeline will be reassessed.	On hold due to COVID-19
	Review our existing charges for services to determine whether they remain appropriate	This work is currently unresourced and deprioritised in light of COVID-19.	On hold due to COVID-19
	<b>Continue to explore opportunities to lever in external funding to help deliver our priorities</b>	We continue to work with external funding partners on a number of ongoing projects. However, the extent to which we are doing this is behind what we would normally be able to progress.	Behind schedule
4.4 We will continue to address Health and Safety risks to our staff and the public	<b>Improve our internal processes and policies</b>	Focus has been on enabling COVID-safe working including putting in place appropriate policies and procedures.	On track
4.5 We will look at further improvements to the	<b>Develop a strategy for cloud-based IT services</b>	Options for cloud-based services being explored with potential providers.	On track



AOP Activity	AOP Deliverable	YTD progress	Rating
effectiveness of our corporate services.	Review our procurement processes to improve sustainability and ensure they remain efficient and robust overall	Resource currently reallocated and item deprioritised in light of COVID-19.	On hold due to COVID-19
<b>5. Delivering and Facilitating a Safe Recovery and Reopening of the National Park</b>			
5.1 We will develop a phased reopening of National Park Authority visitor sites and facilities which ensures the health of communities, visitors and staff is protected.	<b>Create and implement a phased reopening plan for National Park Authority facilities which aligns with the Scottish Government COVID19 Route Map and implementation of its relaxations.</b>	Most facilities reopened through July. Remaining areas to reopen subject to additional constraints, eg completion of construction at Balmaha Visitor Centre	On track
	<b>Create a safe deployment plan for the Ranger Service and Land Operations Team</b>	Deployment plan implemented gradually through June and July onwards	Complete
	<b>Assess and implement any necessary safety measures and associated infrastructure are required before facilities can be opened, including toilets, camp sites and the Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway.</b>	Completed for sites that have reopened. We are continuing to keep these under review as sites are used to improve and adapt where necessary	On track

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5.2 We will work with and co-ordinate other public bodies, NGOs, communities, businesses and landowners and work with national bodies to work towards a saferecovery.	<b>We will establish a National Park Safe Recovery Action Group with our partners to co-ordinate facilities reopening, traffic management, visitor management (including enforcement) and communications to visitors and communities</b>	The group continues to meet at least weekly and has a number of operational groups covering communications co-ordination as well as weekend deployment and intelligence gathering.	On track
	<b>Ensure regular communications with National Park community organisations both directly and working collaboratively with the Community Partnership.</b>	Stakeholder engagement and communication continues to be a priority with weekly updates to communities via the Community Partnerships newsletter, and when appropriate direct communications from the Park Authority to Community Councils/Trusts in the National Park. Area-specific virtual meetings have taken place where a cross-agency/community response is required to specific issues.	On track
5.3 We will work with business, agencies, local authorities, communities and other partners towards the recovery of our visitor economy.	<b>Facilitate regular meetings of the National Park Destination Group to ensure awareness of issues facing tourism businesses, communicate these to Scottish Government and identify future actions.</b>	High frequency of meetings continued until August, focusing on re-opening and recovery planning; opportunities to influence SG support; and the development of business tool kits, public and community campaigns and information sharing services. Monthly meetings will now continue to identify practical areas of support for different sectors and individual businesses including NPA tenants.	On track

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<p>5.4 We will ensure the continuity of our planning service to determine applications and provide advice to assist applicants as they seek to adapt to new operating guidance that supports safe re-opening in line with the Government's Route Map.</p>	<p><b>Availability of responsive planning advice and the delivery of timeous planning decisions to support applicants who are adapting to and investing in recovery.</b></p>	<p>The main focus was continuing to refine and improve remote case handling through electronic workflows, limited office based operations to support statutory publicity on new applications and establish site visit procedures. Work continues to seek to increase capacity with system access improvements whilst prioritising casework.</p>	<p>On track</p>
<p>5.5 We will engage with and advise a range of national organisations and groups to help develop policies, guidance and support as Scotland moves through the four phases of the National Route Map and develop a green recovery.</p>	<p><b>National guidance and support measures respond to the needs of the National Park area</b></p>	<p>Ongoing collaboration with the Greener Scotland Communications Group and the Communications sub-group of the National Park Safe Recovery Action Group has helped a joined-up approach to communications between partners and citizens.</p>	<p>On track</p>