

Annual Operational Plan 2021/22: Progress to November 2021



Rating Key:

Complete	On Track	Behind Schedule	At Risk	Postponed to 2022/23	Cancelled
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AOP Activity	AOP Deliverable	Year to Date (YTD) Commentary (Nov 21)	Rating
1: Taking and inspiring action to address the global climate emergency			
1.1 Start to implement our Mission Zero Route Map to be a net zero organisation by 2030	Develop a detailed implementation plan for the next two to three years of investment and change within the National Park Authority	Prioritised plan for delivery across the Mission Zero programme prepared in line with the review of budgets at the start of Q3. Focus has been agreed for the development of strategic long term plans for estates infrastructure upgrades and fleet decarbonisation.	On Track
	Deliver infrastructure upgrades across our estate including heat pump installations, new electric vehicle charging points, and lighting upgrades	Principal design team has been appointed and initial drafts of implementation plans for infrastructure improvements have been created. Where possible we will seek to undertake positive estate improvements, however the external team will also be working on the development of our longer term implementation plan.	Behind Schedule
	Review our fleet requirements and create a new management strategy for our road vehicles to identify how we will electrify our fleet and curtail petrol/diesel along the way	We have recently commenced work with the Energy Savings Trust who are going to assess our current fleet use and prepare a decarbonisation plan by end of FY. In time this will inform our own internal fleet strategy.	On Track
	Engage our staff, Board, and volunteers to support and encourage positive behaviour changes to reduce emissions, including through a review of our organisational policies	Proposal for engagement plans to be integrated into team level plans developed, involving a refocus of the Climate Change Group to Mission Zero champions to assist moving this forward. Carbon literacy training in development with Keep Scotland Beautiful with the intention of training 30 staff members in 2 cohorts in Q4.	On Track
1.2 Work with our partners to deliver strategic change across the National Park	Build momentum for coordinated climate action within the National Park	We are working with Small World Consulting to create a Net Zero baseline for the National Park as a place. Focus is on sourcing the most applicable data for our NP and working with other NPs to learn from previous use of the modelling.	On Track
	Leverage opportunities that the UN's COP26 in Glasgow provides	Our COP26 activity provided a platform to share the action being taken (and still needed) to tackle the climate emergency and the nature crisis, with a particular focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The important role that nature-based solutions play - Youth action and voices that need to be heard - Sustainable transport's potential to deliver multiple outcomes - The role that National Parks and protected areas play globally 	Complete
	Fund and support the Countryside Trust to work with communities and other stakeholders to develop and deliver local action for climate, nature and active travel.	The Trust has appointed a new Chief Executive. Supported delivery of sustainable travel behaviour change campaign across various social media platforms.	On Track

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1.3 Integrate land use and development planning to help address climate and nature emergencies	Complete the Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy and the Strathard Framework	The final draft Framework and Delivery Plan are being presented to the November Planning and Access Committee for approval. Once approved, the document will be designed and launched.	On Track
	Start the Regional Land Use Partnership pilot process	With reduced staff capacity and turnover we are behind schedule with pilot RLUP development. We are currently recruiting for a Regional Land Use Adviser who will lead on the development of the pilot RLUP governance and delivery model.	Behind Schedule
	Start to consider how future development could contribute to a zero carbon National Park as part of the new Local Development Plan	The publication of the Scottish Government's Draft National Planning Framework 4 now provides greater clarity on the role of the planning system in relation to climate and nature and will help inform approach. Interim planning guidance has been prepared to strengthen guidance on sustainable transport and safeguarding policies to protect non-residential sites within town and village centres (and support more localised living and working).	On Track
2: Restoring and protecting nature in the National Park			
2.1 Develop a future strategy for nature	Develop a Future Nature Route Map including more ambitious landscape- scale nature restoration projects	We are currently leading a series of partner and stakeholder engagement sessions regarding the draft Route Map. Following these further drafting and development will take place with a view to taking the final draft to the March 2022 Board meeting.	On Track
2.2 Deliver Nature-Based Solutions projects.	Undertake peatland restoration and native woodland expansion projects	Peatland restoration has been completed at one site and is nearing completion on the other. It wasn't possible to progress further sites to the stage of getting work underway this year, partly due to COVID-19. One agreement under the woodland creation planning fund and two tree planting grants have been signed. Others are in progress. Our agreement for funding the Upper Teith project is in place and tree planting is underway.	On Track
	Deliver targeted Wild Park projects and further develop a programme of funder-ready proposals.	Riparian INNS work on 3 catchments was completed on target and mink control is underway. Discussions and development work continue on the other projects	On Track
2.3 Broaden our engagement to lead diverse groups in	Provide easy ways for all visitors to the National Park to demonstrate and share their respect for nature during their visit	In addition to our ongoing responsible visitor behaviour communications campaigns aiming to work with and reach a broader audience on key topics, a key area of focus has been on promoting and providing ways for visitors to choose sustainable travel options. Key activities include launching the new Journey Planner App, working with the Countryside Trust to deliver a sustainable travel behaviour change campaign, and our own 'A Different Adventure' strand of responsible visiting communications.	On Track

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2.3 Broaden our engagement to lead diverse groups in valuing and taking action for nature	Deliver our Junior Ranger programme, engage young people, and fund the education travel grant	The focus during this quarter has been on bringing our COP engagement strand to life. We have developed online resources, facilitated sessions focussed on Climate and Nature for conferences, schools and our Youth Committee. We have also supported more direct action through the delivery of our Junior Ranger Programmes with young people. Our Young Volunteer programme has also been able to reopen. We have successfully been recruiting new Youth Committee members and will now shift our focus to Further Education age to complete our recruitment drive for the year.	On Track
	Support our volunteers in delivering more for nature	This quarter has seen a significant reopening of volunteer activity, with over 3600hrs of volunteering activity recorded YTD. Volunteers have been involved in supporting the delivery of COP, including tree planting sessions and logistical support for delegates visiting the NP. We have more recently launched our e-bike trial.	On Track
3: Working collaboratively on positive solutions to growing visitor numbers			
3.1 Provide clear, consistent, and accessible visitor information	Implement our Joint Response Visitor Management Plan with partners, including shared engagement, infrastructure, and enforcement actions	<p>The majority of actions in the plan have been implemented fully.</p> <p>Preparations are underway for the 2022 season and the next Joint Response Visitor Management Plan (JRVMP), with NPSRAG partners and business and community representatives. The finalised JRVMP will be presented at the March Board.</p>	Complete
	Provide strategic guidance on national visitor management communications and create engaging National Park- focused campaigns	We continue to work with partners through the national visitor management group inputting into national messaging and campaigns on camping, litter, responsible toileting and motorhomes. Our approach to water safety messaging in particular has been shared with this group and incorporated into national comms led by Visit Scotland, as well as several partner organisations.	On Track
3.2 Improve visitor services infrastructure	Create a multi-year capital investment plan that considers what strategic investment would better support sustainable visitor management in the National Park	<p>Development of Strategic Visitor Infrastructure Development Plans (SVIDP) for five key tourism hotspot areas in the National Park underway; this will set out a place based and strategic plan of capital investment over the next five years – and together form the core of the multi-year capital investment plan.</p> <p>We are currently working on the first of these strategies for East and West Loch Lomond. SVIDP for Strathard & Trossachs is programmed to start in early quarter four, with studies four and five coming on stream in late Q4.</p>	On Track

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3.2 Continued.	Undertake specific improvements such as car park and path improvements, as well as identify a new tenant for our Luss Visitor Centre.	<p>Feasibility study for creation of additional seasonal parking, shuttle bus stopping infrastructure and active travel links at Loch Achray is complete. We are evaluating next steps taking account of the issues and opportunities outlined in the study.</p> <p>Tender for piers and pontoons infrastructure repairs was unsuccessful and has been re-issued with the hope of appointing a contractor to start in the new year. It is likely that these works will go into the next FY and careful management will be required to minimise disruption to all users.</p> <p>Planning application for Conic Hill path upgrade was submitted in November. Tender process to appoint contractors will run throughout to end of 2021 and appointments made once planning permission is approved (early 2022).</p> <p>Braklinn Bridge demolition tender awarded; due to start in November; progress will be weather dependent.</p> <p>Legal work for the Luss VC lease underway and expected to be finalised by the new year.</p>	Behind Schedule
	Further our work on income generation for the West Highland Way	The WHW commercial sub group is fully established and advising on new retail collection, licensing and business listings (adverts) YTD income figures: £3K merchandise royalties; £2.5 business support; £1K donations towards Year 1 £10K target. Database software for business contacts and donor records for future growth is in place.	Behind Schedule
	Deploy temporary measures to alleviate pandemic-related visitor volume pressures	Temporary toilets all removed at the end of October and plans for next years' requirements underway in line with the tendering of our public toilet cleaning contractor. Two of our Environment Officers have been retained over winter to maintain the momentum in dealing with the continued visitor pressures.	Complete
3.3 Implement the National Park Litter Prevention Strategy	Develop and deliver priority projects and targeted interventions, including those informed by engagement with the Litter Prevention Action Group	Focused work on bins at NPA Lomond sites with intention to replace/update 'node' bins in Q4, to meet needs of the VM action plan. Formalising data collection and management processes for estates litter with GIS team ready for next season. Plan to integrate litter prevention group stakeholders and actions explicitly into JRVMP/place based groups over winter, ready for next season's delivery.	On Track
	Support regular, self-led volunteering activities, subject to COVID-19 restrictions.	<p>Full end of year summary, as volunteer opportunities have finished for the season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 674 bags litter collected • 512 volunteer hours • 139 volunteer sign ups <p>Programme will be reviewed and plans made for next season in Q4.</p>	Complete

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3.4 Explore and pilot sustainable visitor transport services	Develop strategic thinking on how to deliver transport services and infrastructure that will promote modal shift from private car use to access congested places	Developed draft tender brief for Sustainable Travel and Modal Shift Report completed and final editing process between NPA/SPT and Tactran.	Behind Schedule
	Work with partners to develop and deliver new transport pilot projects, subject to pandemic restrictions	Sustainable Travel and Access Manager role recruitment process is complete with start date of Nov 24th. Partners agreed a shift on co-ordination direction and focus with more internal NPA Project Support secured to progress partner co-ordination, Sustainable Travel and Modal Shift Report and Shuttle Bus Pilot.	Behind Schedule
4: Making our organisation, our people and the National Park more resilient through a green recovery			
4.1 Support the resilience of communities and the local economy in the National Park	Engage with communities to understand their priorities and work closely with public and third sector partners to coordinate support	Community capacity support needs identified as: governance, core development work, income generation, social enterprise and asset ownership. Discussions with Third Sector Interfaces to negotiate governance training however decision to roll out postponed to next year. Support also provided to the Countryside Trust and direct to National Park communities to maximise access to Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER community led development funding with 10 communities benefitting.	On Track
	Use the National Park grant schemes and our planning role to support green recovery projects	Ten grant agreements under the Green Recovery Fund worth £171K have been signed and four more worth £97K are still in discussion with the applicants.	On Track
4.2 Use local place-making to support a green recovery in the National Park	Support more communities to prepare their own Community Place Plans to identify local place making priorities and actions needed to support lower carbon living and working within the Park	Killin and Strathfillan's Community Place Plans have both now been published. Three are at finalisation stage. Advice and support being provided to Callander as they undertake community engagement on their Place Plan. Raised community awareness of Local Place Plans via online webinar, co-designed with community representatives, attended by 35 people from 16 communities. Forth Environment Link (FEL) has been commissioned to develop a blueprint for a '20-Minute Neighbourhood' pilot for Drymen and the surrounding communities. This will provide the community with baseline evidence to undertake a new Community Place Plan and also help inform the next Local Development Plan by identifying initiatives required support a more localised way of life and lower carbon living. The intention is that learnings from this pilot will be used in other areas of the Park.	On Track

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4.2 Cont.	Support the Destination Group, consisting of National Park tourism businesses, to help respond to the challenges and opportunities of the year ahead	The business groups continue to meet to progress strategic development aims such as addressing the immediate issues presented by campervans/motorhomes; also engaged with Callander Enterprise towards the VS funded 'Access Forth Valley' promotional campaign to promote accessible visitor services. In-person business engagement has recommenced with visits to 38 local tourism business park-wide, to build relationships and aid recovery.	On Track
4.2 Cont.	Support delivery of Callander's Landscape	<p>Remaining projects are at various stages of delivery, with Path Signage, Interpretation, Digital Story-Map, Dark Skies, Volunteering, Little Leny Meadow Path and Digital Archive all progressing well. Most projects within the Research theme are now mostly complete, with final reporting underway. Plans for the programme's close and legacy are a key focus over the coming months.</p> <p>Falls of Leny is now being led by Callander Community Development Trust (CCDT), and a new proposed timeline is proposed and subject to agreement by National Heritage Lottery Fund.</p>	On Track
4.3 Implement post-pandemic ways of working for the National Park Authority	Develop a new model of working that overcomes some of the challenges of pandemic working while retaining the benefits of reduced commuting and better flexibility	Implementation of phase 2 of the new the model has been delayed due to rising case numbers and Scottish Government Guidance to continue to support home working. Once guidance eases we will be ready for implementation. Staff communication and engagement continues.	On Track
	Determine how our Board and Committees will use virtual meetings in the future	Paper presented to September Board outlining our plans. 2 LRBs have taken place in person alongside audio and visual streaming via Lifesize. Technical upgrades to better support hybrid meetings are being pursued.	On Track
4.4 Improve the organisations resilience	Making health, safety, and wellbeing improvements	The new Staff Communications & Wellbeing Group is now up and running and a Wellbeing & Hybrid working hub has been launched on Park Central. New H&S policies have been developed to address H&S policy gaps, we have obtained new software/e-learning to support DSE compliance and we will trial a new lone worker protection system in the coming weeks	On Track
	Identify ways to continue to supplement our core funding	Plans currently being worked up for submission for additional applications in early January to support various work streams.	On Track
	Improve our digital services, including developing our skills, platforms, and disaster recovery	MS Teams went live on the 1st September, with user mailboxes also being migrated to O365. O365 Cloud backup solution also went live on 1st September. ICT Engineer M365 has been working with Corporate Performance Team on designing our Data Security and Compliance for O365. Cloud based Disaster Recovery has been moved to 2022/23.	On Track