

Annual Operational Plan 2021/22: Progress to February 2022



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 (Feb 22)	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	Draft implementation plan has been created. Delivery Plan remains in draft until budget is confirmed; project team will then be better able to fully scope out the implementation plan and associated resource required.	On Track
	Deliver infrastructure upgrades across our estate including heat pump installations, new electric vehicle charging points, and lighting upgrades	Principle design team approved for 3 years; enables us to have a longer term view on infrastructure delivery. Aiming to agree on a contractor to deliver initial works on site elements (Balmaha Visitor Centre and Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway) prior to year end (dependent on planning decisions).	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	Energy Savings Trust report on decarbonisation of our fleet is due for completion at the end of Feb. This will inform future work on our internal fleet strategy. Purchase of a large electric vehicle has been completed, which is a positive shift in our fleet.	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	Ongoing development of the team plans with a monitoring process agreed. Focused delivery of the Ranger Service's winter Mission Zero work plan, reviewing progress on climate and evaluating areas for further development. Two cohorts of staff will have completed carbon literacy training by 7 th March.	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	Ongoing work with Small World Consulting; final report, which outlines a baseline of emissions for the National Park as a place has been presented to the Executive team.	On Track
	Leverage opportunities that the UN's COP26 event in Glasgow provides	While this action is complete, work is ongoing to ensure that lessons learned from COP26 are carried into our future work, specifically: increased involvement of young people in our work, a sharper focus on climate and nature in our communications, the role of sustainable transport to achieve multiple outcomes in the Park, the role that National Parks play globally in leading the way in response to the climate and nature crises.	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.	Discussions are underway with the Trust on its delivery programme and funding for 22/23.	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 Framework and Delivery Plan have been approved and are currently being redesigned before launch. Launch is expected w/c 21 st February.	On Track
	Start the Regional Land Use Partnership pilot process	Regional Land Use Advisor in post from 28 February. Current focus is governance to complete Phase 1 of project.	On Track
	Start to consider how future development could contribute to a zero carbon National Park as part of the new Local Development Plan	Consideration of draft National Planning Framework 4 is ongoing, including workshop sessions across the organisation. Research commissioned on Nature Networks (to inform development of spatial strategy in both LDP and NPPP as well as planning policy on biodiversity net gain) and on housing, second homes and short term holiday lets (to help inform the extent of new housing development required in the National Park and who this is for).	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	The development manager is now in post and is working with the Nature and Land Use team, alongside other internal and external stakeholders, to identify early priority projects. This will begin to shape a more detailed route map and an update paper for the March Board meeting.	On Track
2.2 Deliver Nature-Based Solutions projects	Undertake peatland restoration and native woodland expansion projects	Peatland restoration works have been undertaken on two sites totalling 359 ha of restoration. Final inspections and any snagging to follow before the end of March (winter weather permitting). Upper Teith tree planting completed. 7 tree planting grants signed in total and two more potential offers under discussion.	On Track
	Deliver targeted Wild Park projects and further develop a programme of funder-ready proposals.	Discussions continue on developing a riparian INNS programme on the Cur/Loch Eck /Echaig catchment.	On Track
2.3 Broaden our engagement to lead diverse groups in valuing and taking action for nature	Provide easy ways for all visitors to the National Park to demonstrate and share their respect for nature during their visit	Visitor-facing content promoted to highlight both safety and respect messaging with clear links to respecting nature, including a winter hillwalking blog in partnership with Mountaineering Scotland and a winter water safety blog in partnership with the Outdoor Swimming Society. Development of the visitor management communications plan for the 2022 season is underway with a stronger focus on messaging linked to climate and nature.	On Track
	Deliver our Junior Ranger programme, engage young people, and fund the education travel grant	Ongoing support has been provided through our Youth Committee and Young Volunteer programmes. The schools woodland project has been successfully delivered as a legacy from COP, which included education sessions within schools before planting of trees within 12 schools grounds. Ongoing training / sessions have been provided for Further Education partners and a range of online education sessions have also been delivered.	On Track

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2.3 Cont.	Support our volunteers in delivering more for nature	We have continued our programme of volunteer opportunities with over 5000 hours of activity to date. This includes litter picks, mountain path surveys, and supporting partners such as the Forth Rivers Trust. There has been a focus on preparation of the 2022 season plan for Volunteer Rangers to ensure they are supporting priority activity across the organisation.	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 (JRVMP) with partners, including shared engagement, infrastructure, and enforcement actions	2021 Plan implemented and complete, and 2022 Plan at advanced development stages.	Complete
	Provide strategic guidance on national visitor management communications and create engaging National Park- focused campaigns	Development of the National Park's 2022 visitor management communications plan is underway based on learnings from the 2021 season. Contributed to national visitor management comms approach which will strongly align to our own comms with key areas of focus being links to respect for nature and climate, water safety messaging and sustainable travel.	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	Development of Strategic Visitor Infrastructure Development Plans (SVIDP) for two key tourism hotspot areas in the National Park are underway (East and West Loch Lomond). SVIDP for Strathard & Trossachs is delayed and now programmed to start in late quarter four, with study four coming on stream in 22/23 and study five postponed.	Behind Schedule
	Undertake specific improvements such as car park and path improvements, as well as identify a new tenant for our Luss Visitor Centre.	<p>We are developing detailed designs at Loch Achray for the first phase of the proposals focusing on the Sustainable Travel Hub site and an off road pedestrian connection to the car park; this is subject to planning permission and agreement with Forestry and Land Scotland as the land owners.</p> <p>Significant maintenance work on Loch Lomond piers and pontoons has commenced, which will be split over 21/22 and 22/23. Careful management in place to minimise disruption to users, however it does involve closure of the Luss and Tarbet piers for certain periods of time.</p> <p>Planning application for Conic Hill path upgrade was granted. Tender to appoint contractors was successful. No opportunities for any build within 21/22; build programmed from October 2022.</p> <p>Bracklinn Bridge was removed in December 2021. Process to design and build new bridge is underway. A separate paper on Luss VC is to be presented to the Board.</p>	Behind Schedule

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3.2 Improve visitor services infrastructure	Further our work on income generation for the West Highland Way	New business listing format launched online. Income generated: £5.5K business support; £3.5K retail (merchandise plan behind schedule – Covid related outlet closures 2020 & 21); £20K donations (inc.replacement bridge campaign); £6K Bord Na Gaidhlig grant to develop itineraries and promote Gaelic along the route.	Behind Schedule
	Deploy temporary measures to alleviate pandemic-related visitor volume pressures	Measures such as temporary toilets across various sites were implemented for the 2021 visitor season.	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	Replacement bins procured, limited servicing options under evaluation for next season, likely to continue with current. Drafted litter / bin statement for estates, to be discussed internally. Drafted response to the national litter and flytipping strategy for internal review before submission by the 31 st March. Ongoing development of the JRVMP for next season's delivery.	On Track
	Support regular, self-led volunteering activities, subject to COVID-19 restrictions.	Full end of year summary, as volunteer opportunities have finished for the season: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 674 bags litter collected • 512 volunteer hours • 139 volunteer sign ups Programme will be reviewed and plans made for next season in Q4.	Complete
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	Shuttle bus tender well developed. Awaiting final internal sign off once external legal advice is gathered. Funding drawn down to pay for 1.5 days a week of co-ordination role.	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	Engagement ongoing across all communities with focus over this period on support to Strathfillan and Lochgoil communities bids to National Lottery Heritage Fund. Support to Strathard Community Development Trust on both progression of Strathard Framework and management of their new development officer. Ongoing support to Forth Valley and Leader Climate Nudge Fund. Organised Future Nature online session for all communities to raise awareness and begin engagement on how we work together to do more for nature in the National Park.	On Track
	Use the National Park grant schemes and our planning role to support green recovery projects	11 Green Recovery Fund grant agreements totalling £195K have now been signed with one more worth £21K expected to conclude shortly. 2 further proposals have been withdrawn.	On Track

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4.2 Use local place-making to support a green recovery	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	<p>Main focus this period has been to pool learnings on approach towards supporting communities to lead on preparing Local Place Plans, building on the engagement last quarter. This work is ongoing.</p> <p>20 Minute Neighbourhood pilot study for Drymen and surrounding communities is well underway and progressing well.</p>	On Track
4.2 Use local place-making to support a green recovery in the National Park	Support the Destination Group, consisting of National Park tourism businesses, to help respond to the challenges and opportunities of the year ahead	Destination Group is focussing on green recovery; supporting business-led initiative on recruitment campaign for hospitality sector, ongoing economic research and data source updating and continued support towards tourism infrastructure projects including grant support management.	On Track
	Support delivery of Callander's Landscape	<p>Path Signage, Interpretation, Digital Story-Map, Dark Skies, Volunteering, Little Leny Meadow Path and Digital Archive projects all progressing well towards completion. Research projects now largely complete. Proposed extension to Falls of Leny project (now being led by Callander Community Development Trust) is being considered by National Heritage Lottery Fund. Coilhallan All-Abilities Trial project has been dropped from the programme due to unwillingness to take forward by partners.</p> <p>Plans currently being developed for resourcing until programme end (October 2022). Requirements for the programme's close and legacy are in development.</p>	On Track
4.3 Implement post- pandemic ways of working	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	Phase 2 of New Ways of Working will see a transition to a hybrid model from 1 st March. IT are configuring work stations in preparation for this. Staff communications are planned for the next few weeks.	On Track
	Determine how our Board and Committees will use virtual meetings in the future	Board and Committee meetings have returned to in person, with live streaming. Scope of works for upgrades to audio visual upgrades to HQ have been completed and approved.	On Track
4.4 Improve the organisations resilience	Making health, safety, and wellbeing improvements	A number of H&S policies have been rolled out to staff and following a successful trial Vodafone/ORBIS will provide our safety cover for lone and remote working. An internal H&S Audit was carried out towards the end of last year and we are working on the actions identified from this.	On Track
	Identify ways to continue to supplement our core funding	Successful funding bid to the CivTech Alliance as part of a partnership project led by the Digital Office Scotland; this will take the current CivTech Challenge 8 to a pre-commercial stage.	On Track
	Improve our digital services, including developing our skills, platforms, and disaster recovery	Migration to Microsoft 365 continues. Most of the security and governance prep for migration has been completed, and training is being offered to all staff. Roll out of monthly Cybersecurity training and testing has begun. Backup solution continues to be worked on.	On Track