



# Organised events in the National Park

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## Introduction

Designated in 2002, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs was Scotland’s first National Park and is a special place celebrated for its great beauty, natural and cultural heritage. It also provides a wealth of opportunities for challenge and adventure intrinsically linked to the special qualities of the area.

The Park Authority recognises the positive benefits that well organised recreational events can bring to the Park. We also have a duty to promote an understanding of the Park and recreational activities should not be detrimental to the area’s natural assets, communities and business operations.

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 gives everyone the right of non-motorised access over most land and inland water in Scotland - as long as they behave responsibly. Detailed guidance on these rights and responsibilities is provided in the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) (SOAC). SOAC is a **key reference** for event organisers who should read it in full with particular attention to paragraphs 2.7, 2.9, 2.11, 3.60 and 3.61. The SOAC Guidance document – “Outdoor events in Scotland - guidance for organisers and land managers” can be found [here](#).



## Organisers

Event organisers are responsible for undertaking their own risk assessments and obtaining appropriate health and safety advice for their event. To ensure the safe delivery of any event an Event Safety Management Plan should be compiled and for events taking place on lochs or other water-bodies, a Water Safety Plan should detail logistics, emergency measures and clear instructions for the delivery team. We would recommend referring to the 'Purple Guide' which provides clear direction to dutyholders to effectively manage health and safety planning: <https://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk/>

It is the responsibility of event organisers to remedy any damage or loss caused by the event. The event organiser must ensure that all temporary infrastructure, banners, promotional materials and litter are generated through the delivery of the event. A full sweep of the event site/course should be completed to ensure no waste is left after the event and the environment is returned to the expected standard.

Permission from the land manager or owner should be obtained. This will ensure that they are fully aware of the event and details of its delivery; ensure that they have the opportunity to raise any concerns; and to work constructively to ensure that there is no conflict and that the event can be delivered negating any negative impacts on any areas being used. Useful information to share with land owners / managers should include:

- Plans for new or temporary facilities and services (such as car parking, fencing, marquees, signs, litter bins, marked courses or toilets);
- The nature of the event and a clear indication of the number of participants or spectators likely to attend the event;
- How event plans will avoid hindering land management operations, interfere with other people enjoying the outdoors or affect the environment.

Events located on Loch Lomond or East Loch Lomond must comply with local byelaws – for more information on Loch Lomond Navigational Byelaws click [here](#), and for the Loch Lomond Camping Byelaws click [here](#).

## The role of the National Park Authority



The NPA does not have a direct role in granting permission (unless it is the land manager / owner) for outdoor events in the Park, but we can assist you with identifying land owners or agencies who should be contacted and engaged with the event planning process. We would like all recreational events in the area to be enjoyable, non-damaging and sustainable, we can also provide information on the following:

- How events can contribute to the aims of the NPA;
- How to minimise any potential impact on the special qualities of the Park, communities, businesses or other visitors.

The NPA asks you to contact us if your event includes;

- A planned start or finish point located in the Park;
- Formal organisation designed to attract large numbers of participants and spectators;
- Using areas where access rights apply e.g. core paths, footpaths, trails, forest tracks, open moorland, and mountainous areas;
- Activities on foot, on bikes, on horseback, with horse-drawn carriages, or involving open water swimming;
- Locations designated (and legally protected) for their conservation value;
- Popular locations e.g. Loch Lomond, The West Highland Way, Ben Lomond;
- The NPA advocates using the NatureScot '[Outdoor events in Scotland: guidance for organisers and land managers](#)' document for reference. The guidance has been published by SNH on behalf of the National Access Forum, which brings together all relevant interests to advise on national issues relating to Scottish access rights.
- The NPA and partner body NatureScot (Scotland's nature agency) recommend referring to the SOAC Guidance document – "Outdoor events in Scotland - guidance for organisers and land managers" – the downloadable guide is linked [here](#).

## After the event

There is great value in seeking feedback from participants, and the NPA encourages you to collect and share this information with us – its helps identify the benefits or any issues arising from an event. We would also welcome any feedback that captures the economic impact of the event to the local area (e.g. through participants or spectators use of accommodation and other businesses) and to hear if there were any other ways in which future event delivery could be improved, for example promoting public and active travel to reduce traffic and parking pressures and associated carbon emissions.



## Useful best practices

It is important organisers employ best practice to deliver safe and enjoyable outdoor events and the following links are examples of organisations providing information and resources;

- **National Trust for Scotland (NTS)** – Information for events on Ben Lomond: <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/ben-lomond>
- **Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS)** – for events taking place on land managed by FLS: <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/>
- **NatureScot** - have developed the excellent Sitelink website for important site based information on designated conservation areas: <https://sitelink.nature.scot/home>
- **Local Authorities** – you should contact the relevant Local Authority to advise of the event plans. You may require licensing consent or permissions for elements such as road use / closures, or use of public facilities.
  - [Argyll & Bute Council](#)
  - [Perth & Kinross Council](#)
  - [Stirling Council](#)
  - [West Dunbartonshire Council](#)

## West Highland Way

The Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park is the lead body of the West Highland Way (WHW) Management Group, which also consists of East Dunbartonshire, Stirling, Argyll & Bute and Highland Councils. There are various landowners / land managers where the WHW passes through along the length of the route which we can advise on. For awareness, the WHW management group would request information on any event plans. Confirmed details of the events on the West Highland Way [website](https://www.westhighlandway.org/notices/) to alert walkers of any events taking place (<https://www.westhighlandway.org/notices/>) can be added so that walkers are aware and can mention on our social media channels too. This helps walkers ahead of their trip and, when events are on, this can put pressure on accommodation in certain places. We also try to manage any clashes on particular dates as the WHW is a focus for outdoor events.

The WHW Management Group also ask you to consider factoring in a donation to the West Highland Way in some form – whilst this is optional, it is strongly encouraging to contribute to the maintenance of the 96 miles of path (plus bridges, signage etc). It could be just a small amount per entrant or a fixed overall amount as a donation. Use of the official logo can be provided to ensure that your support was acknowledged. Contact details can be found on the link here to notify of event plans: <https://www.westhighlandway.org/contact-us/>



## Safety & Emergency Support

**[Arrochar Mountain Rescue Team](#)**: covers the Arrochar and Cowal areas of the Park including The Cobbler.

**[Killin Mountain Rescue Team](#)**: With rescue posts at Killin and Callander covers the northern part of the National Park including mountains such as Ben Lui, Ben More, Stob Binnien, Stuc a Chroin, Ben Ledi.

**[Loch Lomond Rescue Boat](#)**: The voluntary rescue boat operating on Loch Lomond provide a source of information / support for water-based events on the loch.

**[Lomond Mountain Rescue Team](#)**: A good source of information / support for events taking place in the Trossachs.

**[Trossachs Search & Rescue](#)**: Provide search and rescue, emergency services and event support in the Strathblane to Callander area.