



DRAFT

NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2024 – 2029

**LOCH
LOMOND
& THE TROSSACHS
NATIONAL PARK**







**IF NOT
HERE,
WHERE?**



A scenic landscape featuring a winding river in the foreground, a dense forest of evergreen trees in the middle ground, and mountains in the background under a cloudy sky. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text "IF NOT NOW, WHEN?" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**IF NOT
NOW,
WHEN?**



A scenic landscape featuring a valley with a winding road, surrounded by dense green forests and rolling hills. In the background, there are mountains under a clear blue sky. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text "IF NOT ALL OF US, WHO?".

**IF NOT
ALL OF US,
WHO?**

Our National Park matters...

...to all of us, to Scotland, to the planet...

...but it can't and won't stay the same.

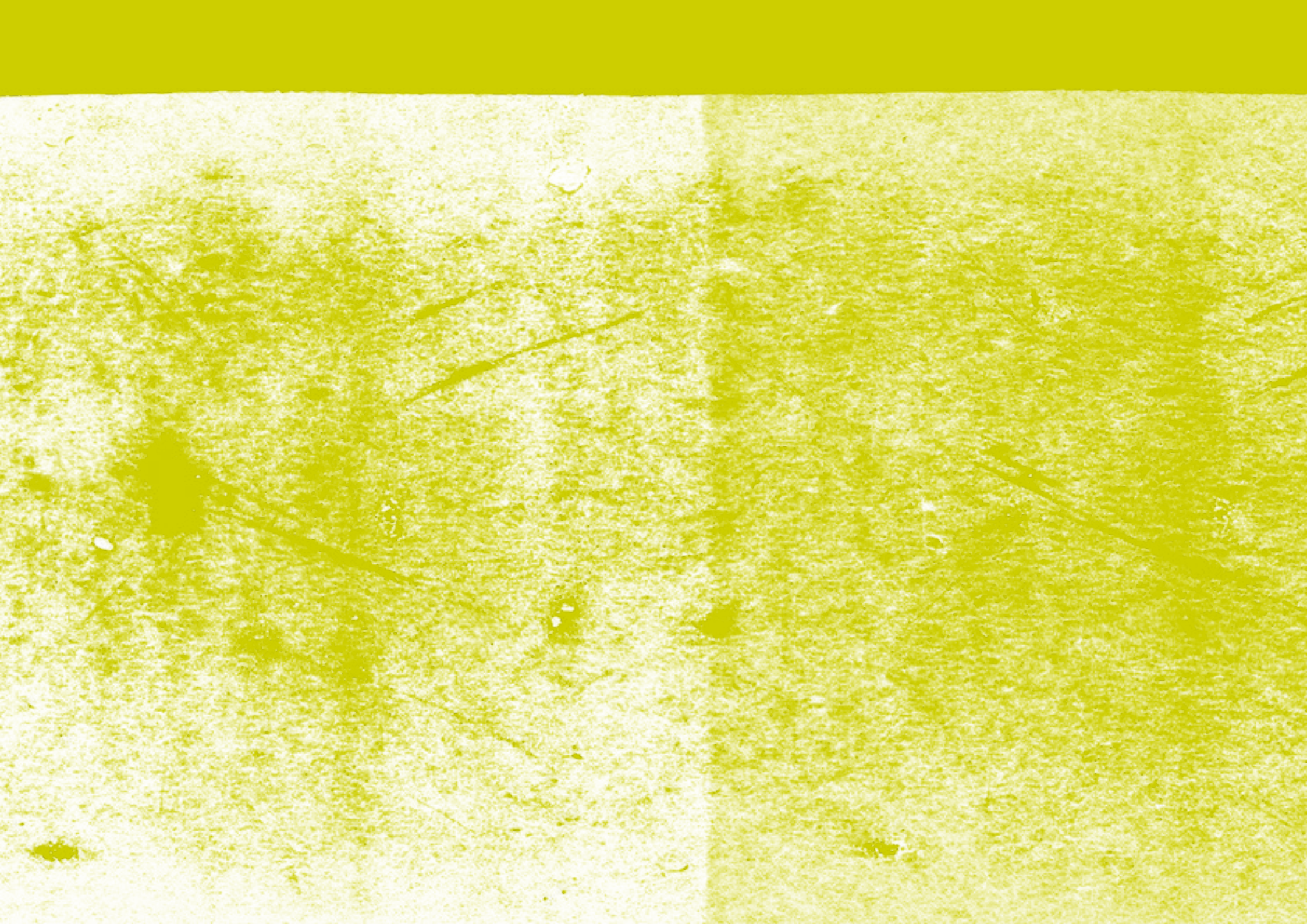
People, nature and climate are all connected and we are facing unprecedented challenges to nature, to climate and to our lives that depend on them.

This is a unique moment in time – we have a small window of opportunity to make transformational change in the face of these huge challenges.

A thriving future for the National Park is a thriving future for all of us. But we all have to work together.

We're opening up a conversation to help us imagine the future of the National Park together.

With your help, we CAN do it.



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INTRODUCTION



LOCH DRUNKIE

The National Park is a unique place and a special landscape. Things are, and should be, done differently here to maximise the benefits that can be provided for nature, climate and people.

Globally, we are facing twin crises of the climate emergency and nature loss. Both crises are happening here and now in the National Park, in fact many of the impacts are being felt even more deeply and obviously here, so it is not enough to simply do what we have always done.

The National Park Authority is making a step change in how it responds to these crises but cannot do it alone. There are many people and groups who have a role in securing a positive future for the National Park. Some who have been here for generations, some who are the stewards of the land, but also those from within and outside the Park who will play a part over the coming years.



This Draft Plan is about transformation in the face of huge challenges

THE GREAT TROSSACHS FOREST

This Plan is about transformation in the face of huge challenges. Transforming the way each of us live, work in, visit and look after the National Park to achieve a more positive, sustainable future for us all.

Tackling the nature and climate crises is not separate to supporting the rural economy and communities. In fact, working together to address these will provide a range of wider benefits, including more investment, business and employment opportunities, for everyone living and working in the National Park.

There is no doubt that this transformation will be a significant challenge and right now not all the answers are clear.

Through this Draft Plan, and the conversations that it sparks, we must find the answers together and identify steps over the next five years to create momentum towards that longer term future.

This might not always be a straightforward or comfortable process but when looking at the scale of the crises we face in terms of nature and climate, and the opportunities the National Park offers to help address these, we must ask ourselves:

**If not now, when?
If not here, where?
If not us, who?**



IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

**Why we need
step change**

**As stewards of the National Park,
now more than ever before we all
need to put nature and climate at
the forefront of our minds.**

CLIMATE

The Scottish Government declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and has set a target of becoming a Net Zero Nation by 2045. The impacts of the climate emergency are becoming increasingly real to those living, working and visiting the National Park, with more frequent flooding and landslips seriously damaging people's homes, communities and businesses. Our warmer and wetter climate also threatens nature, with some habitats and species struggling to adapt to these quickly snowballing changes.

Forecasted increases in extreme weather events and rising temperatures mean that we will see more of these impacts here, for example more blue-green algae blooms in lochs, and tree diseases affecting our forests; challenging conditions for agriculture, such as spread of diseases leading to higher vet and medical costs; increasing pressure on infrastructure, such as roads and bridges; and on society from increased flooding, landslides, storms, wildfires and drought.



LANDSLIDE ON A83, REST AND BE THANKFUL

Adaptation Scotland estimates that winter rainfall in Scotland will increase by

8–19%

over the coming decades with rainfall events becoming more intense all year round, leading to an increase in flooding.

NATURE

Just as crucially, we also face a Nature Crisis, which is closely linked but is its own distinct challenge. Despite this being a National Park, nature is in real trouble here with nearly *a fifth of even our most special, designated sites for nature being in decline.*

The uncomfortable truth we must face is that, despite our collective efforts to protect nature so far, this is not enough. We are losing nature at a scale never experienced before and failing to achieve the necessary impact in nature restoration that we need if we are to ensure that a healthy natural environment is left for future generations. By 2030 we must halt nature loss in the National Park and ensure biodiversity begins to increase and thrive.

There are other factors we must address too, such as the way people visit the National Park.

79% of visitors arrive in the National Park by car and 73% explore the area by car according to our 2019/20 Visitor Survey. If there is no intervention, car-based travel is predicted to increase by 40% by 2037.

As well as reducing carbon emissions, providing more sustainable travel options for visitors and residents can also reduce visitor pressures on communities, making it easier for those without a car to access the National Park and improving the experience for everyone.

LOCH ECK

PEOPLE

While facing these twin environmental crises, we are all emerging from a global pandemic and major changes such as Brexit. Together we need to find ways to adapt to and shape a new, positive future for the National Park's people and environment. In doing this we must carefully manage any challenges to ensure this is a 'just transition' to a fairer, greener future for all.

We know that post-Brexit and COVID-19, many rural businesses are experiencing skills shortages and recruitment challenges. On top of this, *the National Park's population has a lower proportion of young and working-age people compared to other areas of Scotland.* In response to the climate emergency, businesses will need to become increasingly less carbon-dependent, while new jobs and rural skills will be needed. Developing these 'green jobs' and skills will make our economy more diverse through the creation of a wider range of jobs, in areas like energy, construction and land-based skills, and lead to a more diverse population within the National Park, by creating more opportunities for people to live and work here.

To do this, housing needs to be considered as well as jobs.

The National Park is one of the most expensive places in Scotland to buy a house.

This is despite having increased the amount of affordable housing in the National Park in recent years, with 69% of new houses built in the National Park between 2018 and 2022 being affordable. Commuting, retirement and an increased desire for rural living post COVID-19 are driving up housing pressures and land values, alongside increasing numbers of second homes and short-term holiday lets in many communities. Research commissioned in 2022 tells us that *75% of National Park households cannot afford average house prices and 43% cannot afford lower value house prices.*

Having a more diverse population and more local living can strengthen the resilience of our communities and help build capacity for communities to shape and lead local initiatives that help tackle the climate and nature crises and contribute to a thriving rural economy.

By taking steps to transition to a greener economy and more local living and working, we can future-proof the National Park for people, nature and climate.

We are at a crossroads and how we collectively respond to these challenges won't just protect the landscape and individual species.

By working together, we can ensure the National Park's people and places will continue to thrive and we provide a sustainable future for generations to come.

IF NOT HERE, WHERE?

The Role of the National Park

As large-scale landscapes, National Parks have a significant role to play in securing a more sustainable future for Scotland. Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park can also play its part as a member of the global family of National Parks and Protected Landscapes that together can play a transformative role in addressing the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss being felt across the planet.

By working at scale, National Parks can help reverse the decline in nature and support climate change mitigation by capturing and storing carbon through restoring peatlands and expanding woodlands through proactive, integrated land management. They can also play a vital role in adaptation to climate change; reduce inequality of access to the benefits of nature; enhance social, economic, and ecological resilience to climate change impacts; and inspire and inform the billions of visitors each year to benefit from nature and live more sustainably.

Nationally, the role of Scotland's National Parks is also being reconsidered by Scottish Ministers in light of these challenges, with recognition that National Parks can provide leadership for nature recovery and contribute to a just transition to becoming a Net Zero Nation.

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park is unique both in terms of its special landscape and environmental qualities, combined with its location and easy accessibility to a major proportion of Scotland's population.

50% of the population live within an hour's drive of the National Park. These unique qualities provide specific challenges and opportunities.

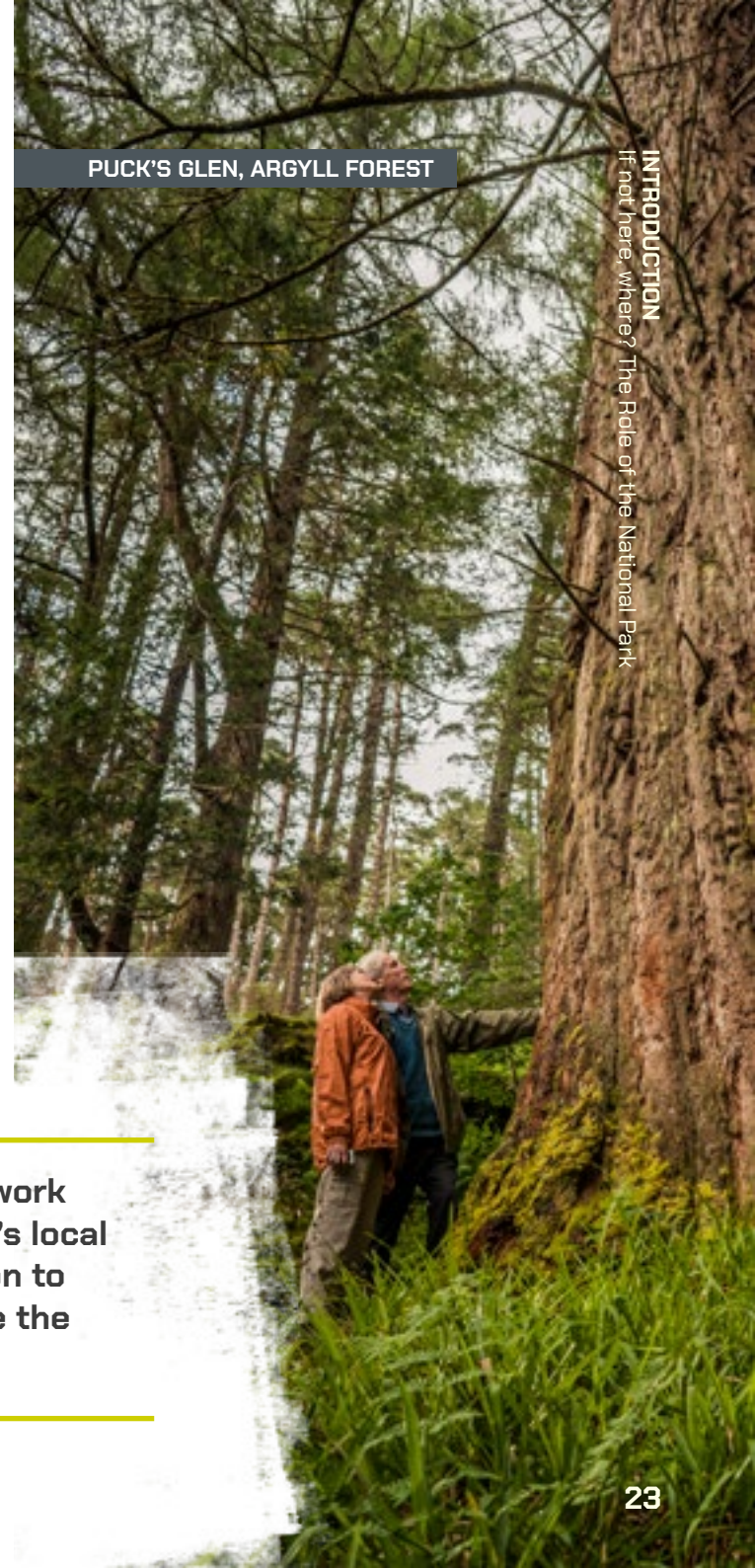
With nature continuing to decline, it is no longer enough to merely conserve – we need to actively expand and improve natural habitats and create networks of better functioning ecosystems that help nature to thrive and support the natural systems on which human life depends.

The National Park is also the type of landscape which should be a net absorber of carbon and become a major contributor to Scotland becoming a Net Zero Nation by 2045 and we should aspire to be a significant net absorber of carbon by that time.

A Greenhouse Gas Footprint Assessment for the National Park was completed in 2022. The assessment included a suggested pathway to becoming a Net Zero National Park which shows the opportunity for the area to move from being an emitter of greenhouse gases to sequestering over 700,000 tCO₂e per year in 2050.

The change needed must be genuinely transformational and will mean leaving behind some activities and practices that are no longer compatible with a climate and nature-positive future.

Doing nothing to change the way we live, work and visit will not benefit the National Park's local communities and businesses. Taking action to adapt our economy can address and make the most of tackling these challenges.



PUCK'S GLEN, ARGYLL FOREST



IF NOT US, WHO?

The Purpose of this Plan

The National Park Partnership Plan guides how all of those with a role to play in looking after the National Park will work together to manage the Park and achieve a shared vision for the area. While the National Park Authority is responsible for drafting and consulting on this Draft National Park Plan, the actions within it require collaboration across a wide range of partners. None of this is possible without significant, collective effort.

Throughout this Draft Plan, 'we' refers to all partners and stakeholders who have a part to play. Under each section, those believed to have a key role in delivering that part of the plan are listed.

The next National Park Partnership Plan is due by 2024. Over the Spring and Summer of 2023, the National Park Authority wants to

hear from and work with everyone who has a part to play and will be impacted by the Plan, to help shape the final version of the National Park Partnership Plan. This will then go to the National Park Authority Board for approval in December 2023 before being submitted to the Scottish Ministers for approval.

This Draft National Park Partnership Plan takes a different approach to previous plans.

This is because during the period of our previous Partnership Plan, 2018-23, the context within which the National Park Authority and our delivery partners work has completely changed – we are recovering from the impacts of a global pandemic, adjusting to the UK leaving the EU, and the need to respond with greater urgency to the twin climate and nature crises has escalated significantly.

This Draft Plan sets out a longer-term vision for 2045 and the most important things to pursue over the next five years in order to create the momentum needed towards achieving that vision.

To address the scale and urgency of the twin climate and nature crises, it is felt that clear outcomes for climate and nature in the National Park need to be set.

This Plan has been drafted based on an aspiration for more ambitious outcomes for nature and climate by 2040.

- » **For nature, through the Future Nature Route Map, a target has already been set to ensure the widespread restoration of nature across the National Park by 2040.**
- » **For climate, it is proposed that we should collectively aspire to become a Net Zero National Park by 2040.**

The consultation on this Draft Plan will provide an opportunity to discuss what this would mean and gather views on these aspirations with all key stakeholders.

The Draft Plan also highlights where partners and local stakeholders have an important role to play in working towards a more diverse, greener economy that ensures a positive transition away from activities that are harming nature and the planet. It sets out how local communities and businesses can support and benefit from this transition, and where support will be needed to adapt to the new skills and capabilities required for the vision to be delivered and for new economic benefits to be realised. It also recognises the changes that need to happen within our wider operating environment nationally.

As the National Park is a heavily visited landscape, the Draft Plan also highlights the significant opportunity to influence how people access the outdoors in a way that is more in harmony with nature and supports the reduction of emissions. Through this we can improve the equality of access to the outdoors for those currently unable to enjoy the National Park, including, for example, fundamental changes in how people get to, from and around the National Park.

CREATING MOMENTUM

How this Plan will work

In order to achieve the vision for 2045 set out in this Draft Plan, and the pace of progress required, this Plan will set out clear priorities for the next five years so that our collective resources and efforts are focussed on the tasks and initiatives that will have the greatest impact.

These are set out in proposed objectives to be achieved by 2030 which will be the critical early steps in supporting the transition to a better future for people and the planet.

For example:

- » To capture and store more greenhouse gases naturally in the National Park, the pace and scale of peatland restoration and new woodland creation will need to step up considerably and we need to create the pipeline of projects necessary while securing both public funding and private investment to achieve this.
- » One of the largest emitting activities in the National Park is from transport, with the vast majority of visitors traveling by car. However, the public transport services provided for people who visit, live in or work in the National Park is poor and is not planned to meet the demand for recreational journeys which generate the most emissions. A step change in how transport services are provided for visitors, while managing heavily car congested destinations, is needed.
- » How the protection of nature is approached in the National Park must go through fundamental change. Until now we have largely focussed on protecting important species and habitats to be in favourable condition and in mitigating the potential negative impacts of damaging activities and developments. The focus now must extend beyond stronger protection for existing species and sites, to expanding important ecosystems and creating nature networks where species can expand and thrive, while tackling key threats such as invasive species and damaging land management practices such as high grazing pressure.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Under each section of this Draft Plan there are proposals for how we might measure success against the draft objectives being put forward. It is important to note that no measures are perfect, but unless we are clear about what we want to achieve – and how we can monitor our progress – we won't know if we are on track. These draft measures are works in progress to be discussed. In some areas we need to work together to identify the right measures needed to achieve these outcomes over the next five years.

Not all the critical steps needed are clear, nor are all the changes required within our gift here in the National Park. This Draft Plan intends to open an honest and frank conversation, locally and nationally, both about the tough choices to be made and major opportunities to be grasped to help inspire everyone on the benefits of moving towards a low carbon, nature-rich future.



THE STATUTORY ROLE OF THIS PLAN

A National Park Plan is required under the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 to set out a National Park Authority's policy for (a) managing a National Park; and (b) coordinating the exercise of an Authority's functions in relation to a National Park and the functions of other public bodies and office holders to the extent that they affect a National Park, with a view to ensuring that the National Park aims are collectively achieved in a co-ordinated way.

Aims of National Parks in Scotland:

- » **To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area**
 - » **To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area**
 - » **To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public**
 - » **To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities**
-

These aims are to be pursued collectively. However, if there is conflict between the first aim and any of the others, greater weight must be given to the first aim (section 9.6 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act).

The National Park Partnership Plan 2024-29 will be the National Park Plan for Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park.

The National Park Partnership Plan will also be the Regional Spatial Strategy for Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, as required under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, setting out a long-term spatial strategy in respect of strategic development.



LAKE OF MENTEITH

PRINCIPLES OF THIS PLAN

This Draft Plan has been prepared based on these key principles:

- » National Parks have a duty and opportunity to deliver for Scotland and beyond – our decisions will take this into account.
- » The scale and urgency of the nature and climate crises will drive our priorities.
- » The change that is needed means we can't/won't shy away from uncomfortable truths or tough decisions.
- » We will prioritise actions that bring us closer to our longer-term vision.
- » We can't do this alone. We'll only make a real difference if we all see ourselves as stewards.
- » We want to bring everyone who lives and works in the National Park or visits it with us – as part of a just transition towards a fairer, greener future.



OUR VISION FOR 2045

**A climate-resilient
place where people and
nature thrive together.**

WHAT SUCCESS COULD LOOK LIKE

By 2045 the National Park has a thriving landscape with native wildlife returning and improving natural habitats. Invasive non-native species are in decline while our woodlands have improved in both their quality and diversity. Degraded peatlands have been restored or are in recovering condition. Together our forests and peatlands are nationally important carbon stores helping to reduce the impacts of the climate emergency.

Natural flood management techniques are widely used to help mitigate flooding in the National Park, with land managers supported by public and private funding for their positive management practices. Land is now recognised for its natural capital value and many landowners have engaged in green finance schemes, which have taken place in several places across the National Park and have secured significant private finance and investment in nature restoration.

There's also a more diverse economy with businesses prospering across the National Park both in farming and sustainable, nature-based tourism, nature conservation, sporting and forestry. Tourism and rural businesses have adapted and diversified to support efforts to tackle the nature and climate crises by reducing emissions and restoring nature.

More working age young people and families from a diverse range of backgrounds live in the National Park, taking advantage of new green jobs, skills and other business opportunities as well as an increase in affordable housing.

Visitors and residents travel to, from and around the National Park using a well-connected and affordable system of public transport and active travel services, such as shuttle buses, waterbuses and cycle routes.

Visitors from all backgrounds value and feel connected to nature whilst enjoying great services and facilities in popular places where tourism and hospitality businesses are thriving and providing local jobs.

Communities have well established groups leading innovative projects that support their area and contribute to tackling the twin climate and nature crises, working in partnership with land managers, public bodies and the local business community.

HELP US IMAGINE THE FUTURE.



RESTORING NATURE

INTRODUCTION

Restoring Nature

Alongside the climate emergency, we know that the global nature crisis is a real and fundamental threat to the long-term survival of our own species - alongside millions of other species that we share the planet with. This is not a remote concept confined to only tropical rainforests or polar icecaps. The evidence of a decline in nature over many years is clear, including here in the National Park. For example, approximately 20% of our Designated Sites for nature are still in unfavourable condition.

Restoring nature is about us supporting our natural environment to bounce back from damage and reduction and become more resilient and bountiful.

It's not enough anymore to conserve what we have. We need to actively stop the decline and then reverse the loss of nature. This is in our interest, as well as for other species, as nature underpins human existence through the benefits and services it provides, such as food, air, water, materials, health and economic wealth.

Our natural environment could be our greatest ally in tackling the climate emergency with our peatlands and woodlands capable of capturing and storing significant amounts of carbon. However, this is not the case and in fact degraded peatlands are currently major contributors to emissions. By restoring these peatlands, removing invasive non-native species and reducing herbivore pressures from animals like deer and sheep, the National Park can become a major carbon sink for Scotland.

Our peatlands, woodlands and waterbodies are also some of the crucial ecosystems we need to restore to ensure that we rebuild the necessary variety and types of species to support a healthy planet.

The way land is used needs to change to address the climate and nature crises as well as delivering production and recreational benefits and supporting a fair transition to sustain a viable and greener rural economy that supports sustainable rural communities. The way land is valued is changing in line with this. This is an emerging picture, with increasing new opportunities to manage land differently through private finance and potential changes to public funding. These opportunities need to be fully understood and, where possible, shaped to maximise the benefits they could provide for nature restoration and people in the National Park.

While there are also challenges in filling the jobs and growing the skills needed to manage nature and land use, there is significant potential to create more of these opportunities by establishing a pipeline of nature restoration projects over the coming years. This in turn will support the transition of the National Park's rural economy through a green recovery and provide a wider range of employment opportunities for people to live and work here.



PEATLAND RESTORATION WORK UNDERWAY

RESTORING NATURE FOR CLIMATE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY RESTORING NATURE FOR CLIMATE?

By restoring nature in the National Park we can help to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of the global climate emergency. Specifically, our peatlands and forests contain millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, and it is crucially important that we improve the ability for them to store and soak up these gases. Healthy peatlands and forests can also mitigate against the impacts of the warmer, wetter climate by acting as giant, natural sponges storing water to naturally help manage flooding.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Although our peatlands and forests hold an estimated 22 mtCO₂e between them, this is not secure. In fact, our peatlands are currently a source of greenhouse gas emissions in the National Park, as exposed and drained peatland soils actively release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. This situation can be aggravated when grazing animals like deer and sheep trample peat's fragile surface.

Our forests and woodlands also have great potential to store even greater volumes of greenhouse gases and act as a large carbon sink, but many of them are threatened by pressures from browsing animals, invasive Rhododendron and increasing levels of tree diseases exacerbated by a warming climate. Some of our most special native woodlands, such as our ancient Caledonian pinewoods and Montane woodland, remain isolated and unable to regenerate due to pressures from animals grazing and preventing the growth of young trees.

High livestock and deer pressures also negatively impact on many of our rivers, lochs and burns with natural riparian woodlands underrepresented and trampling leading to the erosion of banks with soils washing into water bodies, reducing their quality and health.

WHAT COULD IT BE?

The National Park's peatland areas could become sink status sites for Scotland, by capturing and locking in greenhouse gas emissions through the expansion of the peatland restoration programme and better-informed management of livestock and deer.

By expanding and improving the quality of our forests and woodlands through active management, including planting and natural regeneration, we could connect forest corridors and increase their health and resilience.

Extensive and healthy peatlands and forests could also help slow the flow of water into our rivers and lochs, providing natural flood management in our increasingly warmer and wetter climate and reducing the impact of these extreme weather events on our communities.

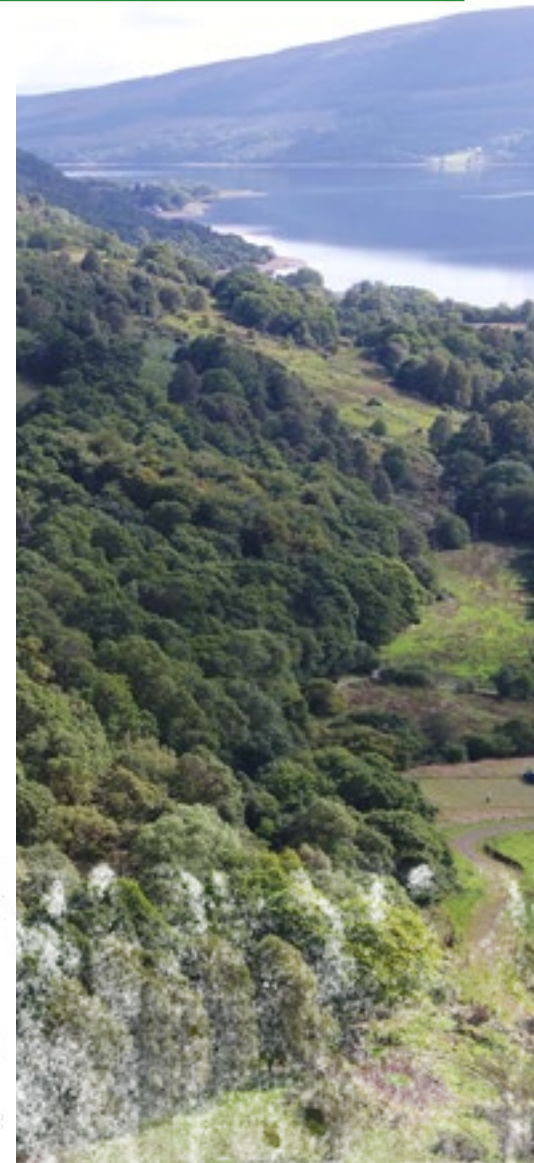
To support a shift in land use towards more regenerative, nature friendly systems, national agriculture and forestry support and regulation schemes need to be integrated, becoming more attractive and supportive for land managers at the same time as preventing practices that erode nature.

We have good examples of land management practices in the National Park that show how land can be managed differently to restore nature and still maintain the production of food and timber.

For example, at Glen Finglas in the Trossachs, The Woodland Trust has over 20 years protected and expanded the special native woodlands of the area while maintaining a viable farming operation.

Over the past seven years, the Peatland ACTION programme has restored more than 1,200 hectares of degraded peatland across the National Park, working with local land managers to improve the condition of uplands, which have traditionally been used for livestock and deer grazing.

In Lochgoilhead, the local community and Argyll Fisheries Trust have been working with owners to protect and enhance eroding riverbanks to improve habitats and water quality to benefit fragile fish populations.



GLEN FINGLAS

AIM BY 2045

Our ecosystems are in good health and helping us to adapt to and mitigate against the climate crisis, supporting the National Park to be an overall net carbon sink for Scotland.

**How might we measure success?
See page 55**

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Peatland

To significantly reduce the area of degraded, high emission peatland and convert this into regenerating carbon capture condition instead.

Scaling up of the Peatland ACTION programme, with support from private finance and carbon markets, to repair more degraded peatland areas, reducing emissions and switching them into carbon capture mode.

Reduction in damage to fragile peatland surfaces from wild deer and livestock trampling through better informed management.

Trees

To increase the number, species diversity and health of trees across suitable areas of the National Park.

Encourage and support more projects and proposals that deliver healthy and diverse tree and shrub habitats in suitable landscapes in the National Park. Including productive forests, native woodlands, hedgerows and scrub, this will be delivered through better informed management of grazing animals and invasive Rhododendron at a strategic, landscape scale allowing successful natural regeneration as well as planting schemes.

Water

To increase the quality, naturalness, and health of freshwater and marine bodies in the National Park, allowing them to provide greater resilience to the impacts of climate change and be nature-rich environments.

Engage with public and stakeholder organisations, and land managers to trial and pilot restoration projects on water bodies through channel re-alignment, removal of legacy engineering structures, woody dam installation, pond creation and water margin woodland creation.

Targeted action on wetland Designated Sites in unfavourable condition.

Review of abstraction, impoundment and discharge permits to promote nature recovery.

Support the return of the beaver to the Park's freshwater bodies.

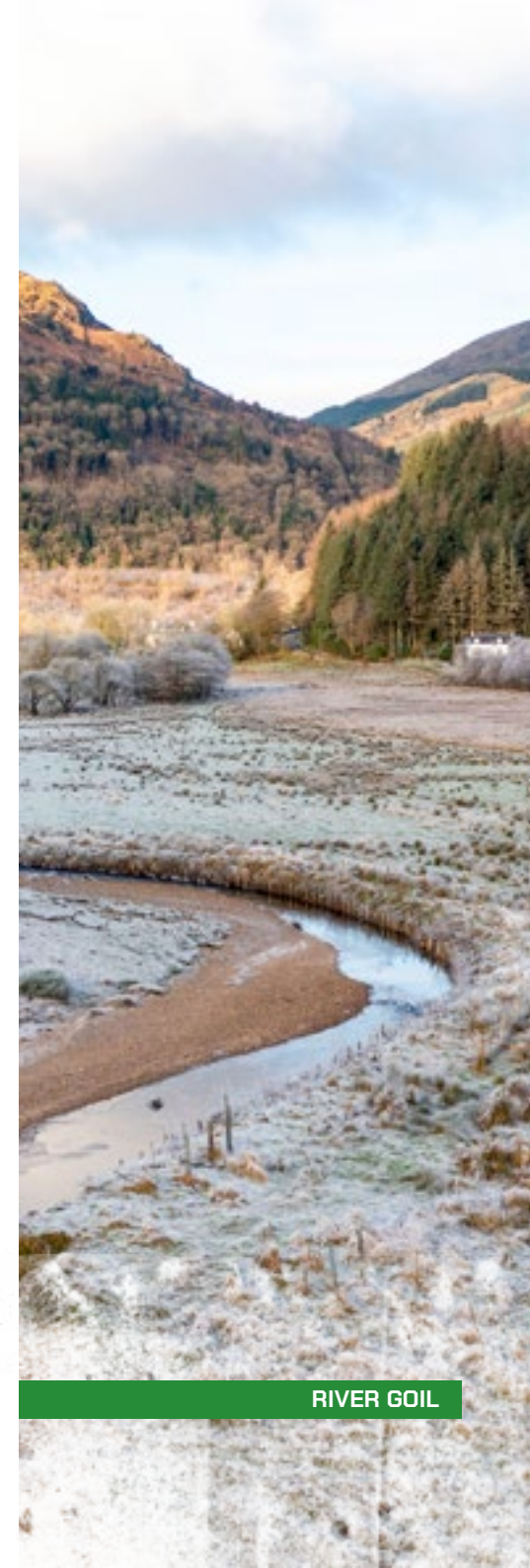
Engage with strategic, regional initiatives that aim to tackle marine litter and pollution for the Clyde area.

RESTORING NATURE FOR HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY RESTORING NATURE FOR HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS?

This is how we allow natural ecosystems, and the different habitats and species that have evolved within them, to recover from the damage and reduction caused by centuries of human modification. That means allowing trees to recover and spread again, helping peatlands to heal and re-wet after decades of drainage, and rivers to once again take slower and more meandering courses.

Our focus for restoration needs to primarily be on the key ecosystems that provide the greatest levels of biodiversity found in this part of Scotland, alongside those ecosystems that help mitigate the causes of the climate emergency, and allow us to adapt to an increasingly changeable and more extreme climate. These key ecosystems are our forests and woodlands, our peatlands, and our wetlands with their burns, rivers and lochs. Other habitats such as species-rich meadows and moorlands do also have significant biodiversity value, and like woodlands, peatlands and wetlands they also need our help to regenerate and become more diverse and healthier.



RIVER GOIL

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Many people and organisations across different sectors in the National Park have worked hard for years to conserve nature. There have been successes in places, often targeted on particular habitats or species of conservation interest, such as Red Squirrels and wading birds.

However, in the face of the widespread and persistent overall decline in nature, much of the action to date has been on protecting our most threatened habitats and species, Designated Sites such as Special Areas of Conservation or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or specific projects in the wider countryside. These actions have, however, been dwarfed by land use activities that have had damaging consequences for nature, such as the drainage of peatland or grazing pressure that prevents trees naturally regenerating. It is only within the past few years that it has become more widely accepted that protection alone is not enough to halt the decline in nature.

In the National Park this decline has been driven by pressures such as high intensity grazing and drainage of wetlands, and

development policies and practices that have only been able to reduce damage rather than improve conditions for nature. Habitats such as native woodland has shrunk and become fragmented, and water quality has deteriorated as sediments and nutrients from surrounding land are washed into our water courses and lochs.

In the face of the spread of Invasive Non-Native Species, overgrazing and shifts in weather patterns from climate change, native species and habitats - such as Caledonian pine forest, - are struggling to regenerate and are becoming increasingly threatened.

Despite this, we still hold nationally important populations of rare habitats such as Atlantic rainforests and the National Park is home to over 300 national priority species and over 60 Designated Sites recognised for their special habitats and species. These are the jewels in the crown of the National Park's natural environment and their health is vital if we are to regenerate nature more widely. They provide the key pieces in creating a large-scale jigsaw of greater biodiversity across the landscape.





GLENBRANTER

WHAT COULD IT BE?

By recovering ecosystems and species, the National Park could have a thriving and resilient landscape, with returning native wildlife and improved natural habitats coexisting alongside regenerative land uses such as modern farming, forestry and renewable energy production that is more sympathetic to nature but still produces high quality local food, energy, natural products and the jobs that go with them.

Through delivery of the Future Nature programme, we will develop a 'Living Network' focusing on the three key habitat networks of woodlands, peatlands and water.

Restored peatlands and improved and expanded forests could provide places for native species to live and prosper, as well as benefits for climate and the people of the National Park.

Invasive Non-Native Species could be reduced to no longer threaten our native ecosystems and more naturalised water courses could become slower and cleaner flowing. The impacts of grazing animals will also be reduced, with all these things relieving the pressure on ecosystems to allow them to naturally expand and regenerate. This would see plant, animal and bird species spread and grow, increasing their resilience in the face of climate change.

AIM BY 2045

The ongoing decline in nature in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park will be reversed by 2030 and there will be widespread restoration and recovery of nature by 2040. A landscape scale Nature Network approach will be taken, improving and connecting core areas and expanding the links between these core areas across the National Park.

How might we measure success?
See page 55

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Restore Nature at a Landscape Scale

Expand and improve priority habitats and enhance connectivity between habitats and eco-systems across the National Park to create functioning nature networks.

Expand, connect and strengthen at a large-scale, the major habitat networks of trees, peatlands and wetlands. See map on page 58

Develop and deliver large-scale nature restoration projects and programmes and improve connectivity to create nature networks for the National Park. Priority areas include Wild Strathfillan, The Great Trossachs Forest and Loch Lomond Basin. See map on page 57

Tackle Invasive Non-Native Species at a strategic, large-scale, with the aim of reducing them to a point that they no longer create a threat to native ecosystems.

Increase the use of effective and focused legislative actions on compliance, and if necessary, enforcement to prevent deliberate mismanagement or neglect that leads to an erosion of nature.

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

Land Managed Primarily for Nature Restoration

Increase the amount of land in the National Park managed primarily to restore nature

Develop a collaborative approach to nature restoration as a prime purpose on land owned or managed by public bodies, environmental charitable bodies, willing private land managers and for all Designated Sites. Create a Nature Restoration Land Forum that coordinates and supports this approach across the National Park and contributes to the implementation of Scotland's 30x30 commitment.

Develop and deliver opportunities for nature restoration projects on other important habitats and species, such as upland heaths, flood meadows or parklands.

Reduce Grazing Animal Pressures

Reduce grazing, browsing and trampling pressures in order to promote recovery of key habitats and sites.

By developing a Herbivore Strategy and through proactive management measures; drive forward a significant reduction in unwanted impacts from grazing animals across the National Park that lead to active recovery of trees, peatlands and wetland habitats.

Improved Monitoring of Changes in Nature

Develop improved monitoring and reporting to measure progress in nature restoration.

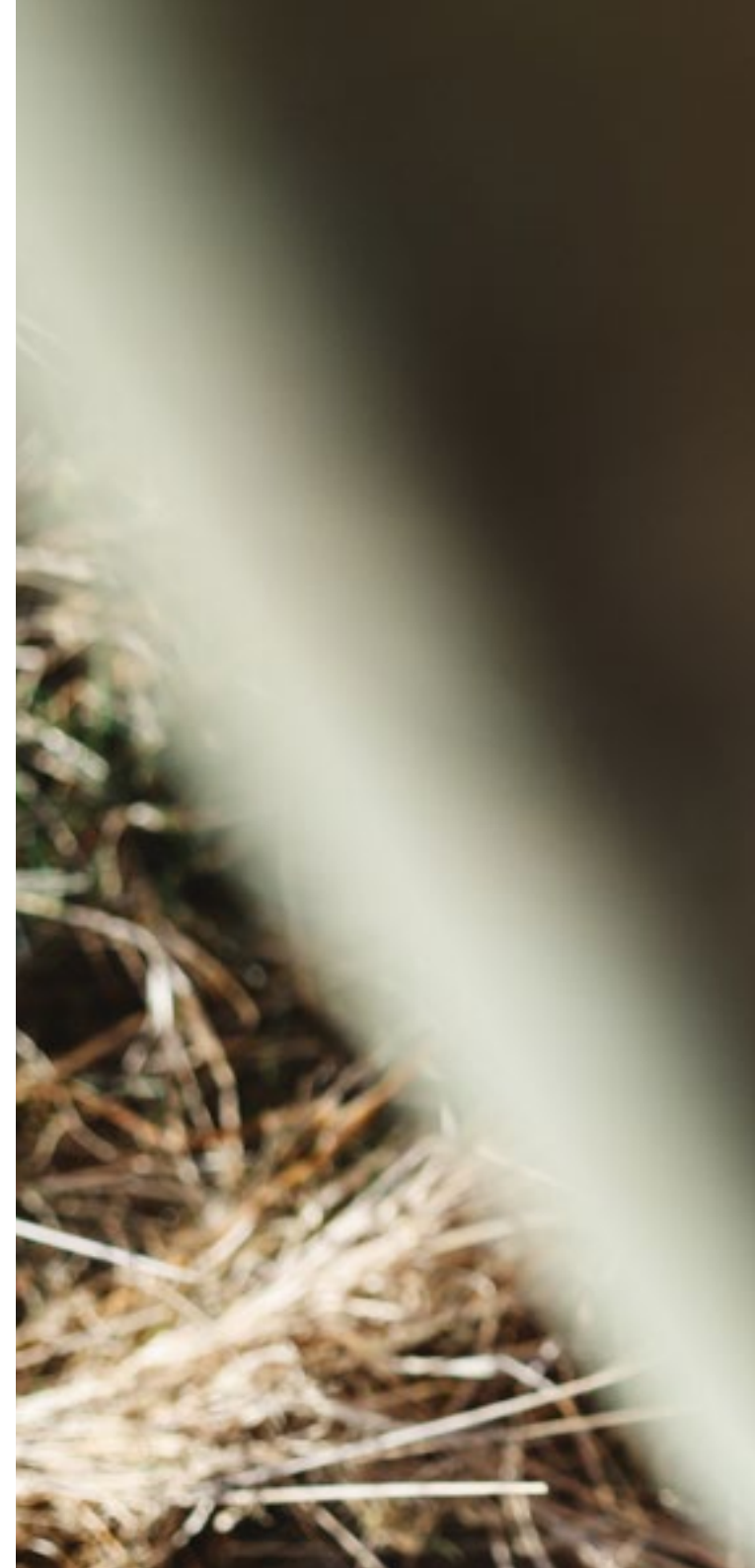
Create a State of Nature monitoring and reporting system for the National Park that provides accurate data and knowledge on the condition of nature, and where action needs to be strategically focused.

SHAPING A NEW LAND ECONOMY

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SHAPING A NEW LAND ECONOMY?

How land is used in the National Park is fundamental to delivering multiple benefits for everyone, but we often take this for granted. Whether land is owned by public, private or charitable organisations, our land provides services such as food, water, timber, energy and a place to enjoy recreation. However, we are increasingly aware that some of the land that we would have once traditionally viewed as primarily to produce food and timber could also now have a crucial role to play in urgently addressing the challenge we all face of the twin climate and nature crises.

We are also starting to see changes to private and public funding that reflect changing priorities for land use focused on delivering more for climate and nature. This transition of our land economy also has the potential, if managed correctly, to greatly benefit our rural communities and deliver opportunities for green jobs, skills and business development, and community involvement. We need, therefore, to rethink how we value and prioritise different land uses in the National Park, and the economies, behaviours and cultures that drive these on this finite, precious resource.



NATIVE WOODLAND TREE PLANTING



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Much of our rural land is used for production such as farming and forestry with national level policies, regulation and funding mechanisms directed to supporting the supply of food, timber and related products. But this picture is changing.

Whilst the production of food and timber is essential for us all, there is recognition that the consequences of some land management activities, such as unsustainably high grazing pressure from livestock and wild deer, aren't compatible with new climate and nature goals. Some land managers are shifting how they do things, and, in some areas, more communities are getting involved in decisions around land use.

In terms of funding there are uncertainties and opportunities.

The global movement to address climate change has also captured the attention of financial markets and this has been reflected in increasing land values in the Park linked with carbon. As well as a growth in small-

scale renewable energy production, such as hydro-electric schemes, over recent years there has been growing interest in creating carbon markets to invest in activities that help capture (sequester) carbon as a means of offsetting the emissions that remain once businesses have fully reduced the carbon footprint of their activity. This is a potential income stream for landowners. And it is hoped that similar schemes will be developed for nature with biodiversity credits too. These growing carbon markets are increasing land values and driving some land purchases across Scotland.

As well as private finance, the future of public funding for agriculture could also be changing. The Scottish Government has consulted on an Agriculture Bill, with implementation expected by 2026. Through this process there is a need to consider whether some incentives traditionally applied to agriculture should also apply to land uses delivering nature and climate outcomes.

While there are opportunities for land managers, it is also recognised that this range of uncertainties may be inhibiting land managers from committing to making

changes that affect land and will be needed to address the twin climate and nature crises.

Another challenge is in skills and capacity, where it is clear there is a gap to be addressed in order to deliver the scale and pace of change needed. This includes contractor capacity to deliver peatland restoration, woodland planting, wild deer and invasive species control at scale, and other nature restoration projects. A sustainable pipeline of long-term publicly or privately funded projects will be needed to build confidence for existing contractors and new businesses.

The Scottish Government is keen to see communities engaged further and greater transparency in land management decisions. There has been consultation on further proposed Land Reform measures around this, such as, for example, a potential requirement for landholdings over a certain size to prepare compulsory land management plans. The National Park Partnership Plan should have a key role in guiding such plans, building on examples such as the Strathard Framework.

WHAT COULD IT BE?

Public funding, incentives and subsidies for land managers could be better tailored towards the nature restoration and climate mitigation opportunities that exist in the National Park to realise broader public benefits, ensuring nature restoration and climate objectives are valued equally alongside productive land uses. We need to reframe what productive land means in the National Park, to include the production of other seemingly invisible services, such as carbon sequestration and diversity of nature.

A new framework and partnership with local and national stakeholders, such as a Regional Land Use Partnership could ensure agreement on more clear land use priorities which would guide how future funding is targeted.

Creating larger scale, multi-year funding programmes could build momentum and confidence for land managers to make business decisions and for contractors to invest and grow. Through better understanding of the skills needed to support new opportunities, we could also expand training to ensure the potential for new green jobs is realised.

Developing models for blending ethical private and public investment in land use change and restoration work could ensure that opportunities from the growing interest from investors is grasped in a way that also benefits our local communities and businesses.

By getting communities more engaged in the land use issues and decisions that affect them we could ensure that wider local regeneration opportunities are also identified and supported.



FARMING DIVERSIFICATION, LAKE OF MENTEITH

AIM BY 2045

The National Park is an exemplar of a new form of best practice land use and management, where climate action, nature restoration, local produce and green jobs bring benefits for all.

How might we measure success?
See page 55

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Land Use Change

To transform land use within the National Park over time, to ensure that it delivers much more for climate and nature, as well as local food and high-quality jobs.

Facilitate a Regional Land Use Partnership and prepare a Park-wide Land Use Framework setting out collaborative land use change objectives and priorities across multiple land holdings at a landscape scale.

Promote the integration of land use and development priorities and opportunities within emerging area-based strategies prepared through the new Local Development Plan.

Facilitate strategic, joined-up planning for larger land holdings (or multiple neighbouring holdings), incorporating the business and investment opportunities coming from climate and nature restoration land use changes.

Encourage and support land managers to shift more suitable land towards low carbon and regenerative agriculture as a primary purpose.

New Funding Streams

To develop funding support opportunities that help deliver wider public benefits from our land, including for climate and nature.

Engage in national level land reform policy discussions to advocate for a shift in land use policy support and regulation schemes. Aim to deliver a change in the way that land and water is managed, towards a new, integrated system that does not continue to deplete nature and instead restores it as well as support production and jobs.

Encourage, develop and pilot new funding streams and projects, such as private ethical green finance and new investment markets (e.g. carbon credits and biodiversity credits) that bring new, multi-year funding to allow delivery of land-use based climate and nature restoration benefits across the Park.

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

Engaging Communities in Land Use Decisions

To engage communities and other stakeholders more effectively in land use change decisions.

Support and enable communities to engage with land managers and influence land use decisions affecting their futures and discuss what opportunities there might be to benefit all parties.

Green Jobs, Skills and Business Opportunities

To support change in the land management sector to better meet and benefit from the opportunities from changing land use priorities.

Develop and deliver training and further education opportunities that meet the anticipated demand from scaling up climate and nature restoration projects as well as and regenerative agriculture and sustainable forestry. Help local communities and land managers to turn these into employment and volunteering opportunities through training and re-training.

Create longer-term confidence for land management contractors and service providers by scaling and packaging up projects more strategically and over multiple years.

WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED?

A multi-agency response is required on restoring nature, under pinned by agricultural and land use reform, including:

- » Scottish Government
- » NatureScot
- » Scottish Forestry
- » Forestry and Land Scotland
- » Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- » Scottish Water
- » Scottish Land & Estates
- » NFU Scotland
- » Environmental NGOs and charities
- » Deer Management Groups
- » Private land managers & their agents
- » Local communities & rural businesses
- » Private finance organisations and brokers
- » Rural Skills Training Providers
- » UK National Parks Partnerships





POLICIES FOR RESTORING NATURE

POLICY FOR RESTORING NATURE FOR CLIMATE

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park will be a net zero place by 2040 and will continue to work towards being carbon negative beyond that. A key focus to achieve this will be to significantly increase efforts to naturally absorb carbon in the landscape through a nature-based approach.

This will include:

- » Restoring significant areas of peatland and protecting this precious resource by repairing degraded peat soils and ensuring impacts from grazing animals are minimal.
- » Increasing the quantity and quality of tree cover through planting and promoting natural regeneration by significantly reducing grazing animal pressure.

Ensuring that efforts to sequester carbon also help restore nature and contribute to establishing new nature networks.

Working with land managers and communities to secure new sources of funding that provides new opportunities and help support a just transition to a net zero and nature positive National Park.

POLICY FOR RESTORING NATURE FOR HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

The ongoing decline in nature in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park will be reversed by 2030 and there will be widespread restoration and recovery of nature by 2040.

A landscape scale Nature Network approach will be taken, improving and connecting core areas and expanding the links between these core areas across the National Park.

This will be achieved by:

- » Ensuring that peatland restoration programmes are expanded to deliver multiple benefits including carbon sequestration, improved biodiversity and water storage.
- » Expanding our connected network of trees with an increased proportion of native tree and shrub species and improving their quality through proactive management, including management of invasive Rhododendron.
- » Strategic landscape-scale management to significantly reduce unsustainable deer and sheep grazing and browsing pressures and to allow the recovery and expansion of tree cover and reduce trampling of fragile peat soils.
- » Taking a strategic approach to controlling Invasive Non-Native Species at a landscape scale.
- » Improving the freshwater and marine environments by restoring rivers and wetlands and increasing water quality by addressing diffuse pollution, sewage discharge and fertiliser run-off from land uses.
- » Improving the condition of existing Designated Sites and delivering actions that protect, expand and reconnect the special species and habitats found there.
- » Fully adopting and delivering the principles of the National Planning Framework 4 and ensuring that new development in the National Park takes a net gain approach to protecting and restoring nature on and around development sites.

POLICY FOR SHAPING A NEW LAND ECONOMY

We will connect and embed our Natural Networks across all land uses in the National Park by supporting positive land use change and more climate and regenerative land management practices.

This will be achieved by:

- » Piloting a Regional Land Use Partnership and from it delivering a Regional Land Use Framework to promote a collaborative approach to positive land use change delivering multiple benefits.
- » Ensuring planning policies support rural development which helps sustain land businesses, employment needs and local communities.
- » Working with national partners to secure more effective use of grants and subsidies which are tailored to support better outcomes for nature. This includes:
 - » Agriculture – delivering sustainable and regenerative agriculture to continue to support livelihoods, rural communities and food production whilst delivering restoration of our soils, expansion of tree cover and reduced grazing animal pressures on habitats.
 - » Forestry – delivering timber production whilst expanding and improving a resilient and sustainable forest network.
 - » Enabling the creation of new nature-based green jobs and skills by mapping out capacity and skills shortages and supporting opportunities to grow employment and knowledge.

Developing and piloting new funding models which can blend public and private finance to support multi-year large-scale nature restoration projects.



POLICY FOR RESTORING NATURE WITH ETHICAL GREEN FINANCE

To achieve ambitious nature restoration and climate targets it is recognised that this cannot be achieved through public funding alone. Ways to secure private green investment to achieve targets will be piloted and developed in collaboration with the Scottish Government and other UK protected landscapes. To ensure such finance is genuinely reducing overall carbon emissions, supporting nature restoration targets and benefiting the wider rural economy, we will only facilitate private investment which:

- » Takes an integrated approach in supporting environmental, social and economic benefits and which responds to local needs and opportunities.
- » Provides benefits across public, private and community interests and supports a just transition to a greener economy.
- » Has included local engagement to inform land use decisions where possible by consulting on a land management plan.
- » Is from organisations that have made a public commitment to reaching Net Zero emissions by 2050 at the latest, with clear demonstrable activities to reduce emissions and signed up to a credible initiative to deliver on this commitment.
- » Is not finance derived from income associated with environmental damage, the extraction of fossil fuels or any unethical practices.

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

Based on the proposed objectives, below are some of the ways we might measure progress on Restoring Nature which we are keen to gather views on through the consultation on this Draft Plan.

Potential Measures of Success: Restoring Nature

» **Net Zero:**

Measure the greenhouse gas footprint of the National Park every 5 years against the baseline year of 2019. Reach net zero GHG emissions by 2040.

» **State of Nature:**

Baseline assessment to be completed in 2023, measure every 5 years thereafter.

» **Peatland restoration:**

Track the extent and condition of the National Park's peatland. Increase the average annual rate of restoration projects from the current average of 240/ha to 640/ha. Achieve approximately 8,000ha of restoration by 2030.

» **Trees:**

Track the extent and condition of the National Park's woodland/forest/tree cover. Increase the average annual rate of woodland creation from the current average of 200ha year to 400ha.

» **Grazing Impacts:**

Complete Habitat Impact Assessments for every Deer Management Group every 2 years.

» **Water quality:**

Track the ecological status of target waterbodies at key restoration sites (and a 'control group' of waterbodies for comparison).

» **Invasive Non-native Species:**

Track the extent and distribution of target Invasive Non-native Species. See a demonstrable, ongoing decline that is consistent with halting the decline of nature by 2030.

» **Agreements:**

Track the amount of land in the National Park under new climate and nature-related agreements and funding




It also will be important to track things like the amount of new funding streams to deliver for climate and regenerative agriculture, the new skills opportunities developed, and any new land use policies and processes that deliver more holistic land use change. Effective measurements for these will need to be discussed and agreed.

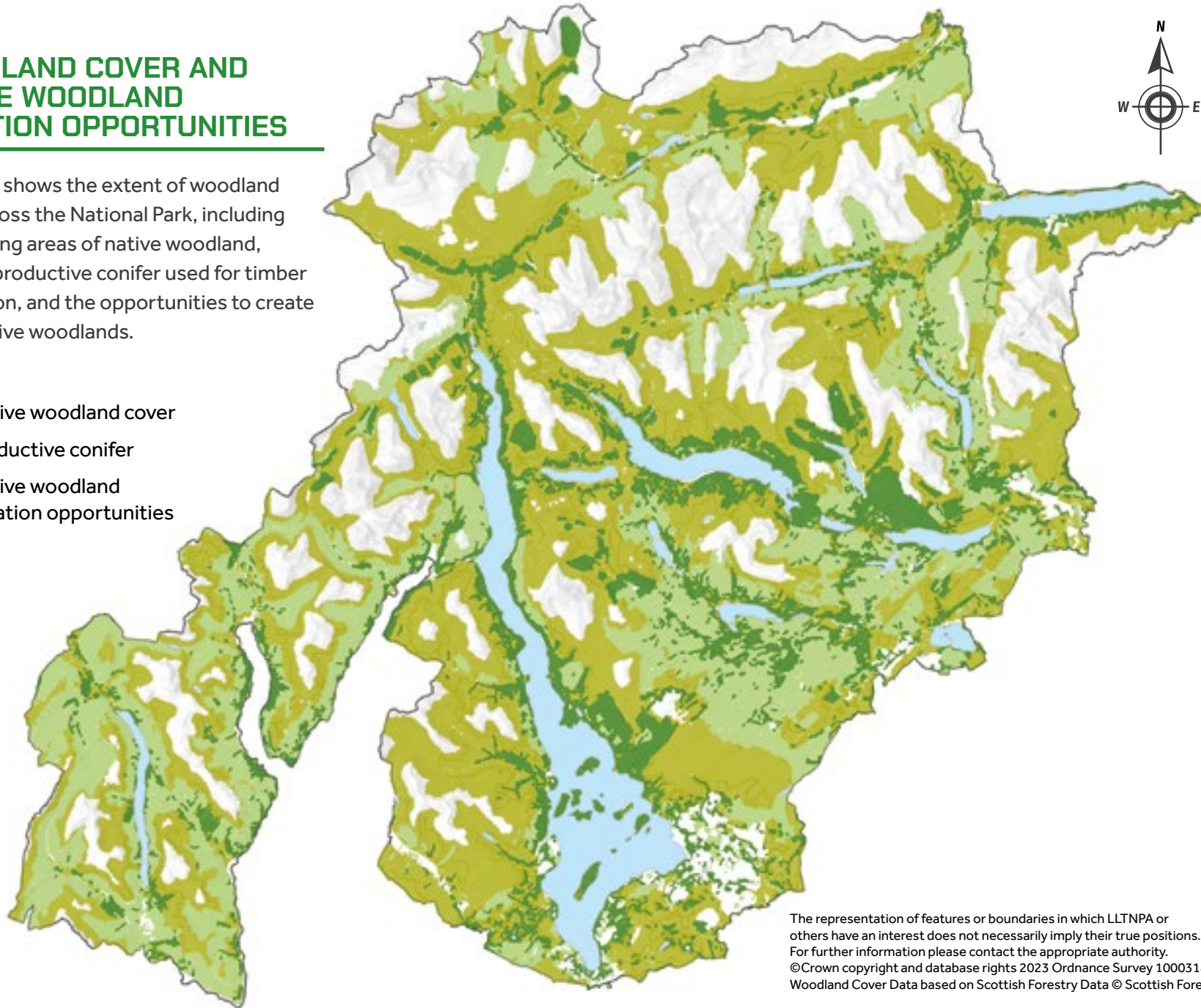


GLEN FALLOCH

WOODLAND COVER AND NATIVE WOODLAND CREATION OPPORTUNITIES

This map shows the extent of woodland cover across the National Park, including the existing areas of native woodland, areas of productive conifer used for timber production, and the opportunities to create more native woodlands.




-  Native woodland cover
-  Productive conifer
-  Native woodland creation opportunities

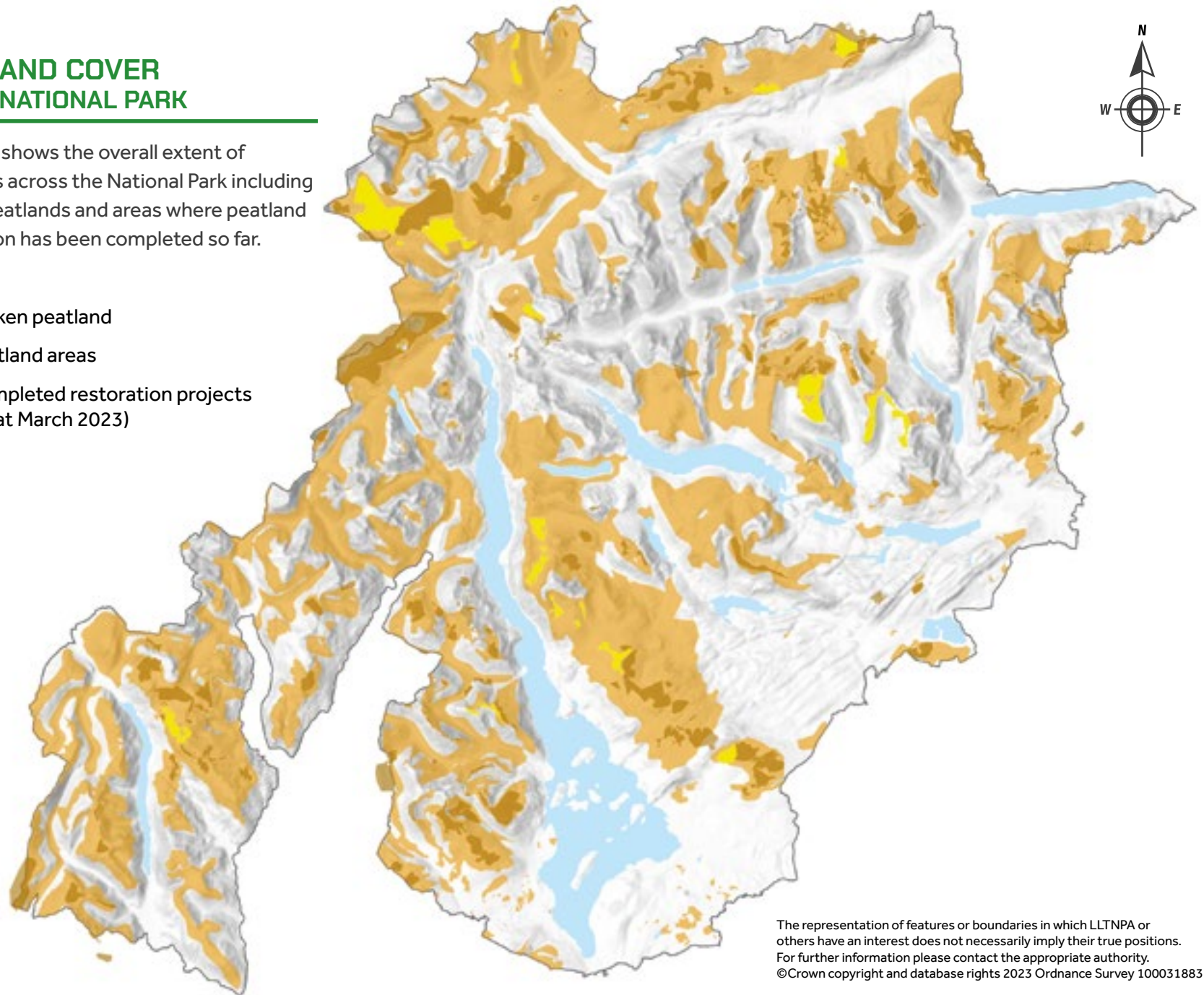


The representation of features or boundaries in which LLTNPA or others have an interest does not necessarily imply their true positions. For further information please contact the appropriate authority.
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Woodland Cover Data based on Scottish Forestry Data © Scottish Forestry

PEATLAND COVER IN THE NATIONAL PARK

This map shows the overall extent of peatlands across the National Park including broken peatlands and areas where peatland restoration has been completed so far.

-  Broken peatland
-  Peatland areas
-  Completed restoration projects (as at March 2023)

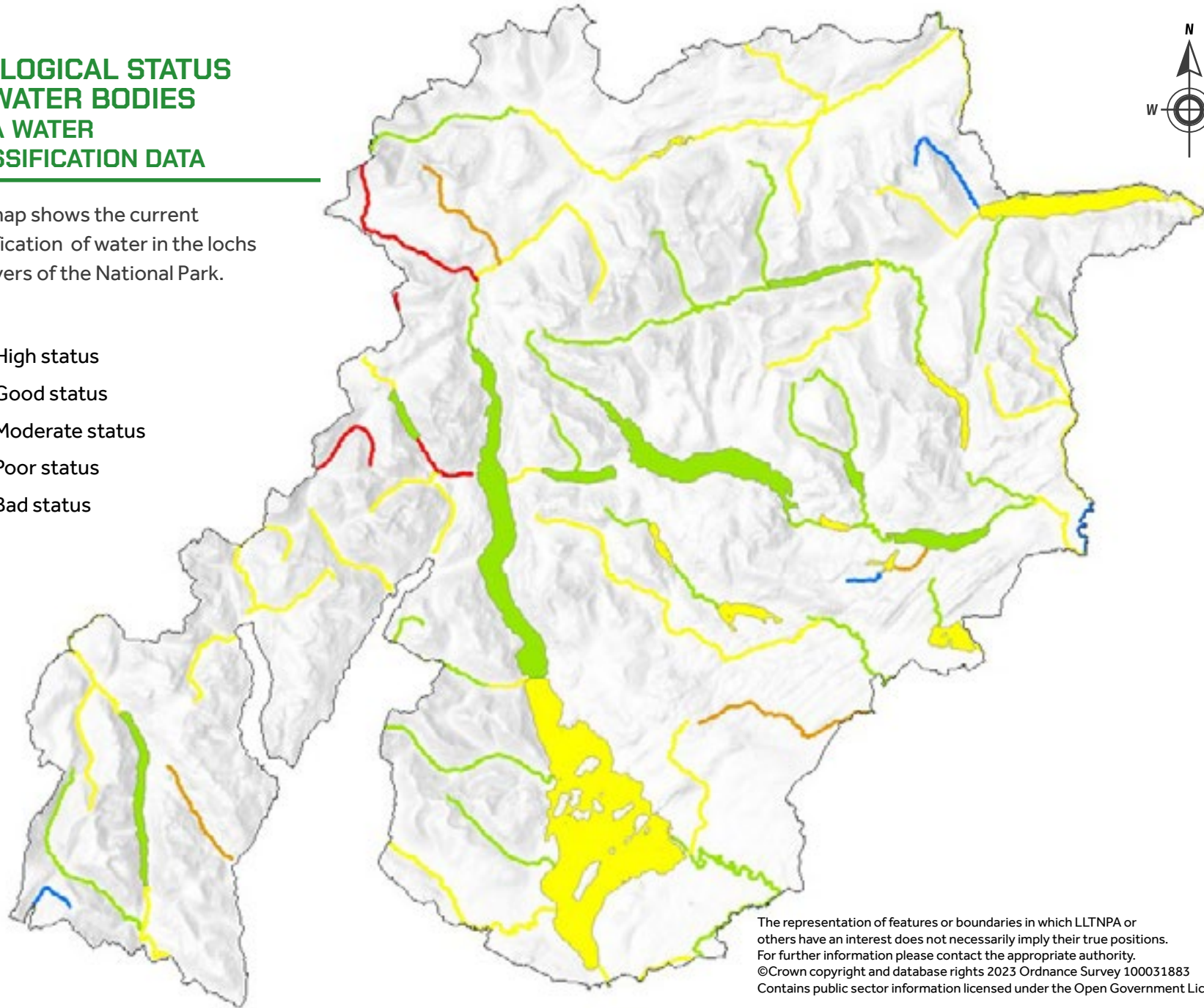


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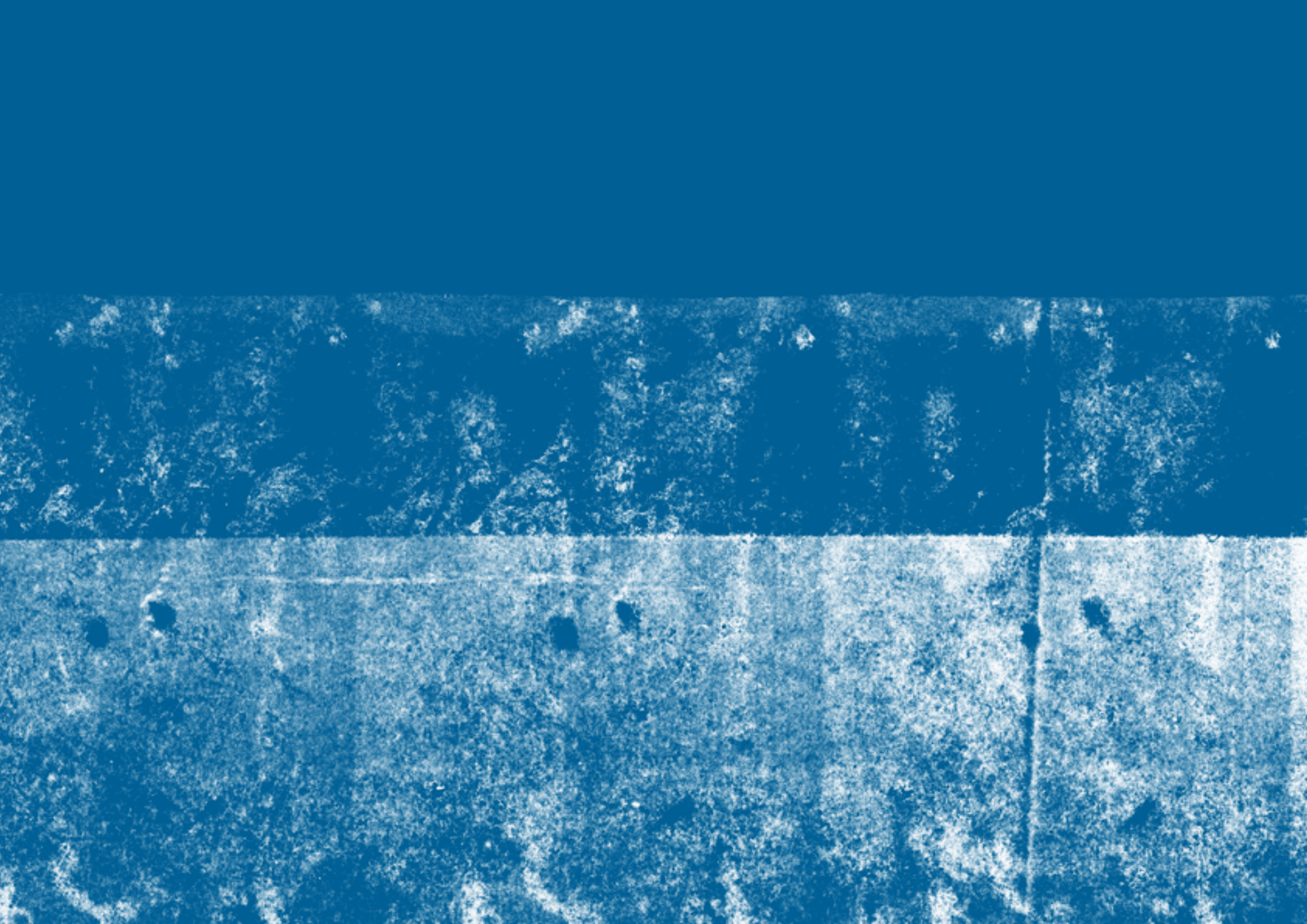
ECOLOGICAL STATUS OF WATER BODIES SEPA WATER CLASSIFICATION DATA

This map shows the current classification of water in the lochs and rivers of the National Park.

- High status
- Good status
- Moderate status
- Poor status
- Bad status



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**CREATING A
SUSTAINABLE,
LOW-CARBON
DESTINATION**

INTRODUCTION

Creating A Sustainable, Low-Carbon Destination

Approximately four million visitors come to the National Park each year to enjoy and benefit from its natural beauty, rich heritage and recreational opportunities.

People feeling connected to nature provides benefits not only for their wellbeing but encourages them to act in ways that are more likely to benefit the environment.

That connection with nature can mean different things to different people, from taking in a view, to ensuring they take their litter home after a visit, to taking part in conservation volunteering.

The National Park already offers the opportunity for millions of people to experience and connect with nature.

Our 2019/20 Visitor Survey found that the main motivation for visiting the National Park was to enjoy the beautiful scenery, this was mentioned by 60% of all respondents, and 90% said it was a good place to see wildlife.



The Visitor Survey also found that

97%

of respondents agreed that being in the National Park improves one's mood and sense of wellbeing.

Post COVID-19, more and more people are enjoying the outdoors, with increases in activities such as hillwalking, paddleboarding and open water swimming. For example, a 2022 NatureScot study stated there had been a 10% increase in non-powered, water-related activities such as swimming, fishing and paddleboarding between 2019 and 2022. So, the potential to encourage even more people to connect with nature and act in ways that help tackle the climate and nature crises is huge. The proximity of the National Park to urban Scotland, combined with its special qualities, also provides significant employment and income opportunities, supporting the economy and communities of the National Park.



SIR WALTER SCOTT STEAMSHIP ON LOCH KATRINE

However, the popularity of the National Park creates pressures and challenges resulting in impacts on our natural environment and behaviours which aren't compatible with the Scottish Government's ambitions to become a Net Zero Nation by 2045. For example, the dominance of car travel for recreational day trips is a major contributor to carbon emissions of the National Park. Demand also currently outstrips supply of fit-for-purpose services and facilities to meet the needs of our visitors. We also know that while many more people are enjoying the outdoors, the visitor profile of those enjoying the National

Park doesn't fully reflect the diversity of Scotland's population and more can be done to support people of all backgrounds to be able to benefit from the National Park.

As we emerge from the pandemic and face the challenges of the climate and nature crises head on, there is great opportunity to transform the National Park into a more sustainable, low carbon destination.

In some places, where climate and nature considerations need to be given greater weight, action will be required to restrict visitor demand where capacity is an issue. At

the same time, we will need to develop and invest in more services and infrastructure in popular places. In particular, a strategic, system-wide approach to rethinking how people travel to, from and around the National Park is needed. The increasing interest in nature and climate friendly visiting also provides significant potential for businesses in the National Park to adapt and support the long-term sustainability/resilience of our visitor economy while at the same time contributing to Scotland's ambitions to become a Net Zero Nation and restore nature.



CREATING A SUSTAINABLE, LOW-CARBON DESTINATION
Creating A Sustainable, Low-Carbon Destination



CYCLING IN QUEEN ELIZABETH FOREST PARK

CONNECTING EVERYONE WITH NATURE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CONNECTING EVERYONE WITH NATURE?

It is becoming widely accepted that the more connected someone is to nature, the more likely they are to have good health and wellbeing and to act in ways that will benefit the environment. The National Park has an important role in providing opportunities for people of all backgrounds to do this, from stopping at a viewpoint while driving through on their way to somewhere else, to taking part in practical conservation as a volunteer.

The attraction and benefit of enjoying the outdoors also opens huge potential for businesses, communities and our collective work to deliver for nature and climate and reach people who don't currently access the National Park.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

The National Park is an asset for all of Scotland, but the range of people currently visiting the area does not reflect the diversity of our society. For example, only 1 in 10 of respondents in our most recent Visitor Survey reported a long-term health condition or a disability. In contrast, 20% of people reported a long-term health condition or disability in the 2011 census.

This challenge is not unique to the National Park, nor is it new. According to recent Scottish Government research: "Since 2012, there has been a significant increase in the number of adults participating in outdoor recreation on both an annual basis and a weekly basis. However, increased participation has not been seen across all groups, such as those with a long-term illness or disability, or among minority ethnic groups." There is an important opportunity over the next five years to ensure a broader spectrum of visitors to the National Park.

The National Park's landscapes, natural environment and cultural heritage are the very reason there is a tourism economy, with 60% of those responding to our Visitor Survey saying their main motivation for visiting was the beautiful scenery.

Spending on nature-based tourism is a growing area, nationally it "is estimated to contribute nearly 40% of all tourism spend supporting 39,000 full time equivalent jobs".

How people experience the National Park has also changed significantly in recent years including the increase of independent travel and self-catering, the impact of social media, and a desire for more sustainable visitor experiences.

Wellness Tourism is another emerging global trend, with a 2019 VisitScotland Insight study finding that 42% characterised a wellness holiday as including "experiencing fresh air and being outdoors", while "peace and quiet" came in at 41%.

However, the way that millions of people currently visit the National Park each year is not compatible with the Scottish Government ambitions to become a Net Zero Nation by 2045 and is resulting in impacts on our natural environment. To respond to this there needs to be a new type of tourism.

Tourism businesses within the National Park are increasingly aware of the special landscape in which they operate and the need to balance commercial challenges with the priorities of restoring nature and tackling the climate emergency. We are already seeing businesses work hard to reduce their environmental and climate impact, training their staff in the Park's nature, collaborating to deliver connections with public transport and communities taking action to repair and enhance their local environments.

WHAT COULD IT BE?

Nature connection and engagement is one of the three main pathways set out in the Future Nature Route Map. Through this by 2030 we aim to establish widely available, inventive engagement and education opportunities around nature. This could provide opportunities for all communities, including those groups which may be normally excluded, to learn about and experience nature in the National Park in exciting and informative ways.

By giving visitors and communities a strong understanding of nature, they could feel more engaged and empowered to contribute to efforts to protect it. As a result, the National Park could be a high-quality destination for everyone to experience and help care for Scotland's fantastic landscapes and natural and cultural heritage.

Tourism businesses in the National Park are well placed to position themselves to respond to the increasing interest in voluntourism, sustainable holidays, carbon-aware itineraries, locally sourced produce and eco-friendly accommodation. In doing so, the visitor economy could become more compatible with a net zero and nature-rich future, by offering visitors an experience which actively contributes to emissions reduction, climate adaptation and the restoration of nature.



VISITORS AT CASHEL FOREST

AIM BY 2045

The National Park is a place where people of all backgrounds benefit from experiencing nature.

How might we measure success?
See page 87

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

A Sustainable Visitor Economy

The National Park visitor economy is transitioning to offer more low emission, nature-connected tourism opportunities.

Review existing nature-based tourism offerings and identify opportunities with our Destination Group of tourism businesses to support growth in delivery.

Work with national agencies and organisations to develop practical toolkits and other approaches to help tourism businesses maximise the market opportunities in low carbon tourism.

Inspiring Action for Nature and Climate

Outreach and outdoor learning programmes are focused on building understanding of the challenges facing our planet, inspiring action for nature and climate and promoting the wellbeing benefits of enjoying the outdoors.

Develop guiding principles for our work in nature connection and an outreach/outdoor learning programme to promote climate and nature conscious behaviours.

Review and realign National Park Authority educational and outreach resources and programme with Future Nature priorities and key messages.

Develop and deliver National Park local schools 'Nature Network' project.

Bring together National Park education and volunteering providers to build consensus on objectives and better align delivery to address nature and climate priorities.

Continue to support the Walk in the Park programme of wellbeing walks.

Diversity and Inclusion

Better communicated and designed opportunities to access the National Park and become involved in its work are reaching and engaging previously underrepresented audiences and have enabled improved diversity.

Volunteering opportunities across the National Park have been expanded to enable wider opportunities for people from outside the Park to actively participate in nature restoration and climate action, use and develop skills and support our Ranger Service to engage with our visitors and communities.

Continue to develop the role and membership of the National Park Youth Committee in providing a youth voice, ensuring the priorities of young people are reflected in policies and decisions.

Engage and support the growing sector of charities and voluntary organisations who work with a wide range of ethnic communities to enable more access to the National Park.

Develop communication approaches to ensure all opportunities to access or become involved in the work of the National Park are reaching underrepresented groups.

Refresh the National Park volunteering programme to rebuild volunteer numbers following the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, seeking to expand the diversity and including for young people.

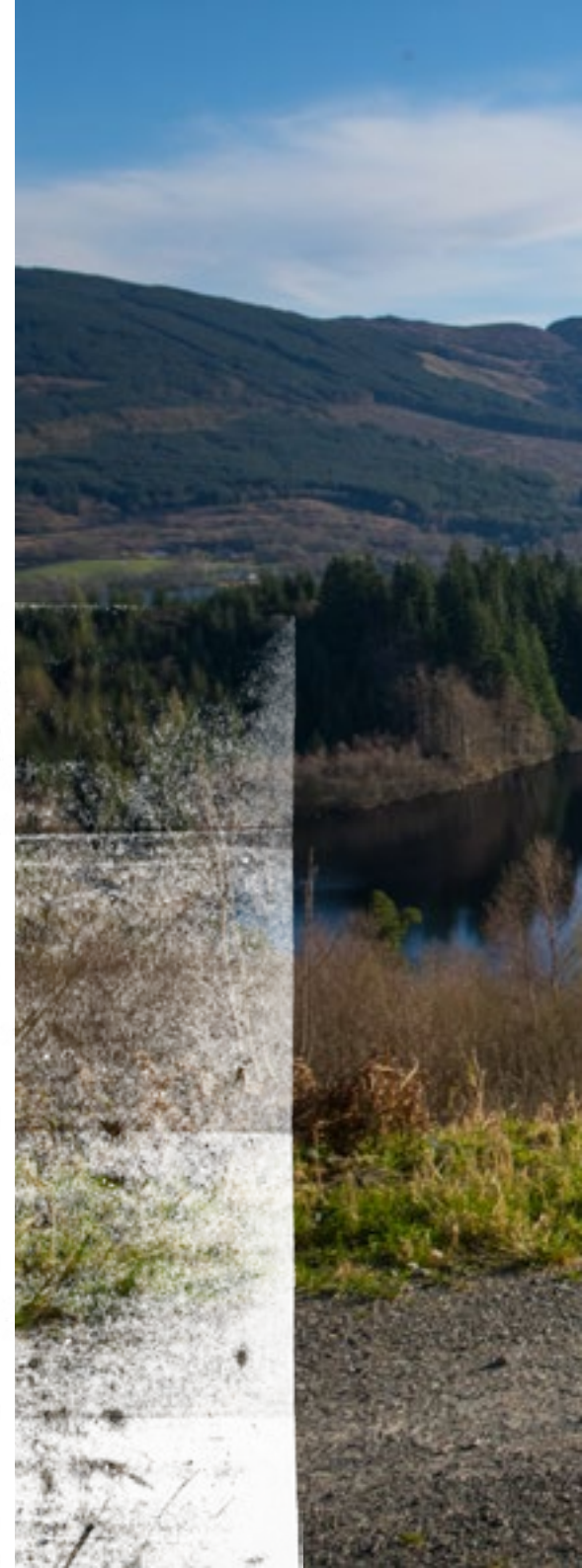
IMPROVING POPULAR PLACES AND ROUTES

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY IMPROVING POPULAR PLACES AND ROUTES?

Despite the size of the National Park, certain locations and paths are long established as popular places where visitors tend to cluster, while other areas have much lower volumes of people seeking different visitor experiences. Our hills, lochshores, villages and the long distances routes, such as the West Highland Way, are well established and attract increasing numbers of visitors as people discover these places and experiences.

The numbers of people and cars going to the most popular locations on our busiest summer days shows the value people place in these diverse experiences. However, while extensive work has been undertaken to reduce and manage seasonal visitor pressures over the years, there are still impacts on our natural environment and the quality of life of our communities.

As well as co-ordinated visitor management on the ground, we need to co-ordinate investment and strategically plan across all publicly managed visitor sites and routes to make sure we can meet changing visitor needs and expectations, where this can be achieved sustainably.





DUKES WEEKENDER, ABERFOYLE

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

There is a well-established pattern of visitor activity in the National Park in terms of popular places and routes. As with any popular destination, there are tensions at times between local communities and visitors, for example in places like Luss and Balmaha, but also in other small but popular places.

Over the years this pattern has allowed us to collaboratively target investment, services and communications to support a positive visitor experience and, where needed, address visitor pressures in these areas. The National Park Authority and partner organisations have invested significantly in creating new routes, maintaining existing routes to a high standard, improving visitor sites and other infrastructure such as piers and pontoons. Byelaws are also in place in some areas for Seasonal Camping Management and the Loch Lomond Byelaws for loch users providing a mechanism for enforcement when needed.

The pandemic was a significant 'stress test' on rural visitor destinations and recreational facilities across Scotland. A major increase in visitors resulted in some negative visitor

behaviours in our most popular, easy to reach places with littering, toileting, illegal parking, congestion along with anti-social behaviours being the main issues. These impacted on our communities as well as on other visitors.

This experience brought stakeholders, third sector, businesses and communities closer together to accelerate action to increase visitor facilities, improve real time information and extend ranger patrols. This was supported by targeted national funding for 'boots on the ground' over the last three years.

However, it has also confirmed where long-term change is needed. *Services, information and infrastructure needs to improve so that the National Park is more accessible for everyone and to help our visitors reduce the impacts of their visit* - for example, by choosing to travel by public transport rather than by car. This is a crucial part of becoming a Net Zero National Park, with visitor travel to and from the area being the largest (34%) of the six main categories of emission reduction targets.

The visitor sites and infrastructure in the National Park – car parks, toilets, piers, paths – both those managed by the National Park Authority and other organisations, were all largely established prior to the National Park's designation in 2002. Climate change is also increasingly affecting our visitor sites and routes, including through increased rainfall damaging paths and bridges on the West Highland Way. While there has been investment in upgrades and improvements over the years, until recently there has not been a real joined up strategic approach looking across all public visitor sites in the National Park.

Climate change is increasingly affecting our visitor sites and routes damaging paths and bridges.

WHAT COULD IT BE?

The National Park Authority is leading on a new Place Programme of planning and investment on its own visitor sites and supporting others to do the same. Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Studies are being progressed covering all areas of the National Park, with the Trossachs, East and West Loch Lomond complete. These studies are being prepared in collaboration with landowners, businesses, communities and partner public bodies and will drive a pipeline of improvement.

While our tourism industry supports a thriving local visitor economy, there is a need for continued collaborative work with the business community to support sustainable, responsible visiting for everyone.

We have the potential now to capitalise on the experiences and legacy of recent years to improve and support how people experience popular places and routes.

A long-term collaborative and coordinated approach to visitor services and infrastructure, as well as managing pressures, could have huge benefits for visitors, communities and businesses as well as supporting climate and nature objectives.

By providing a high-quality experience for visitors in popular places, through improved services and facilities with less impact on nature and climate, communities could also see a reduced impact on their everyday lives.

A better designed, organised and managed network of visitor sites could make the delivery of visitor management services more efficient, by reducing enforcement issues.

Local businesses could thrive by providing positive, enjoyable and sustainable tourism experiences, while at the same time supporting local employment and services.

This joined up approach could support visitors from all backgrounds to enjoy the National Park safely and responsibly with an increased awareness and understanding of their contribution to taking care of this special place.

Key visitor hubs, such as at Balloch, Callander and Arrochar/Tarbet can provide more sustainable ways for people to travel to, from and within the National Park through improved and joined up sustainable and active travel options. Meanwhile, in less heavily visited areas, where priority has been given to non-motorised access and recreation activities, nature can recover more rapidly.

AIM BY 2045

People have a high-quality experience visiting the National Park and are able to use great services, facilities and routes with less impact on nature or contributing to climate change. Communities see fewer impacts of tourism on everyday life. Nature is recovering more rapidly in less visited areas, where priority has been given to non-motorised access and recreation activity.

**How might we measure success?
See page 87**

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Multi-year Place Programme

A multi-year place programme approach has delivered an initial phase of co-ordinated improvements.

Complete Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Studies, engaging with local communities, partners and stakeholders.

Deliver a multi-year Place Programme co-ordinating investment by partners public bodies on priority visitor infrastructure projects that support:

- » People and Place
- » Climate and Nature
- » Inclusion and improved accessibility
- » Modal shift to sustainable and active travel
- » Visitor management and dispersal

See Map on p77

Promote investment in digital and sensor technologies to improve visitor data gathering that informs responsive visitor services and real time information.

Ensure investment in visitor sites also enables the development of a growing and reliable EV charging network.

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

Visitor Hubs

Ensuring investment in visitor hubs at, or linking to, Balloch, Callander and Arrochar/Tarbet will enable more sustainable ways to travel both to and within the National Park including links to improved active travel networks.

Develop better designed place connectivity between rail, bus and water transport services at Balloch which also promotes and enables active travel opportunities.

Work with destination businesses and public bodies at Arrochar and Tarbet to maximise connectivity between road, rail, active travel and water access.

Develop a location in Callander to be the hub for sustainable travel into the wider Trossachs area.

Recreational Path Network

Investment in the National Park's recreational path network will focus on keeping the existing network and statutory core paths in good condition and developing more sustainable models to resource path maintenance

Develop model for the sustainable management and promotion of the West Highland Way.

Develop a maintenance programme for the most heavily used stretches of the core path network, informed by a path condition monitoring framework supported by volunteers.

Water Recreation

Investment in maintaining and where appropriate expanding facilities for enjoying water recreation and the safe enjoyment of busier lochs.

Invest in existing pier and pontoon infrastructure on Loch Lomond to enable leisure journeys and growing water transport services.

AIM BY 2045

Enjoyment of the most popular places and routes in the National Park is underpinned by holistically managed and resourced services delivery efficiencies and improvements for public service delivery. Ranger presence will help reduce footprint of visitors on climate and nature and promote responsible behaviours.

How might we measure success?
See page 87

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Partnership Approach to Visitor Management

To ensure a strong partnership approach to co-ordinating all public bodies with a role in supporting the safe and responsible enjoyment of the National Park.

Jointly plan visitor management with partners to ensure a co-ordinated approach to staff presence on the ground, litter management, visitor information campaigns and operation of publicly managed visitor facilities.

Further develop the volunteer ranger programme to support and supplement the work of the professional Ranger service and engage with our visitors.

Byelaws

National Park Camping and Loch Lomond Byelaws will be kept under review and amended as necessary where a regulatory response is needed to address issues of concern arising from changing recreational demand and behaviours

If approved by Scottish Ministers, implement changes to the Loch Lomond Byelaws to ensure safe recreational experiences at busy locations, reducing conflicts between power and non-powered activities.

Review the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Camping Management Byelaws to continue to provide a high quality camping experience in the Camping Management Zones.

Promoting Visitor Safety

A co-ordinated approach will be taken across responsible bodies to ensure the safe enjoyment of publicly managed and other popular visitor sites.

Take a consistent approach to the provision of signage, public rescue equipment, and visitor information campaigns across all responsible public bodies to raise awareness of public safety issues and potential hazards in the outdoors, particularly in relation to water safety.

VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PRIORITY AREAS AND LOCATIONS

This map shows the priority areas and locations identified in the National Park Place Programme for strategic investment in visitor infrastructure as well as the key visitor hubs for facilities and sustainable transport options.

- Priority Areas
- Priority Locations
- Visitor Hubs

Priority areas

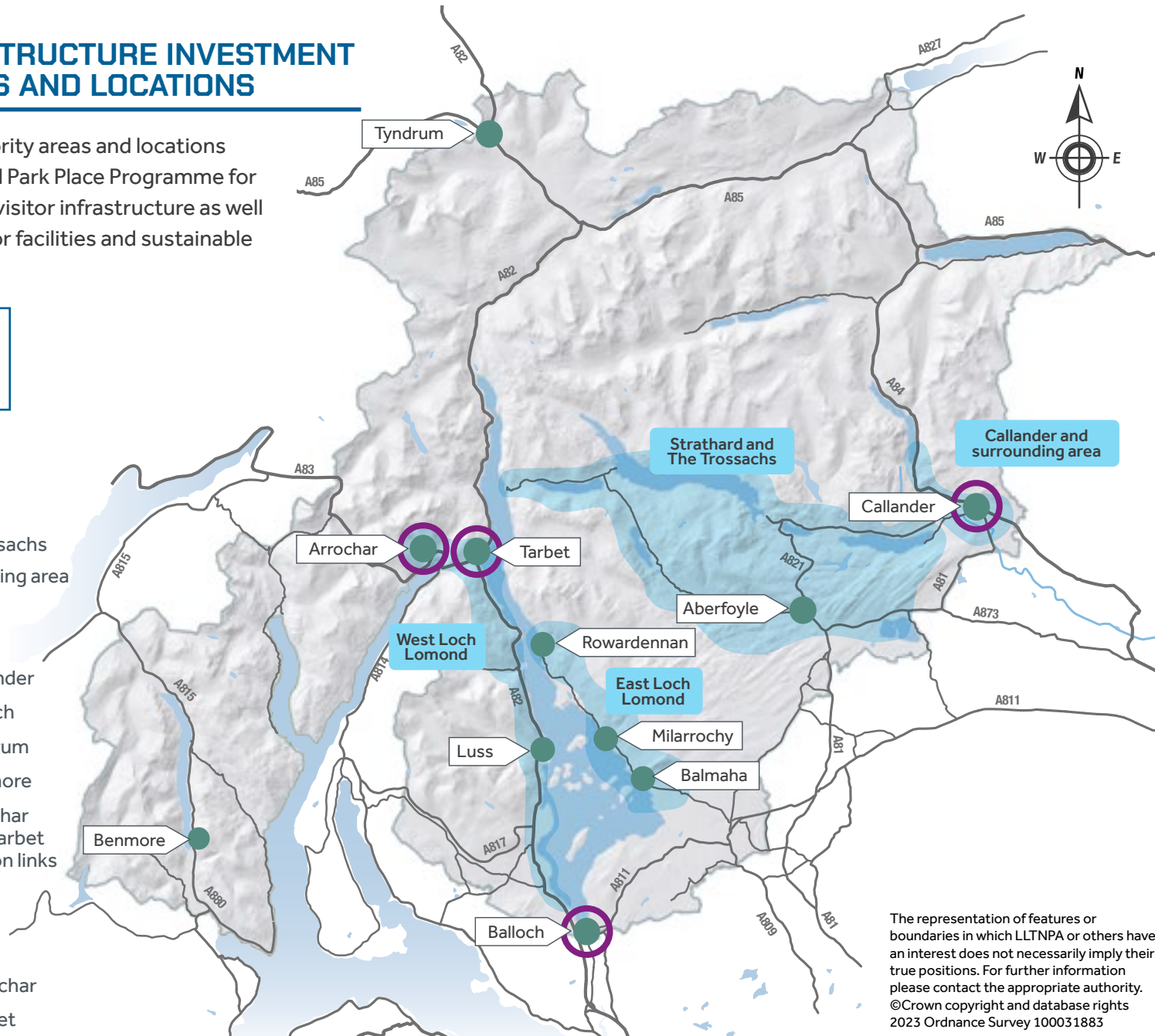
- East Loch Lomond
- West Loch Lomond
- Strathard and The Trossachs
- Callander and surrounding area

Priority locations

- | | |
|---|--|
| ● Tarbet | ● Callander |
| ● Arrochar | ● Balloch |
| ● Luss | ● Tyndrum |
| ● Balmaha | ● Benmore |
| ● Rowardennan | ● Arrochar and Tarbet station links |
| ● Milarrochy Bay | ● Aberfoyle |

Visitor Hubs

- | | |
|--|---|
| ○ Balloch | ○ Arrochar |
| ○ Callander | ○ Tarbet |



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CREATING A SUSTAINABLE, LOW-CARBON DESTINATION
Improving Popular Places and Routes

WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY LINE, LOCH LONG



LOW CARBON TRAVEL FOR EVERYONE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY LOW CARBON TRAVEL FOR EVERYONE?

We need to reduce the emissions generated by travel to, from and around the National Park while at the same time improving transport options for people visiting, living and working here.

To do this there needs to be a well-connected, dependable, and affordable system of public transport and active travel services, such as trains, shuttle buses, waterbuses and cycle routes. This system needs to provide a viable, attractive, and reliable alternative to the private car travel that has been the norm for many years.

Delivering this system-wide transformation of the National Park's transport sector will play a crucial part in:

- » **Reaching net zero**
- » **Addressing inequalities in accessing the National Park**
- » **Managing visitor pressures**
- » **Supporting the rural economy**
- » **Supporting health and wellbeing**

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Car-based travel dominates how people get to and around the National Park. 79% of visitors arrive in the National Park by car and 73% explore the area by car according to our 2019/20 Visitor Survey. Large parts of the National Park can't be reached without a car and long-standing systemic constraints make travel in the main exclusive to car users. This results in high and ever-increasing volumes of cars which in turn brings high emissions, congestion, visitor management pressures and a non-inclusive recreational opportunity.

Nationally, car-based travel is predicted to increase by 40% by 2037 if there is no intervention according to Transport Scotland and the latest progress report from the UK's Climate Change Committee emphasises that "tangible progress is lagging the policy ambition". In terms of reducing the National Park's greenhouse gas footprint and the transition to net zero, travel to and from the National Park requires the biggest change. The Footprint Assessment for the National Park completed in 2022 showed that visitor travel to and from the area is our single biggest source of emissions,

totalling 290,978 tCO₂e per year, nearly half of the overall footprint. The assessment's suggested pathway to net zero includes six categories of emissions reduction targets. Visitor travel to and from the area has the largest baseline of the categories at 34%.

Anecdotally, the pandemic has seen a further shift in private cars being used for living and working to more leisure and recreation journeys. The policies and funding for reducing the emissions of leisure journeys are not as well developed as for travel for other reasons. This is only beginning to be discussed and considered at a national scale.

Public transport across the country and within the National Park is designed primarily for residents not visitors. Many local people, particularly young people, do not feel it meets their needs. *A good example of the current system failure is that public transport provision to the rural visitor hotspot destination of Balmaha from Balloch has more capacity on a Tuesday morning in November than on a Saturday in the peak of the summer.*

The issues we face here are not new but the strategic imperatives of the climate crisis and just transition, and the green recovery from the pandemic, bring the need for transformative action into sharp focus.

The National Park Authority is highly dependent on action by partners in grasping this opportunity, for example Local Authorities and transportation operators. There is also currently a skills gap, for example work on a Shuttle Bus Pilot in 2022 made clear the shortage of bus drivers across the country, particularly in rural areas. Addressing the issues will take a long-term, strategic and 'whole system' approach. It requires the reprioritisation of sustainable modes of transport and active de-prioritisation of the private car.

79%
**of visitors arrive in the
National Park by car**

WHAT COULD IT BE?

Key routes into and around the National Park are well placed to serve the needs of both residents and visitors if they are improved and increased to meet the latent demand.

We could develop a viable and attractive alternative to the private car through a well-priced, inclusive, integrated, multi-modal, low emission rural transport system.

Establishing a new travel sector aimed at leisure journeys could enhance journeys for people living and working here too.

With the creation of this new market comes the opportunity for existing operators to scale-up or diversify, for new operators to establish themselves, and the requirement for an enlarged workforce creating more local job opportunities.

Many of the issues and challenges around travel are not unique to the National Park, and what is most relevant here is the scale of visitor travel and the opportunity to be an

exemplar of attractive, well priced, inclusive, integrated, multi-modal, low emission rural transport system that delivers for visitors and residents.

We can draw on examples of successful sustainable travel initiatives in other National Parks both in the UK, such as Snowdonia, and abroad, such as Banff National Park in Canada, to develop this new integrated system.

ARROCHAR & TARBET TRAIN STATION



AIM BY 2045

The National Park has a thriving rural transport sector providing services which have reduced the number of car journeys and transport generated emissions, met the travel needs of both visitors and residents and provided more inclusive access to the outdoors.

**How might we measure success?
See page 87**

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Whole System Approach

A 'whole system approach' has been taken and a range of new public transport services are provided which are targeted at popular outdoor leisure journeys, reducing transport emissions and promoting inclusion.

Develop a governance model in collaboration with responsible transport authorities and agencies which enables a National Park wide approach to rural transport planning.

Develop new targeted seasonal transport services that provide a viable and attractive alternative to the private car to access popular National Park destinations.

Gather data which demonstrates the latent demand for rural travel to inform service planning.

Develop and deliver an active travel strategy that links up services and infrastructure as key parts of an integrated, connected multi-modal transport experience of the National Park.

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

Incentivising Sustainable Travel Choices

Sustainable travel choices have been incentivised and enhanced through responsible public bodies collaborating on the operation and pricing of transport services, travel hubs and parking facilities.

Develop a strategic approach to setting pricing levels for travel and parking which will incentivise and support low carbon travel choices where alternative transport services are in place.

Develop a network focused on mass transit corridors and journey demand including journeys to the National Park from nearby urban areas.

Work with operators to develop an improved, integrated and affordable Waterbus service network on Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine.

Developing a Rural Transport Sector

Business and transport providers have collaborated to develop the sector and create commercial opportunities to meet sustainable travel demands.

- » Work with transport providers to address barriers to delivering integrated rural transport services in particular:
 - » delivering seasonal services.
 - » creating jobs and sourcing staff to operate services.
 - » collaborating with destination businesses to promote itineraries and complimentary offerings to grow demand.

WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED IN CREATING A LOW CARBON DESTINATION?

- » NatureScot
- » Green health partnerships
- » Education and volunteering providers and partners in the National Park (e.g. RSPB)
- » Organisations and business who manage sites within the National Park where people connect with nature (e.g. RSPB)
- » Representative bodies and those with lived experience of the barriers to engaging with the National Park
- » Scottish Government outdoor learning group partners
- » Destination Group of tourism businesses
- » Local tourism, hospitality, leisure and recreation businesses Park-wide
- » Transport Scotland
- » Police Scotland
- » Forestry and Land Scotland
- » Sustrans
- » Local Authorities
- » West Highland Way Partnership
- » Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust
- » Scottish Water
- » VisitScotland
- » Scottish Enterprise
- » ScotRail
- » Business Energy Scotland
- » Community organisations
- » Landowners and land managers

POLICIES FOR CREATING A LOW CARBON DESTINATION

POLICY FOR CONNECTING EVERYONE WITH NATURE EXPERIENCES

In developing a high-quality visitor experience in the National Park, we will work to ensure that nature and recreation experiences are accessible to and informed by the needs of all groups in society.

Our approach will focus on:

- » Enabling and encouraging more underrepresented and protected groups to enjoy the National Park.
- » Ensure improved communication about the National Park into networks used by underrepresented audiences including to improve representation and participation in policy and decision making and to improve diversity generally in the work of the National Park Authority.
- » Ensuring that investment and visitor sites and infrastructure takes account of the accessibility needs of all abilities and cultures.
- » Encouraging local tourism and recreation businesses to improve accessibility in providing visitor offerings.
- » Ensuring that more young people enjoy the outdoor experience in the National Park and are inspired to care more for nature and the climate.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL BY WATERBUS



POLICY FOR INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE VISITOR EXPERIENCES

The National Park Authority and its partners will take a place-based approach to investing in higher quality visitor facilities across publicly owned sites that reflects a sustainable balance between local needs, environmental sensitivities, and visitor demand. There will be a particular focus on ensuring improvements that enable sustainable travel, improved accessibility, visitor safety and responsible tourism.

Our Place programme work will focus on five thematic priorities:

- » **Supporting Sustainable Development** - people and place, promoting a high-quality landscape experience through design excellence, for both visitors and communities, to enhance place quality and the landscape qualities of the National Park.
- » Supporting inclusion and improved accessibility to the National Park by identifying and facilitating actions that support equality and diversity to secure barrier free / inclusive access that meets the needs of all users.
- » **Supporting Sustainable Development** – climate and nature, leading a nature-based approach to design which addresses the climate and biodiversity crises using the principles of both Future Nature and Mission Zero, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, and capitalising on the benefits of nature and considering sustainability of design, materials, maintenance, and use.
- » Supporting more sustainable ways of travel both to and within the National Park (Modal Shift) strengthening service support through a network of integrated hubs; walking, cycling, accommodation of electric vehicle (EV) use, and public and shared transport and the facilities required to increase uptake and address private car use increases.
- » Supporting visitor management and dispersal, creating a flow of people to our more resilient places, and using good design, information and better provision to support more responsible behaviours, whilst reducing the need for visitor management operations and continuing a collective approach to ensure effective long-term stewardship of our sites.

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

Based on the proposed objectives, below are some of the ways we might measure progress on Creating a Sustainable Low Carbon Destination which we are keen to gather views on through the consultation on this Draft Plan.

Potential Measures of Success:

» **Net Zero:**

Measure the greenhouse gas footprint of travel to and from the National Park against the baseline year of 2019, as part of a full footprint assessment every 5 years. Reach net zero GHG emissions by 2040.

» **Number of Visitors:**

Measure the annual number of people visiting the National Park.

» **Connection to Nature:**

Track the Nature Connectedness Index value for respondents who have visited the National Park. Baseline the value in 2023 and measure for any change every three years.

» **Diversity:**

Track how representative our domestic visitors are of Scottish society.

» **Visitor Economy:**

Track the overall value of the visitor economy. See it returning to 2019 levels of over £400 million, predominately driven by the Food & Drink and Accommodation sectors.

» **Volunteering:**

Measure the number of hours of volunteering delivered under this Plan. Increase from the 2022 baseline.

» **Strategic Investment:**

Track the total investment secured by 2030 to deliver the programme of co-ordinated improvements at strategic visitor sites.

» **Car usage:**

Track private car usage to and within the National Park. Decrease against 2019/20 visitor survey baseline of 79% of people travelling to the National Park by car.

It also will be important to track things like use of buses, trains and waterbuses, active travel routes, new rural transport routes and business development, and whether we are supporting inactive people to become more active. Effective measurements for these will need to be discussed and agreed.





**ENABLING A
GREENER ECONOMY
AND SUSTAINABLE
LIVING**

INTRODUCTION

Enabling a Greener Economy and Sustainable Living

How we live and work in the National Park needs to change to respond and adapt to the nature and climate crises. We also need to consider how development, and investment in infrastructure can support this.

We know that nationally the transformation of our economy is critical to get to net zero. Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (March 2022) states that "the next ten years will be a time of incredible change and extraordinary opportunity – but success is not inevitable. The time for brave and bold action is now."

Here in the National Park, our economy must adapt to support this, as well as to the further investment required in nature and land. In the short term it is expected that there will be a need for an increase in specialist expertise across various industries, including growing land-based skills and low carbon technologies such as micro-renewable energy and construction sectors. We need to understand more about

the opportunities this can bring for the local economy and how the benefits from this can be shared in a fair and just way, including for existing businesses, people and local communities, including generating and retaining wealth more locally.

A particular challenge for many communities is an aging population and loss of services.

Housing and transport are two of the biggest issues causing barriers to more working age and young people being able to find a home and jobs in the National Park.



This is changing the composition of communities and significantly impacting on the local economy due to the challenges for businesses being able to attract and retain staff. These issues need to be addressed to support the transition to a greener economy and to encourage more local living.



LOCHGOILHEAD

Living and working more locally will reduce our reliance on carbon by making residents less reliant on car journeys to other areas, as well as supporting more vibrant, healthy communities.

We need to support communities to adapt to the changing climate and how this directly impacts their infrastructure, like roads, and environment. More heavy, intense periods of rainfall is resulting in increased flooding, with significant flood events from the Rivers Forth and Teith in Aberfoyle and Callander impacting on these communities and at times cutting off some residents entirely. Landslips are another example over recent years, blocking strategic road links on both the A83 and A85 Trunk roads as well as minor local roads within more remote parts of the National Park. Building on existing examples of communities taking action to develop their resilience and using Local Place Plans can help this transition.

Being a National Park doesn't mean there can be no development here. However, since the last Partnership Plan, the national policy and operating environment has shifted. In its latest National Planning Framework for Scotland (NPF4), the Scottish Government has made it clear that to respond to the climate emergency and nature crisis, all investment and development must contribute to making Scotland a more sustainable place.

Development and infrastructure investment has an increasingly important role here and now within the National Park to help address the climate emergency, restore nature and support rural communities.



TRANSITIONING TO A GREENER RURAL ECONOMY

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY TRANSITIONING TO A GREENER RURAL ECONOMY?

Addressing the climate emergency and nature crisis requires the National Park's rural economy to transition towards becoming greener, and more diverse than it is now. This means supporting a rapid transition of our business sector towards becoming net zero, as well as securing increased investment in our land-based sector, to help mitigate and adapt against the impacts of climate change and help restore nature.

To facilitate this, significant growth in local 'green jobs' is expected to be required. These types of jobs are yet to be precisely defined or quantified for the National Park, however these will be needed across multiple sectors and particularly in the nature-based land sectors. Additional specialist skills and expertise are likely to be required to support businesses to get to net zero, alongside the need for new jobs and skills across various sectors and technologies such as digital, transport, tourism, renewable energy and construction.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

At the time of drafting this plan, businesses in the National Park are experiencing some of the most difficult operating circumstances in a generation, brought about by adjusting to Brexit, COVID-19 and the current cost of living crisis. The National Park Destination Group comprises local tourism business representatives from across the National Park who say that escalating operating costs, skills shortages and recruitment challenges are being experienced across all sectors, with the tourism and hospitality sectors requiring to make changes to operating models, either reducing or scaling back on their business hours or service provision at a time when visitors are returning to the National Park.

Availability of local housing for staff and good public transport links are compounding factors affecting the ability of businesses to attract and retain staff. However, the current fiscal operating environment, specifically current levels of business rates and VAT levels, are stated by many businesses to be the key issue impacting on both short and long-term planning, alongside responding to legislative changes during the current parliamentary term including the consideration of a Local Visitor Levy and Short Term Let Control areas.

Many businesses are taking steps to reduce their carbon footprint by making changes to their energy usage and waste systems and supporting local supply chains.

Business collaboration and projects within the visitor economy sector are also supporting citizens to make greener choices and supporting behaviour change.

This sector has a significant role as ambassadors for the National Park through their interaction with visitors and opportunity to connect with a broad range of people.

This economic transition is also occurring at a time when the National Park is experiencing an aging population and loss of working age and young people. The most recent projections indicate a decline in population overall from around 14,700 (2018 estimate) to 14,300 by 2028. However small area population forecasts suggest this will differ between communities with some experiencing population increase. Engagement with young people through the National Park Youth Committee suggests that they may find it hard to know what skills are going to be needed and, aside from hospitality sector, what job opportunities are likely to be available to them within the National Park.

WHAT COULD IT BE?

Investment in natural capital as part of our transition to net zero could provide significant new employment opportunities. This has been found in studies from other rural areas of Scotland with similar landscapes, such as recent research undertaken by Highlands and Islands Enterprise to investigate opportunities arising from investing in natural capital in Argyll and Bute. Analysis by NatureScot expects that nationally there will need to be extensive growth in nature-based jobs such as woodland planting and peatland restoration.

The increase in flexible ways of working post-COVID, such as home or hybrid working and options to work from local business hubs, supports more local and lower-carbon living and working. There are already business hubs in Aberfoyle and Drymen and some trials underway using local village halls as multipurpose venues, breathing new life into rural facilities and helping to sustain these.

Community and third sector enterprises have the potential to grow as part of our transition to a wellbeing economy.

There are many examples of innovative community-led enterprises across the National Park including community-run village halls, a café, pontoons, visitor centre, business hub and a post office/newsagent and pub. All of these generate income that supports greener, local living. Some communities also have their own run of river hydro schemes that provide a clean source of energy and income to the local community as well. Ensuring communities are supported to maintain and build capacity in their local organisations, through supporting more local people, including young people, to get involved could result in more social enterprises like these being established and supporting local wealth building.



COMMUNITY-LED RUN OF RIVER HYDRO SCHEME

AIM BY 2045

The National Park has a greener and more diverse rural economy, with businesses capitalising on the market advantage of restored nature and a net zero place; supporting an increase in working age population and contributing towards, sustainable, thriving communities.

How might we measure success?
See page 116

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Transition to a greener economy

The National Park economy is transitioning to a greener, zero-carbon wellbeing economy in ways that are fair and inclusive to everyone and where the benefits arising from this are retained and shared locally.

Establish a robust evidence base to identify where there are existing skills or labour shortages along with opportunities and demand for new green skills and jobs growth.

Develop a Green Skills and Just Transition Action Plan for the National Park to ensure the benefits arising from economic transition are shared in a fair and inclusive way.

Support closer working between the public sector, land managers, businesses and communities to grow the green economy, including opportunities for new business models, collaborative pilots and community led social enterprise that will help build and retain local economic wealth and grow the local workforce.

Low Carbon businesses

Businesses are reducing their carbon emissions from a shift to greener and more local supply chains, renewable energy use, more sustainable waste management, and greener forms of transport.

Identify the support needs of existing businesses (including land and tourism) to help them transition to net zero, including specialist technical advice and identification of opportunities for collaborative support and action.

Seek the expansion of specialist business support and funding to facilitate carbon reduction.

Continue to support improvements to digital and telecommunications infrastructure to facilitate improvements in business operations and minimize the need for travel where appropriate.

Support collaboration between tourism businesses, communities and public sector partners on improved public transport solutions for employees and visitors.

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

A wellbeing economy

National Park communities are fully harnessing the opportunities arising from economic transition, seeing an increase in working age population through take up of new green jobs and experiencing a range of benefits from investment in natural capital within their local landscape.

Through the National Park Authority's planning role and working with housing partners, ensure new housing more closely corresponds to identified requirements of communities and the local labour force.

Update a framework of support for communities to fully realise the potential opportunities arising from transition to net zero through increased capacity building support, training and skills development for community anchor organisations.

Through learning programmes, training and events, support communities to understand how they can engage in and help inform land use decisions and investment in natural capital that can help address identified local community needs.

Inclusion and learning opportunities

More people within our communities are contributing to supporting a greener rural economy through increased learning, skills and volunteering opportunities.

Refresh the National Park Authority- led volunteering programme in the Park, particularly to welcome new volunteers from our communities.

Design a whole volunteering pathway, providing opportunities to gain green skills, from youth programmes through to adult volunteering, skills sharing and beyond to employment.

Support young people to see their future in the National Park through development of traineeships, apprenticeships and placements that provide wide-scoping opportunities for green skills development and pathways into green jobs and careers.

Continue to grow the National Park Authority Youth Committee as a platform for young people from a wide range of backgrounds to engage with the National Park, be involved in decision making and advocate for their sustainable future.

LIVING WELL LOCALLY

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY LIVING WELL LOCALLY?

One of the ways we can all change behaviours to reach net zero is by acting quickly to reduce our reliance on carbon, and by living more locally. This is about ensuring that people are increasingly able to meet their daily needs as close as possible to where they live or work without needing to use a car, and instead by using active travel (walking, wheeling or cycling) or public transport.

Living well locally can also:

- » support improved quality of life, health and wellbeing for many people by supporting more active lifestyles,
- » strengthen and deepen the connections between people and the places where they live – with nature, culture and local heritage, and
- » support vibrancy in the local economy, rural businesses, third sector enterprises and increase opportunities for generation and retention of local wealth.

To support people in our communities to live well locally we must also support communities to adapt and build resilience towards the changing climate and its direct impacts on people, villages, rural infrastructure and the local environment.





DRYMEN SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL HUB

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Within a rural area such as the National Park, car-based travel is very often a necessity rather than an option. Our communities rely on each other and the towns and villages around the National Park to access shops, health care, education, employment and a range of other services and facilities. Travel between, and in many cases within communities, can be challenging without a car, especially for young people.

Communities would like to see improvements to the frequency, timings and connectivity of public transport services and the locations to which they can travel. More active travel options will also help support sustainable travel and improved wellbeing, including, where possible, off-road connections between communities that are currently linked by trunk roads with large volumes of traffic travelling at speed. More detailed information can be found in the Local Place Plans prepared by communities.

Access to affordable housing continues to be a significant issue, including provision of a different range of housing types and tenures. This is despite an increase in affordable housing in recent years. Commuting, retirement and an increased desire for rural living post pandemic are thought to be key factors driving up housing pressures, alongside increasing numbers of second homes and short-term holiday lets in many communities. Whilst these can be beneficial to the visitor economy, some communities are concerned that a tipping point is being reached where too many homes are being removed from the local housing system for use as holiday lets and second homes, having a detrimental impact on communities and local businesses.

NEW HOUSING BALLOCH



Research on the National Park housing system undertaken in 2022 found that around 33% of the National Park's population earn less than £25,000, making owner occupation at the lower sector of housing market unaffordable.

Privately owned housing is dominant in the National Park, which means it is extremely challenging for low to moderate income households to own a home.

This combined with a limited supply of both social and private rented sector dwellings compounds the difficulties people face when looking for housing in the National Park.

Flooding and landslips are perhaps the most obvious and direct impacts of the climate emergency experienced by our communities and businesses. However,

climate change impacts all aspects of life, health and the economy. Communities need to build resilience to the increasing impacts of the changing climate, including increased heavy rainfall events, hotter, drier summers (which increases instances of water scarcity and wildfires) and sea level rise. They can also help manage the impacts climate change is having on nature – in our forests, woodlands, lochs and rivers, as well as influence the behaviours, systems and land use changes now needed to help us all adapt to living with climate change.

While many communities are proactively leading local action to address these issues, community-led action relies on local people with confidence and skills volunteering their time and expertise, and not all communities currently have the same level of ability to identify and take local action. Right now, support to communities on climate action is shared across multiple partners and organisations.

WHAT COULD IT BE?

Communities are already delivering to support local living. For example, community-led action on local energy generation via community owned run of river hydro schemes; local food growing and distribution; scoping of local community-run transport enterprises; community-based health walks/cycling groups and community run business hubs. We could build on these examples to encourage and empower all communities in the National Park to take action towards living well locally, adapting to the Climate Emergency and delivering for nature.

Local Place Plans are also beginning to say more on climate and local living and could be an important tool in supporting this transition. A pilot project in Drymen explored with the community how people can live more locally, linking with surrounding communities. The findings of this are summarised in 'Drymen and the villages of East Loch Lomond: Living Well Locally Vision and Routemap' and are being used by the community to inform their new Local Place Plan.

Collaborative initiatives to support communities, such as the current roll-out of regional Community Climate Action Hubs by the Scottish Government will provide more resource as well as opportunities for networking and collaboration at a scale larger than individual community level.

Through the Local Development Plan, we can make sure that new housing meets the needs of communities and the economy, and that housing is not being lost to holiday lets and second homes.

Evidence from recent housing research highlights the need for innovative solutions to develop alternative affordable housing tenures such as mid-market rent, low-cost home ownership and shared ownership, as well as the need to consider how policy intervention, such as Short Term Let Control Areas might help improve housing availability.

Improving rural transport provision and active travel links between communities will support people living and working here to become less reliant on using cars.

AIM BY 2045

National Park communities are leading the way on net zero living and working and have successfully adapted to living with the future impacts of climate change.

As passionate ambassadors for local places, communities have utilised knowledge, skills and influence to deepen the sense of place and their connection with nature, culture and heritage, providing a nature-rich, resilient landscape for the next generation.

**How might we measure success?
See page 116**

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Low carbon local living

People living within the National Park are reducing their carbon emissions through both individual and community-led action to support the transition to net zero and more local living.

Through the roll out of collaborative initiatives (such as the Scottish Government-led Community Climate Action Hub network), support communities to collaborate and lead more on climate action.

Support Councils' work on rolling out Local Food Growing strategies and Local Heat and Energy Efficiency strategies.

Support improved opportunities to live more locally through taking a local place-based partnership approach towards service delivery, including supporting the retention of local services and facilities, public transport, alongside innovative new approaches towards rural service provision, including through digital and online opportunities.

Support opportunities to re-purpose and for multi-use of existing facilities including halls, local business hubs and valued heritage assets within communities.

Increasing resilience to the changing climate

Communities are climate-ready, having developed increased awareness and understanding of the impacts of climate change on health, buildings, local infrastructure, businesses and the surrounding natural environment and identified how to adapt and build resilience to living with a changing climate.

Support communities to identify ways in which they can take action on climate mitigation and climate adaptation, including consideration of how investment in natural capital can help support increased local resilience, particularly in relation to flooding, through local resilience plans, Local Place Plans, the new Local Development Plan and proposed Regional Land Use Partnership.

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

Addressing housing needs

Housing within the National Park better meets the needs of young and working-age people who want to work and live in the National Park, directly supporting the rural economy and vibrant rural communities.

Through the new Local Development Plan, ensure that new housing responds to meeting local housing needs of both communities and the rural economy through a continued focus on affordable housing provision and securing delivery of a broader range of housing types and tenures.

Through the new Local Development Plan, stem the further loss of housing to holiday lets and second homes through consideration of interventions including a new requirement for all new homes to be for permanent occupation only and the merits of applying for Short Term Let Control Areas within certain areas of the National Park.

Support delivery of a minimum of 30 new homes per year. Through the preparation of the new Local Development Plan, consider whether this minimum requirement needs to be increased, informed by Local Place Plans, aligned to investment for nature and climate and where additional housing can support some of the more remote rural communities in the National Park.

Rural transport and active travel

People living and working in the National Park are less reliant on car-based travel through improvements to rural transport provision and active travel links within and between communities in and around the National Park.

Support communities to identify improvements to rural transport options through collaboration with public/private sector to establish innovative solutions or new social enterprise opportunities.

Establish active travel opportunities within and between communities to help more people meet their everyday needs by walking, cycling or wheeling as well as support health and wellbeing outcomes.

Community influence and place making

Communities are empowered to exert more influence and control over changes in and around the places where they live, delivering a range of outcomes that support local living and strengthening connections between people, land, nature, culture and heritage.

Establish an updated framework from public and third sector organisations to provide increased support to communities to build and maintain capacity within their local organisations and to increase levels of confidence and knowledge to engage in decisions around improving local. This could be through networking, learning and skills development to provision of dedicated development support to assist with project identification, securing funding and delivery.

Support to communities to care for heritage assets, where possible linked to opportunities for re-use, social enterprise and job creation.

HARNESSING DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HARNESSING DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT?

Significant investment is required within the National Park to deliver the multiple outcomes identified in this Draft Plan – for climate, nature, people and communities. This includes investment in the natural capital held within the National Park’s vast landscapes, investment

in our towns and villages to meet development needs of rural communities and the rural economy – and to support more local living - as well as investing in infrastructure to help ensure the Park is more resilient to the effects of climate change.

It will be important to secure the right sorts of development and infrastructure investment to realise this and ensure we harness the benefits that development can bring, including for climate and nature.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

The location of the National Park between the urban central belt of Scotland and the Highlands and West Coast means it hosts nationally strategic infrastructure. The A82, A83, A84 and A85 Trunk Roads, the West Highland rail line, as well as electricity transmission infrastructure, all traverse it and there is a large hydro-electric power station at Sloy, Loch Lomond. Ongoing maintenance and investment in this infrastructure is required.

There continues to be considerable demand for inward investment, mainly for private housing and tourism-related developments, including larger and smaller scale tourism development in the countryside. Some locations are no longer able to accommodate much more development due to its impact on the environment or insufficient rural infrastructure.

There are also tensions within some communities where there are competing aspirations between local communities and inward investors either over how land is used for development, or over how the benefits from the wealth generated from

development is managed. These issues are being highlighted through the preparation of Local Place Plans and when development proposals are submitted.

Significant new development is not envisaged to be required beyond that already identified in the current National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) and already in the pipeline for delivery. Development that will meet the strategic needs of the National Park and adjoining areas at Balloch and Callander is still considered necessary, as well as a focus on addressing vacant and derelict sites at Arrochar and Tarbet.

There remains a legacy of many undeveloped vacant and derelict sites in and around towns and villages, with some causing significant blight within communities.

In villages it is likely that options for increased intervention, such as compulsory purchase, community right-to-buy, and innovative finance options will be required by a range of partners to stimulate and facilitate development on these vacant

and derelict sites. The re-use of brownfield sites outside towns and villages will require re-consideration in relation to the support this offers to supporting local living, the rural economy and local wealth building and the biodiversity gains that could be achieved by allowing the site to naturalise.

The delivery of rural development faces challenges. Development costs remain extremely high and across the rural area there is either limited, or a lack of capacity within existing infrastructure, to support new development in many instances.

This is affecting the viability of much needed development in small rural communities and causing delays to delivery of affordable housing at some locations. There is also a need to invest in existing rural infrastructure to repair, improve and strengthen its resilience towards the impacts of climate change.

WHAT COULD IT BE?

Being a National Park doesn't mean there should be no development, it means development delivering for nature as well as social and economic outcomes.

The National Planning Framework for Scotland (NPF4) has introduced new national planning policies and a national strategy for development that now forms a statutory part of our development plan. It identifies a large part of the National Park, alongside other areas of central and northern Highlands of Scotland, to become an overall net carbon sink, locking in more carbon than it releases into the atmosphere. It also states that new development must help address the climate emergency, restore nature and support the regeneration of the area's communities. We have an enormous opportunity in the National Park to respond to this in ways that will help deliver local benefits whilst also delivering national outcomes.

This means a fresh new approach towards guiding new development and infrastructure within the National Park, that is more closely aligned to facilitating the required land use change to deliver for climate and nature and meeting the needs of those living and working in the National Park. Through preparing our new Local Development Plan, we can ensure an integrated land use and development strategy. This will ensure nature recovery is secured through identifying opportunity areas for investment in natural capital, strengthening nature networks to support improved ecological connectivity and enhancing biodiversity on site as part of development delivery.

A pilot has been trialled in the Strathard area of the National Park. The 'Strathard Framework' is an integrated land use and planning framework prepared jointly by the Strathard Community Council, the Strathard Community Development Trust, the National Park Authority and Stirling

Council. It identifies the development and infrastructure needs for the area alongside opportunities for investment in natural capital. The focus now is on delivery across all partners. This approach has helped test and consider how similar rural land use and planning frameworks might work in other areas of the National Park.

Investment in land, our natural capital and the range of ecosystem services it provides, will ensure the National Park becomes an overall net carbon sink, and will also help people to adapt to the impacts of climate change, building more resilience for our communities, businesses and the physical infrastructure that supports them.



ABERFOYLE

AIM BY 2045

New development and infrastructure is more responsive to the needs of land use and management, directly contributing to a wellbeing economy that benefits people, climate and nature.

**How might we measure success?
See page 116**

OBJECTIVES BY 2030 ACTIONS

Identifying development needs and opportunities

New development and infrastructure is delivered in an integrated way with investment in nature and carbon, helping to unlock the value of natural capital where possible and respond to locally identified needs and opportunities.

Prepare a revised development strategy in the new Local Development Plan with a focus on development and infrastructure requirements to support nature, climate, low carbon rural living and community wealth building outcomes.

Through the new Local Development Plan, expand the coverage of area-based land use and development planning investment strategies in partnership with landowners, communities, businesses and public agencies, integrated, if possible, with the development of a Regional Land Use Framework for the National Park.

Support the delivery of nationally strategic infrastructure development identified by National Planning Framework 4 by ensuring these are designed and delivered in ways that are sensitive to the National Park's special environmental and landscape qualities and maximise benefits to local communities, businesses and visitors.

Support the delivery of the strategic development needed at Callander to support sustainable expansion of the town and more local living outcomes, the delivery of strategic development that improves Balloch as a main visitor and transport interchange hub for the National Park as well as continuing place-based partnership working approach at Arrochar and Tarbet to support rural regeneration. See Map 4.

Nature-first approach to development

New development is helping to create nature-rich places and networks, with stronger connections established between places and habitats within and around the National Park.

Ensure new development delivers positive outcomes for nature through securing biodiversity net gains on site and investing in local nature networks identified as part of the development of the new Local Development Plan.

Support awareness raising and sharing of good practice on development and nature.

OBJECTIVES BY 2030

ACTIONS

Delivering positive local outcomes

Development and Infrastructure investment have directly contributed towards the creation of a wellbeing economy where local communities benefit from local wealth generation and are empowered to shape their own places, including more control and influence over land and assets.

Support local communities to influence how land and sites are used within and around towns and villages and ensure the benefits arising from this are retained and circulated locally, including greater influence via partnership working with public and private sectors and landowners and/or potentially through more community ownership of land and assets.

Through the new Local Development Plan set out an approach for inward investment in the tourism sector, recognising the important role of this sector to the rural economy and livelihoods, whilst seeking to balance this with environmental carrying capacity and community views and aspirations on use of land and sites of local community importance.

Making the best use of land and assets

Vacant and derelict sites within many of the National Park's communities are being brought back into use and help to meet the needs of local communities and businesses or are restored to provide green infrastructure and support nature.

Work with communities, through Local Place Plans, to identify a list of undeveloped and vacant sites within and around towns and villages and that could be brought into use or restored to improve local places and nature.

Consider and identify the range of interventions required to facilitate bringing these sites back into use, including community right to buy, finance options and potentially Compulsory Purchase Orders where undeveloped sites are causing significant blight within local communities and/or are impacting on achieving net zero, nature restoration and/or sustainable local living outcomes.

WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED IN ENABLING A GREENER ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING?

- » Local Authorities
- » Skills Development Scotland,
- » Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)
- » Colleges & Education Providers
- » Scottish Government
- » National Park Youth Committee
- » NatureScot
- » Forestry and Land Scotland
- » Scottish Forestry
- » NFU Scotland
- » Scottish Land & Estates
- » Scottish Enterprise
- » Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- » Communities
- » Landowners, land managers, and agents
- » Businesses
- » Transport Scotland
- » SCCAN (Scottish Communities Climate Action Network)
- » Housing Providers
- » DTAS (Development Trust Association Scotland)
- » Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Countryside Trust

POLICIES FOR ENABLING A GREENER ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING

POLICY FOR LOCAL PLACE PLANS

The National Park Authority will provide help to communities within the National Park to prepare Local Place Plans and will support implementation of these by focussing on those aspects that contribute to:

- » communities transition to net zero living and working through actions that increase opportunities for low carbon local living
- » building resilience to the impacts of the changing climate
- » restoring nature on land within, around and between communities
- » increased collaboration between communities and between communities and a range of public, private and third sector partners.



'ROOTS FOR THE FUTURE' NATIONAL PARK SCHOOLS TREE PLANTING PROJECT.

POLICY FOR EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

The National Park Authority and its partners will support communities to grow their influence to shape their local places through:

- » supporting the preparation and implementation of Local Place Plans
- » supporting increased opportunities for communities to consider and inform how land and sites are used and developed to help support resilient, sustainable, vibrant and healthy communities.
- » consideration of opportunities to support local wealth building through generation and retention of more wealth by local community organisations and local rural businesses.





LOCHGOILHEAD COMMUNITY GARDEN

POLICY FOR MEETING RURAL HOUSING NEEDS

New housing within the National Park will help retain and attract young people and working age population through:

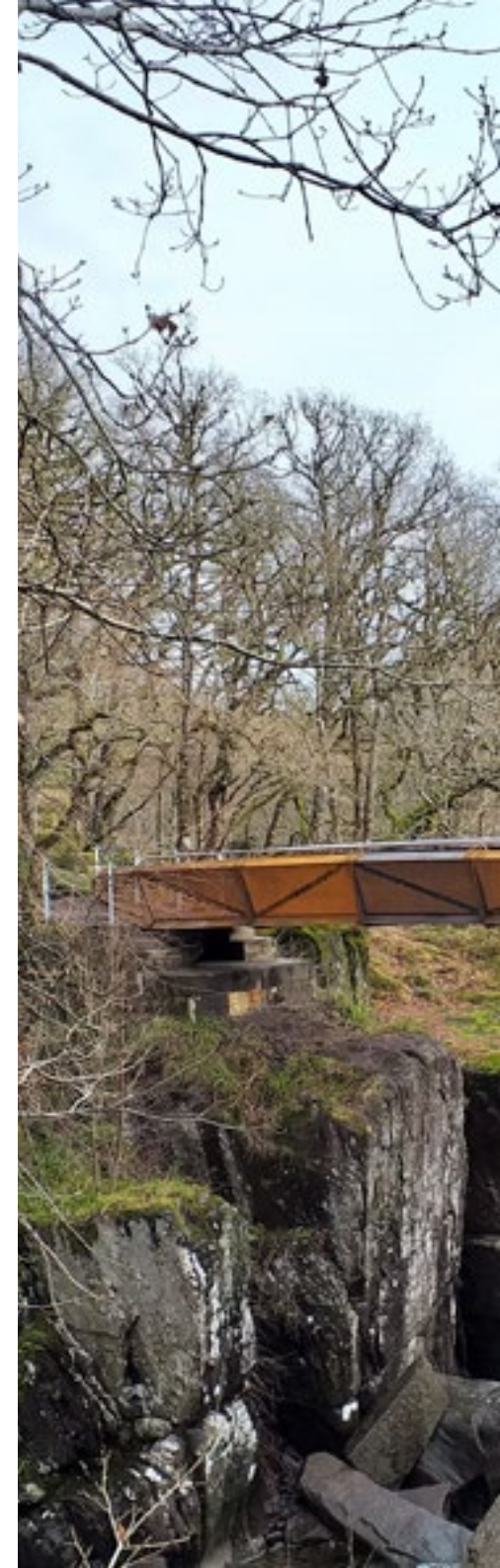
- » focussing new housing provision on addressing local housing needs of communities and the rural economy
- » a continued focus on enabling affordable housing delivery, including a more diverse range of affordable tenures and addressing the challenges of delivering rural housing and
- » consideration of the interventions required to stop the loss of housing from the existing housing supply.

POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Development and infrastructure in the National Park will:

- » Support tackling the climate emergency,
- » Maximise opportunities to deliver or unlock nature restoration,
- » Respond to meeting the needs of National Park communities and support more local living and working,
- » Support a just transition for local businesses towards a greener, low carbon economy.
- » Support growing a wellbeing economy including through opportunities for local wealth building and greater community-led development and project activity.

Nationally strategic development and infrastructure improvements associated with trunk road improvements, electricity transmission or hydro-electric power generation will be supported by ensuring opportunities to safeguard the environment and landscape qualities are maximised as well as creating enhanced opportunities for people to experience the National Parks special qualities.





NEW BRACKLINN BRIDGE, CALLANDER

Strategic scale development will be supported at Callander, Arrochar, Tarbet and Balloch through:

- » Delivery of the southern expansion of Callander, needed to facilitate sustainable expansion of the town and to provide mixed uses in support of the development needs of both Callander and surrounding rural communities for which it acts as a service hub. The New Local Development Plan will re-consider the requirement for longer term land release beyond the currently identified mixed used development site for which a masterplan has been prepared to guide and support development.
- » The prioritisation of development and infrastructure within Arrochar and Tarbet that helps unlock constrained, vacant and derelict sites, bringing them back into use in ways that support identified community needs, low carbon local living and improves infrastructure for visitors.
- » The delivery of tourism investment in Balloch as a core strategic tourism gateway location, with opportunities for improved transport interchange as well as job creation and wider economic regeneration with adjoining areas to the National Park.
- » Large scale wind farms will not be supported within the National Park in accordance with National Planning Framework 4. Wind Farm proposals adjacent to the National Park should be located and designed in ways that do not adversely impact on the special landscape qualities of the National Park.

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

Based on the proposed objectives, below are some of the ways we might measure progress on Enabling Greener Living and Economy which we are keen to gather views on through the consultation on this Draft Plan.

- » **Net Zero:**
Measure the greenhouse gas footprint of National Park businesses against the baseline of 2019, as part of a full footprint assessment, every 5 years. Reach net zero GHG emissions by 2040.
- » **Population:**
Measure the extent of population change and composition at small area level and for the National Park overall.
- » **Green jobs:**
Track the creation of new or expanded numbers of jobs and business development opportunities, including social enterprise, in sectors that are crucial to the just transition of the National Park's economy. For example, sustainable travel, woodland creation, peatland restoration and ecotourism.

- » **Community-led climate action:**
Track the number of community-led projects, or communities participating in projects, that tackle the climate emergency. By 2030 all National Park communities to have implemented actions to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- » **Homes:**
Measure the number of new homes (including by tenure and location) and number of existing homes removed from the housing system. Achieve a minimum of 30 new homes per year in the National Park.
- » **Stalled sites:**
Track the status of stalled sites and vacant/derelict sites. Increase the extent of sites that are re-developed or restored for nature.




- » **Development for nature, climate and people:**
Monitor new developments' delivery against outcomes for nature, climate, low carbon rural living and community wealth building through a new Local Development Plan monitoring framework.
- » **Net gain for biodiversity:**
Measure the nature restoration secured through delivering new development, including biodiversity net gains on and offsite. All new development to provide biodiversity net gains.

It also will be important to track things like the new skills development opportunities developed, new low carbon transport services and active travel opportunities that meet local needs, and the number of community organisations able to influence or lead improvements to their local places (including influencing land use decision-making). Effective measurements for these will need to be discussed and agreed.




STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE NATIONAL PARK

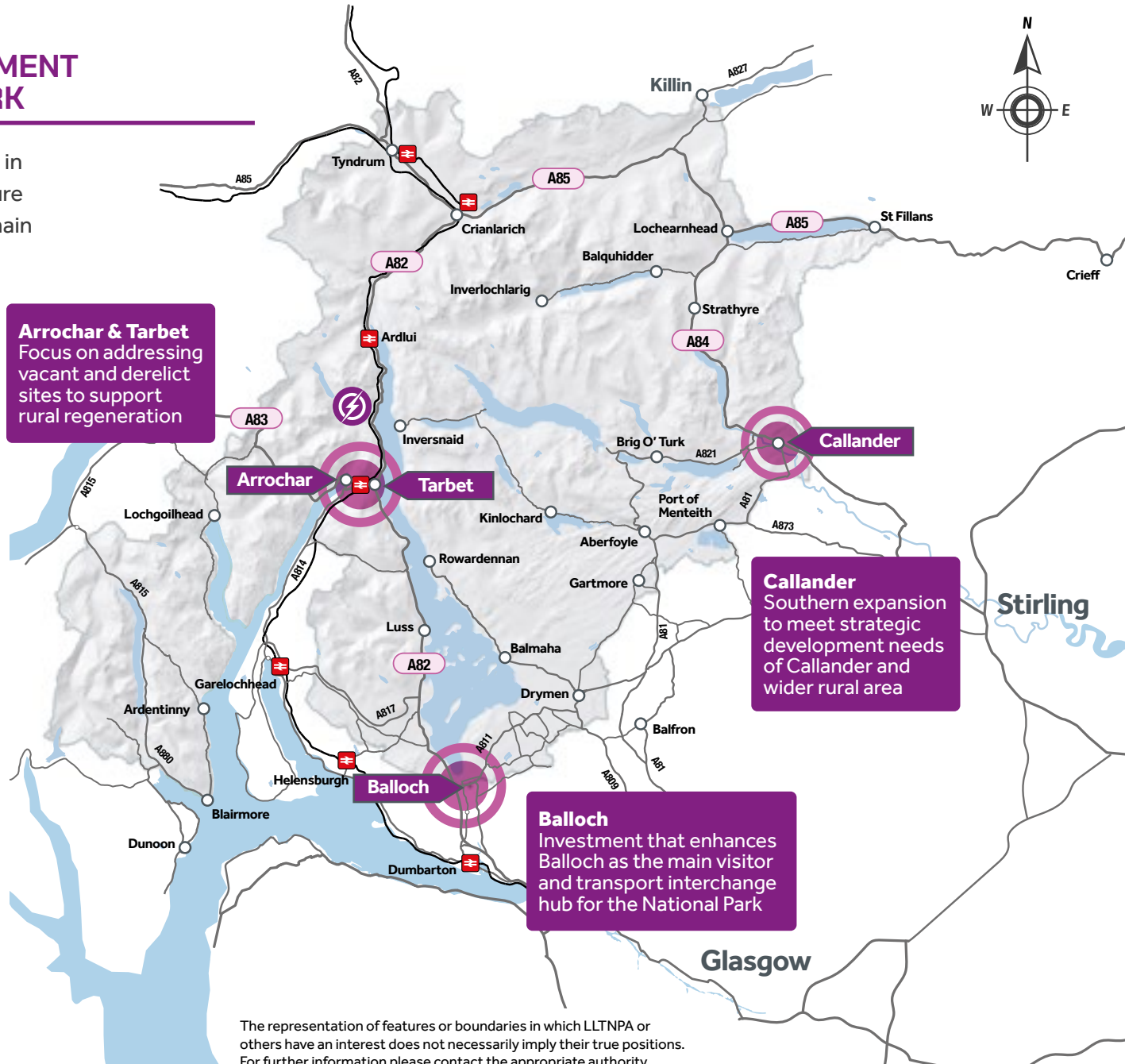
This map highlights the key areas in the Park for strategic infrastructure and development and what the main focus for each area should be.

National Strategic Infrastructure

-  Trunk Road Network
-  West Highland Railway Line
-  Sloy Hydro Electric Power Station

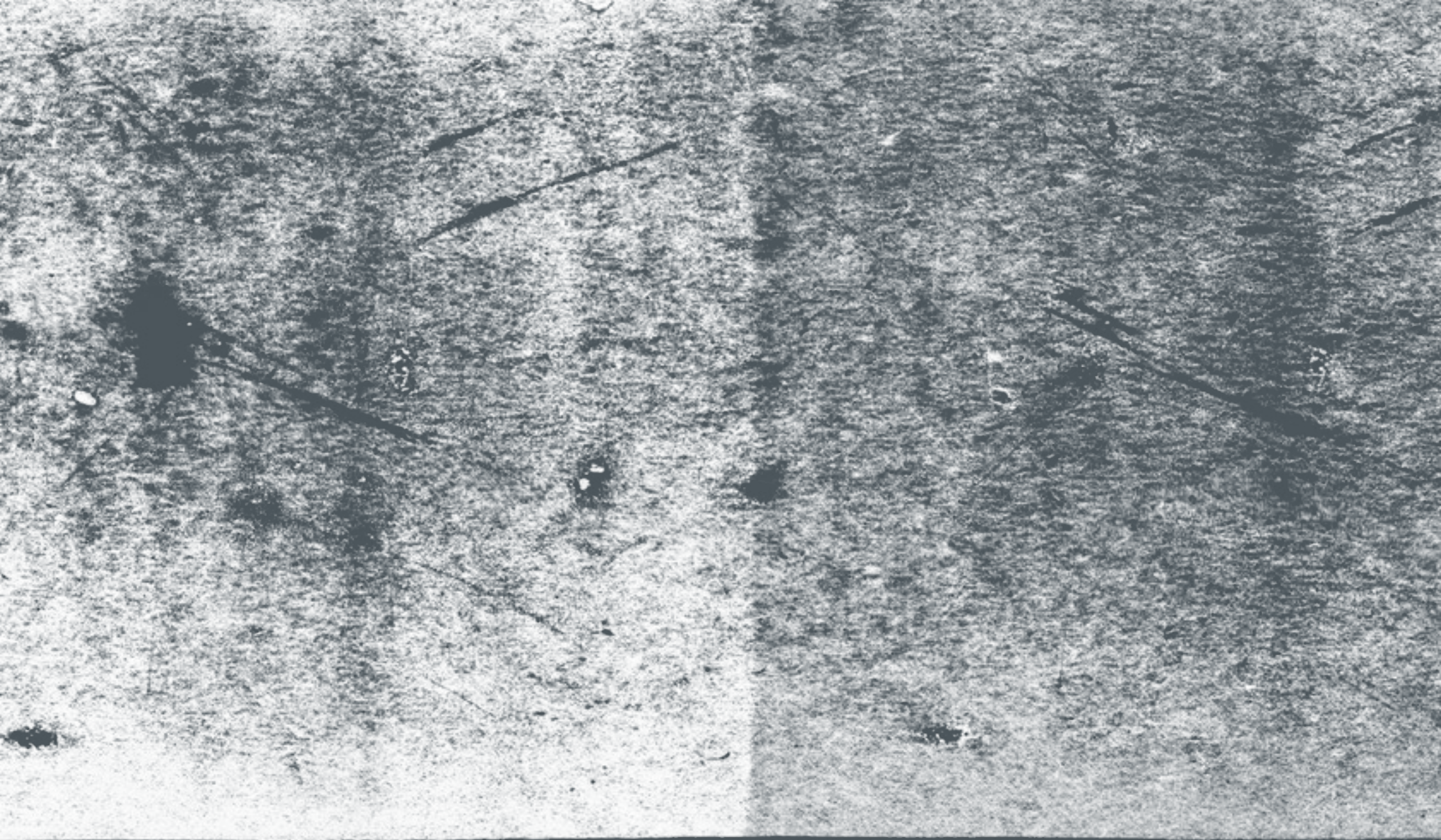
Strategic Development and Investment Locations

-  Balloch
-  Callander
-  Arrochar & Tarbet



The representation of features or boundaries in which LLTNPA or others have an interest does not necessarily imply their true positions. For further information please contact the appropriate authority.

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**TELL US
WHAT YOU
THINK**



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK
How might we measure success?

This is a draft National Park Partnership Plan which has been prepared for consultation and discussion with all the key stakeholders who have a role to play in its delivery and will be impacted by its proposed outcomes.

It has been drafted based on ongoing engagement with key stakeholders through all the key areas of the National Park Authority's work, internal experience, and knowledge as well as research and data gathered both by the National Park Authority and others.

This Draft Plan won't have all the answers, but it does put forward a wide range of proposals to address the huge challenges we currently face in the National Park as well as at a national and global level. The purpose of the consultation is to use this Draft Plan as a focal point for conversations around the future of the National Park.

Consultation on this Draft Plan will run from 26th April until 19th July 2023. To get involved in the consultation go to www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/future

This Draft Plan aims to highlight the vast opportunities that exist for setting a new direction for the National Park which faces those challenges head-on, while at the same time shaping a positive, resilient future for the National Park's people, nature and climate.

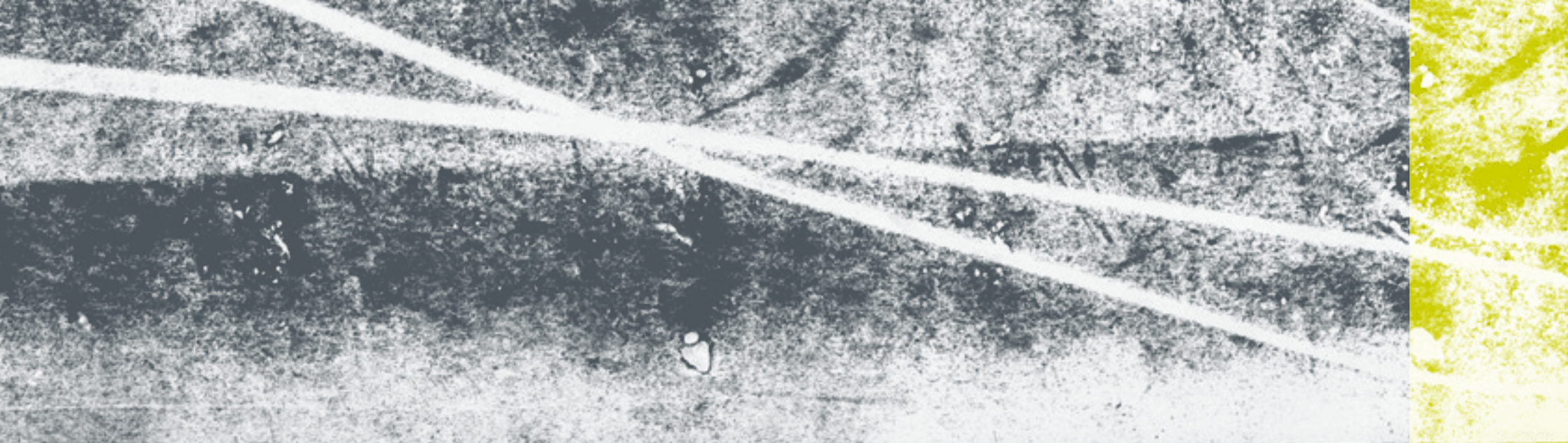
**We cannot do this without you.
We all have a part to play.**

**HERE.
NOW.
ALL OF US.**



visit lochlomond-trossachs.org/future





GLOSSARY



Affordable housing

Good quality homes that are affordable for people on lower incomes. This can include social rent, mid-market rented, shared-ownership, shared-equity, housing sold at discount (including plots for self-build), self-build plots and low-cost housing without subsidy.

Biodiversity

The variety of life on earth essential for sustaining the ecosystem that provides us with food, fuel, health, wealth, and other vital services.

Biodiversity credits

A standard for assigning financial value to biodiversity for financial market trading and investment. Biodiversity credits are similar to carbon credits, which allow investment in projects that capture and store carbon.

Brownfield

Land which has previously been developed, including vacant and derelict land, land occupied by redundant or unused buildings and developed land.

Browsing animals

Animals feeding on leaves, soft shoots, or fruits of high-growing, generally woody plants such as trees and shrubs. This is contrasted with grazing, which means animals feeding on grass or other lower vegetations.

Carbon credits

A carbon credit is a tradable certificate or permit representing the right to emit a set amount of carbon dioxide or the equivalent amount of a different greenhouse gas (tCO₂e).

Carbon negative

Emitting less than zero carbon dioxide and carbon dioxide equity equivalent (CO₂e) greenhouse gasses.

Carbon sequestration

The long-term removal, capture, or storage of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to slow or reverse atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) pollution and to mitigate or reverse climate change.

Carbon markets

A market system where carbon credits are sold and bought.

Carbon sink

Anything natural or otherwise, that accumulates and stores some carbon-containing chemical compound for an indefinite period and thereby removes carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere.

Climate adaptation/ climate change adaptation

Responding to the changes in climate that we have seen over the last few decades whilst preparing for the changes we will face as climate continues to change.

Climate mitigation/ climate change mitigation

Efforts to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions which have an impact on global temperatures and reducing the current concentration of carbon dioxide by enhancing carbon sinks (for example, increasing the area of forest).

Community climate action hub

A Scottish Government led initiative to support a network of regional community hubs to provide a joined up regional approach to climate change action.

Community wealth building

A people centred approach to local economic development, that redirects wealth back into the local economy and places control and benefits into the hands of local people.

Diffuse pollution

The release of potential pollutants from a range of activities that, individually, may have no effect on the water environment, but, at the scale of a catchment, can have a significant effect.

Designated sites

Areas that are protected for their natural features of special interest and to ensure the features remain in good health for all to enjoy, now and in the future. The designation of sites may be called for by international directives and treaties, domestic legislation and policy, or local needs and interests. Also known as protected areas.

Ecosystem

An area where plants, animals, and other organisms (living parts), as well as non-living parts (air, soil, water, weather) interact as a system.

Green jobs

Green jobs include those in renewable energy, the circular economy and zero waste, and the nature-based sector with wider 'green skills' sitting on a spectrum ranging from highly specific requirements in sectors directly supporting the transition to net zero such as energy, transport, construction, agriculture, and manufacturing, through to more general requirements across all sectors to thrive in a net zero economy.

Herbivore pressures

The negative impacts that grazing animals, such as wild deer and livestock can have on trees and other vegetation through eating fresh growth, stripping bark and trampling.

Just transition

For the Scottish Government a just transition is both the outcome – a fairer, greener future for all – and the process that must be undertaken in partnership with those impacted by the transition to net zero. It supports a net zero and climate resilient economy in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice.

Mass transit corridor

The movement of people from urban areas using public transport such as buses and trains.

Montane woodland

Small tree and low shrub species, such as dwarf willow and birch found on higher slopes and rocky outcrops in upland areas.

Natural capital

The world's stock of natural resources. This includes air, water, minerals, and all living things.

Nature-positive

Reversing the current declines in nature, so that species and ecosystems begin to recover.

Natural riparian woodlands

Woodland along rivers and water courses. It serves very important functions in our landscapes, in regulating natural processes and in mitigating extreme events like flooding. Native woodland in the riparian zone is a vital part of the water ecosystem.

Nature networks

A joined-up system of places important for wild plants and animals, on land and in water. It allows plants, animals, seeds, nutrients and water to move from place to place and enables the natural world to adapt to change, providing plants and animals with places to live, feed and breed. Effectively functioning nature networks will connect existing nature rich areas through habitat corridors, habitat 'stepping stones', or habitat restoration areas.

Net Zero

The balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. We reach net zero when the amount we add is no more than the amount taken away.

Net Zero Nation

A nation in which the amount of greenhouse gas emissions put into the atmosphere is balanced by the amount taken out by sequestration - resulting in net zero emissions.

Peatland/s

Land defined by peat soil or peaty soil types. This means that 'peat-forming' vegetation is growing and actively forming peat, or it has been grown and has formed peat at some point in the past.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A type of designated site (see description of designated site above). Areas of land and water that are designated as they best represent Scotland's natural heritage.

Special Areas of Conservation

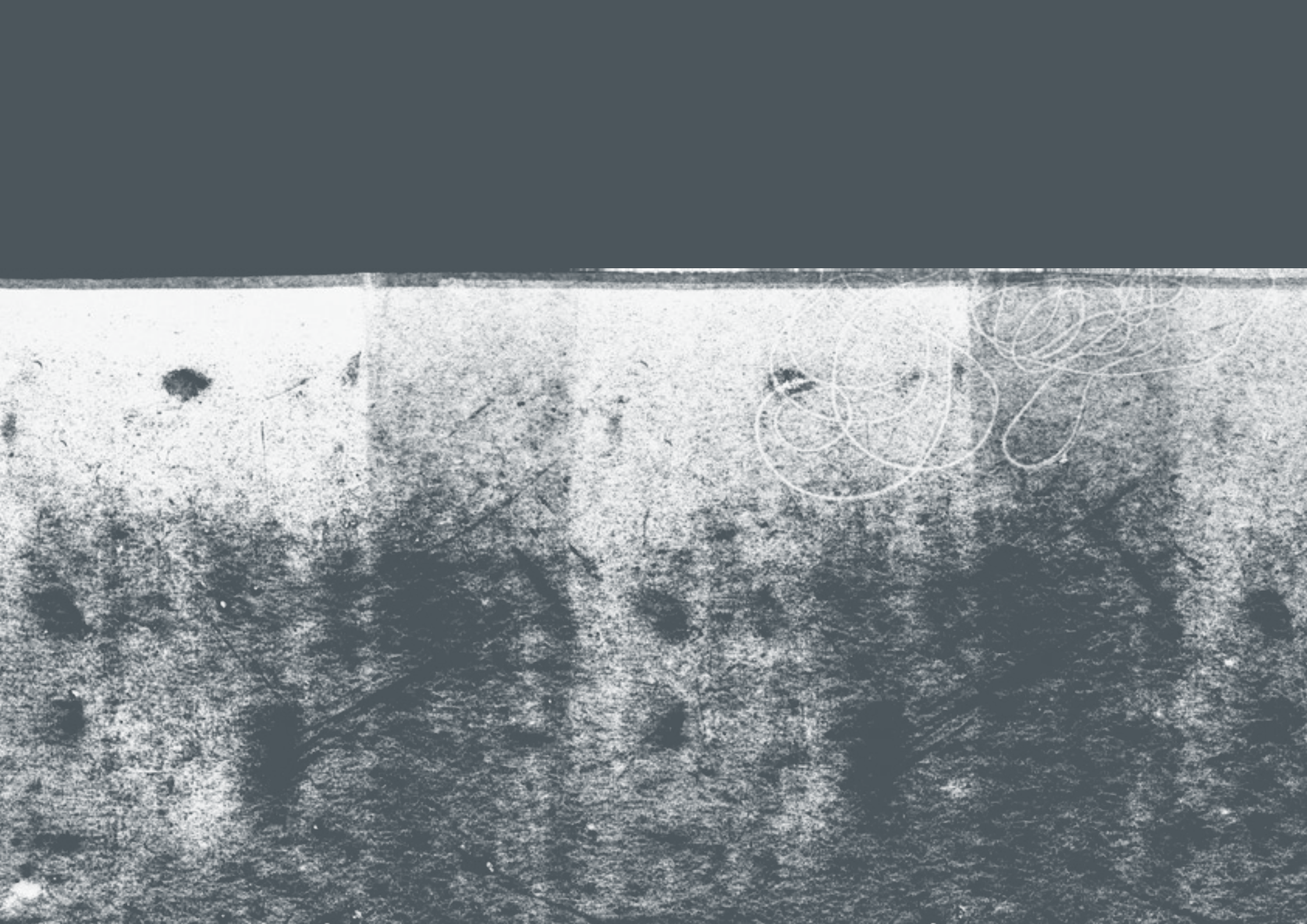
A type of designated site (see description of designated site above). Areas of land and water that are designated to protect one or more special habitats and/or species listed in the Habitats Directive.

Sustainable

Meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations.

Third sector

The third sector includes charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups, delivers essential services, helps to improve people's wellbeing and contributes to economic growth. It plays a vital role in supporting communities at local level.





KNOWLEDGE BASE

The National Park Authority has drawn on different types of knowledge for this Draft Plan, including national policy; practitioner knowledge; good practice examples; discussions with partners and stakeholders; publicly available research reports, and research we have commissioned.

You will see direct references where appropriate within the Draft Plan itself. If you would like to read more, some of the key sources of insight for the Draft Plan are listed below. Many of these informed various sections of the Draft Plan. If there are additional sources of information you feel should be used to help shape the final Partnership Plan please let us know through the consultation.

THROUGHOUT THE PLAN

- » Future Nature (National Park Authority)
- » A greenhouse gas emissions assessment and target scenario for Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority (Small World Consulting). Please note that the report will be made public alongside the draft Plan at the time of the consultation.
- » Reviews of progress on the Indicators of Success of the 2018-23 National Partnership Plan (National Park Authority). Please note that an update to this will be made public alongside the draft Plan at the time of the consultation.

RESTORING NATURE

- » Edinburgh Declaration (National Park Authority are signatories)
- » Interim Principles for Responsible Investment in Natural Capital (Scottish Government)
- » Key drivers for land manager decision making in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park and opportunities for addressing constraints to woodland creation (SEFARI Fellowship)
- » Strathard Framework (National Park Authority)
- » Scotland's Climate Week: Letter from National Park Youth Committee
- » Community benefits from investment in natural capital, A Discussion Paper (Scottish Land Commission)

CREATING A LOW CARBON, SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION

- » Improving Nature Connectedness in Adults (Open Access Academic Journal)
- » Equalities Mainstreaming Report and Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025 (National Park Authority)
- » Outdoor recreation - understanding the drivers of participation: research (Scottish Government)
- » The Role of Wellness in the Visitor Experience (VisitScotland)
- » Nature Scot professional advice on Sustainable Tourism
- » Place Programme and Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Studies (National Park Authority)
- » 2022 Progress Report to Parliament (UK Climate Change Committee)
- » STPR2 Strategic Transport Projects Review (Transport Scotland)
- » Futures Group (NPA Board committee) discussion paper on sustainable transport
- » Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (GTS)
- » 2019/20 Visitor Survey (Progressive)
Please note that the findings will be made public alongside the Draft Plan at the time of the consultation.

ENABLING GREENER LIVING AND ECONOMY

- » National Planning Framework 4 (Scottish Government)
- » Scotland Climate Change Plan Monitoring Report 2022 (Scottish Government)
- » Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (Scottish Government)
- » Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025 (Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Government)
- » Highlands and Islands Enterprise Reports on Optimising carbon sequestration for community wealth building in Argyll and Bute
- » Nature based jobs and skills Action Plan 2022-2023 (NatureScot)
- » Local Place Plans
- » Operation of Housing System within Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park 2022 (Arneil Johnston). Please note that this report will be made public alongside the draft Plan at the time of the consultation.
- » Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Local Development Plan
- » Strathard Framework (National Park Authority)
- » Community Climate Action Hubs (Scottish Government)
- » Short Term Let Control Areas (Scottish Government)
- » Drymen and the villages of East Loch Lomond: Living Well Locally Vision and Routemap (National Park Authority)

Further research on some key topics, such as rural economic transition, state of nature in the National Park, mapping our nature network, sustainable travel, and play sufficiency, has also been commissioned and is underway. These studies will be published alongside the Draft Plan as part of or during the consultation.



A scenic landscape featuring a mountain range in the background, several evergreen trees in the middle ground, and a stream flowing through a grassy field in the foreground. A semi-transparent blue rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the word "HERE." in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

HERE.



An aerial photograph of a vast, forested valley. The foreground and middle ground are filled with a dense, green forest. In the distance, rolling hills and mountains are visible under a clear, bright sky. A small lake or reservoir is situated in the valley on the left side. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

NOW.





ALL OF US.

Between 26th April – 19th July 2023 we are holding a conversation on the future of the National Park.

WE WANT TO KNOW:

- » Which of the objectives and actions outlined in this Draft Plan can you or your organisation help to deliver? What role can you play in delivering these?
- » Are there any challenges or barriers we need to overcome to help you do this?
- » Can you suggest any other objectives or actions to help us meet our aims in each area of this Draft Plan?
- » Can you suggest any other delivery partners needed to help deliver these?
- » Do you have any comments on the policies outlined in each area of this Draft Plan?
- » Do you have any comments on the measures of success proposed? How can you help us to measure them?

HOW TO RESPOND:

Join the conversation online:

lochlomond-trossachs.org/future

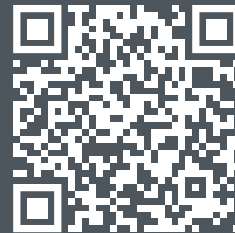
Or send us an email:

NationalParkPlan@lochlomond-trossachs.org

or respond in writing:

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs
National Park Authority
Carrochan, Carrochan Road,
Balloch G83 8EG

Help us imagine the future of
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park



visit lochlomond-trossachs.org/future

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