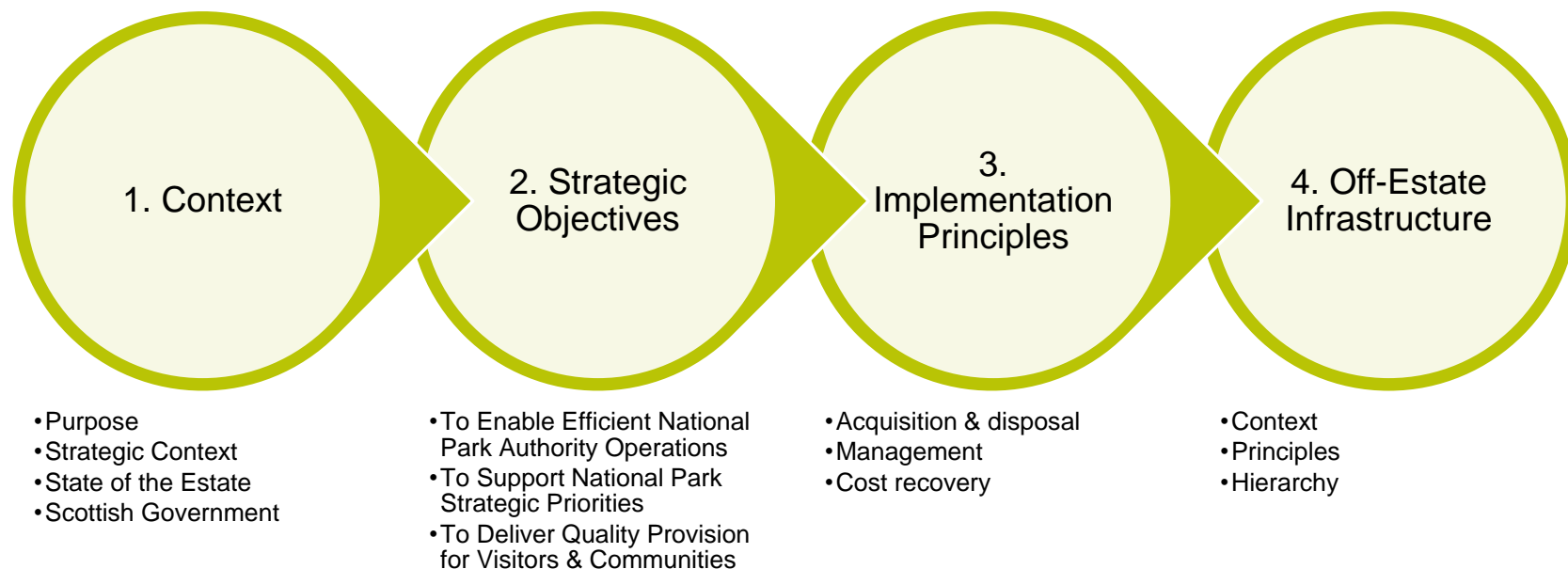


Estates Strategy

SUMMARY

MAY 2023

Contents





Purpose of the Estates Strategy

- The purpose of our Estates Strategy is to:
 - Describe how the strategic functions of our Estate can be leveraged for the benefit of the National Park
 - Establish the principles we will apply when taking decisions about our Estate
 - Set the priorities for the future development and maintenance of our Estate
 - Guide our Estates management approaches and resourcing needs
 - Establish criteria for the NPA's involvement in off-Estate infrastructure

This strategy is for the whole organisation – it will take all of us working together to achieve its objectives

Strategic Context

National Park Partnership Plan 2024-2029 (draft)

- Establishes that the scale and urgency of the nature and climate crises will drive our priorities
- We will bring everyone who lives and works in the National Park or visits it with us

Place Programme

- Sets out our long term strategic approach to raising standards of visitor infrastructure in the National Park
- Supporting a modal shift for transport
- Where appropriate, developing our destinations

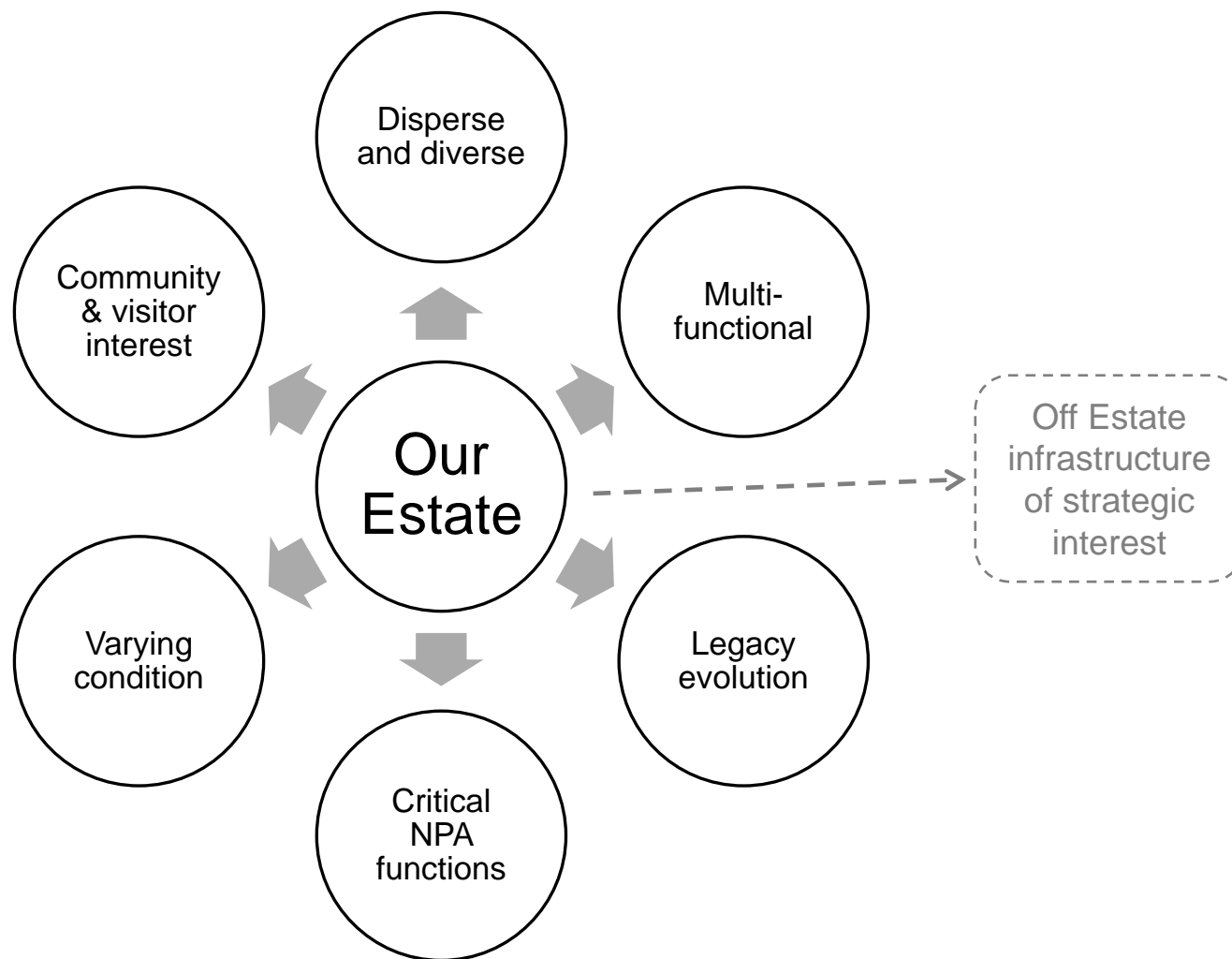
Mission Zero

- Ambition for National Park Authority to be Net Zero by 2030
- Most of our direct (scope 1) emissions are within the sphere of the Estate

Place Programme interaction

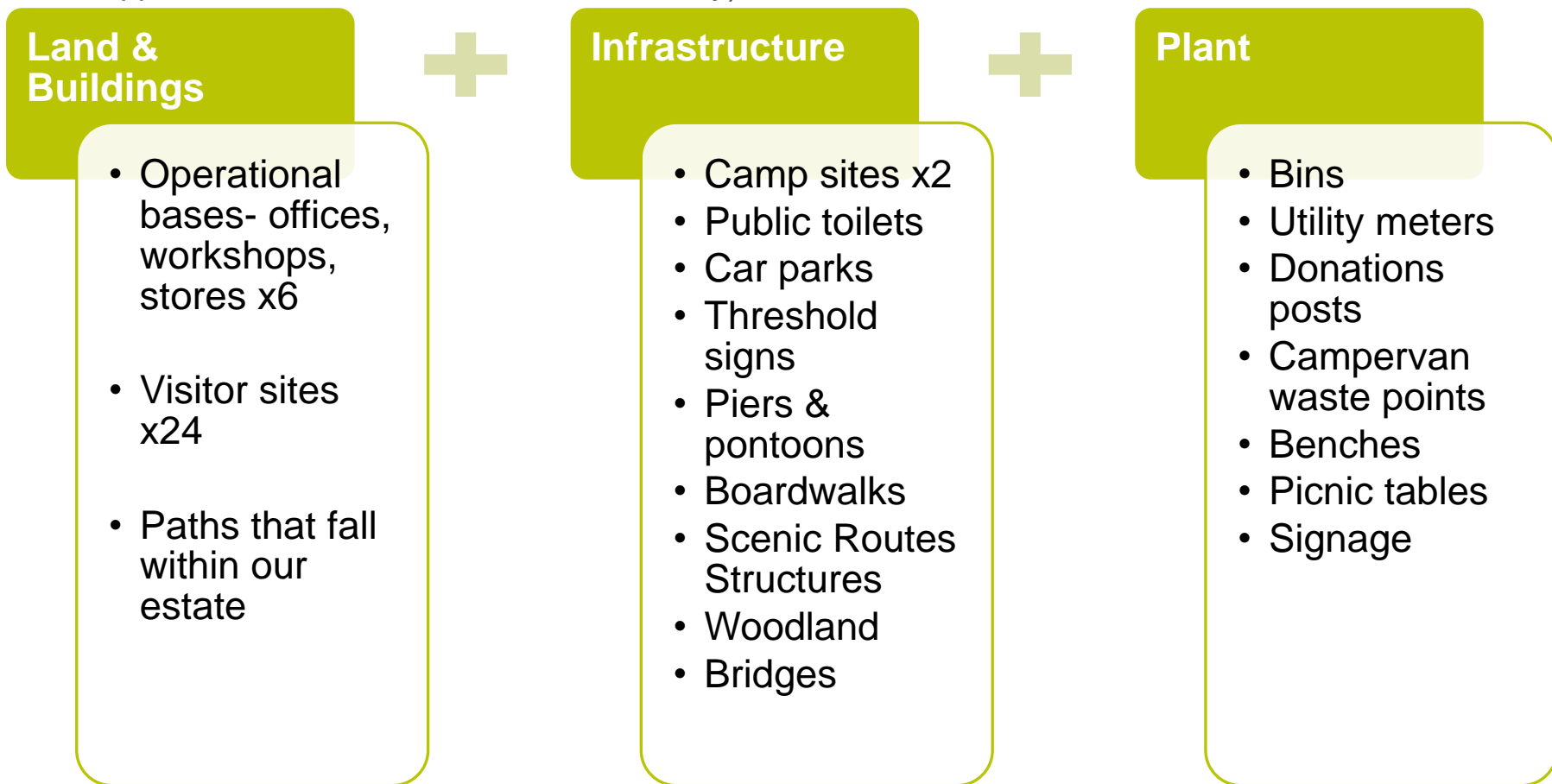


State of the Estate



State of the Estate – Key facts

Small but complex - could be mighty: [Summary of NPA Estate](#) (Board Paper Appendix from December 2018, for info only)



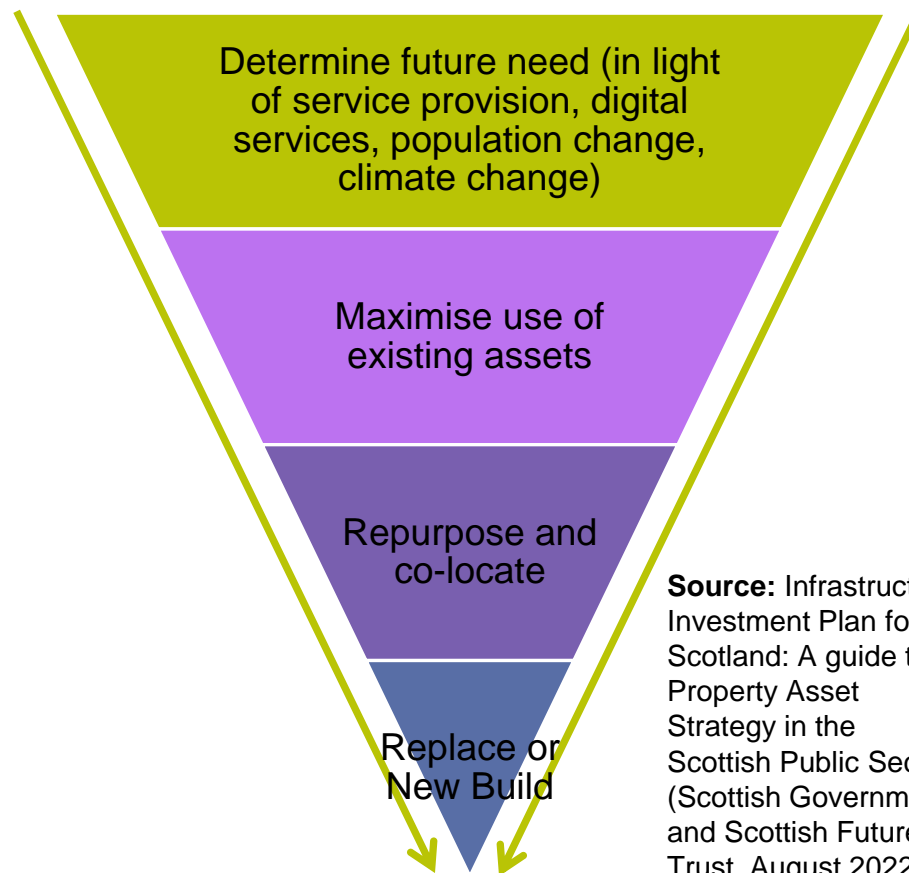
Scottish Government

Public Service Reform

- Scottish Government is undertaking a longer-term transformation programme to ensure public services remain fiscally sustainable
- Focusing on ensuring resources are deployed as efficiently as possible towards priorities
- Exploring a range of areas including:
 - collaborative working and joined-up service delivery
 - revenue raising
 - structural landscape of public bodies
 - service model transformation
 - sustainability of pay bill

Using our Estate jointly with partners, for cost recovery, and to serve the public, are points relevant to our Estates Strategy

SG Investment Hierarchy



Source: Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland: A guide to Property Asset Strategy in the Scottish Public Sector (Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust, August 2022)



What do we want from our Estate?

Three key strategic objectives:

(1)

To Enable Efficient
National Park
Authority Operations

(2)

To Support the
National Park
Strategic Priorities

(3)

To Deliver Quality
Provision for Visitors
and Communities

And in doing so:

Be safe and
compliant

Promote
responsible
behaviour

Be net zero by
2030

Provide best
value including
through cost
recovery

To Enable Efficient National Park Authority Operations



Objectives by 2030

- Our workplaces:
 - Are strategically located and fit for a flexible and hybrid working environment
 - Support the wellbeing and welfare of our staff
 - Support staff in achieving net zero
- Use of space in offices and operational bases is maximised

Priority actions

- Rationalise the use of Carrochan, expanding the sharing of space with other bodies and considering the balance of meeting space vs desk space needs
- Implement the Mission Zero infrastructure plan, and invest/design to support low carbon commuting and behaviours
- Reconfigure and invest in the Units in Alexandria to better serve our operational and storage needs and provide better staff welfare and working facilities
- Identify new fit-for-purpose operational / office space serving Trossachs & Breadalbane to replace the existing Callander and Lochearnhead offices
- Re-design the Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway site to better serve operations and stakeholders

To Support National Park Strategic Priorities



Objectives by 2030

- NPA sites are managed and invested in to support restoring nature and connecting people with it
- NPA assets enable a sustainable, inclusive, low carbon destination through the multi-year Place Programme, our role in visitor hubs, the recreational path network, and water recreation

Priority actions

- Develop and implement site-specific nature recovery plans for our land holdings, and explore new ways to use our estate to better connect people with nature
- Update the management plan for Inchcailloch and invest in it to support engagement with nature
- Invest in priority NPA visitor sites through the Place Programme, enabling sustainable, low carbon visiting and transport modal shift
- Implement renewables and emission reduction infrastructure at NPA sites through our Mission Zero plan to achieve net zero by 2030
- Consider an investment case for replacement of aging NPA piers and pontoons with more enduring materials that enable long term water transport provision and support water safety
- Establish a framework for the temporary acquisition of derelict and neglected sites to support the Living Well Locally objectives of the (draft) National Park Partnership Plan 2024-2029

To Deliver Quality Provision for Visitors & Communities

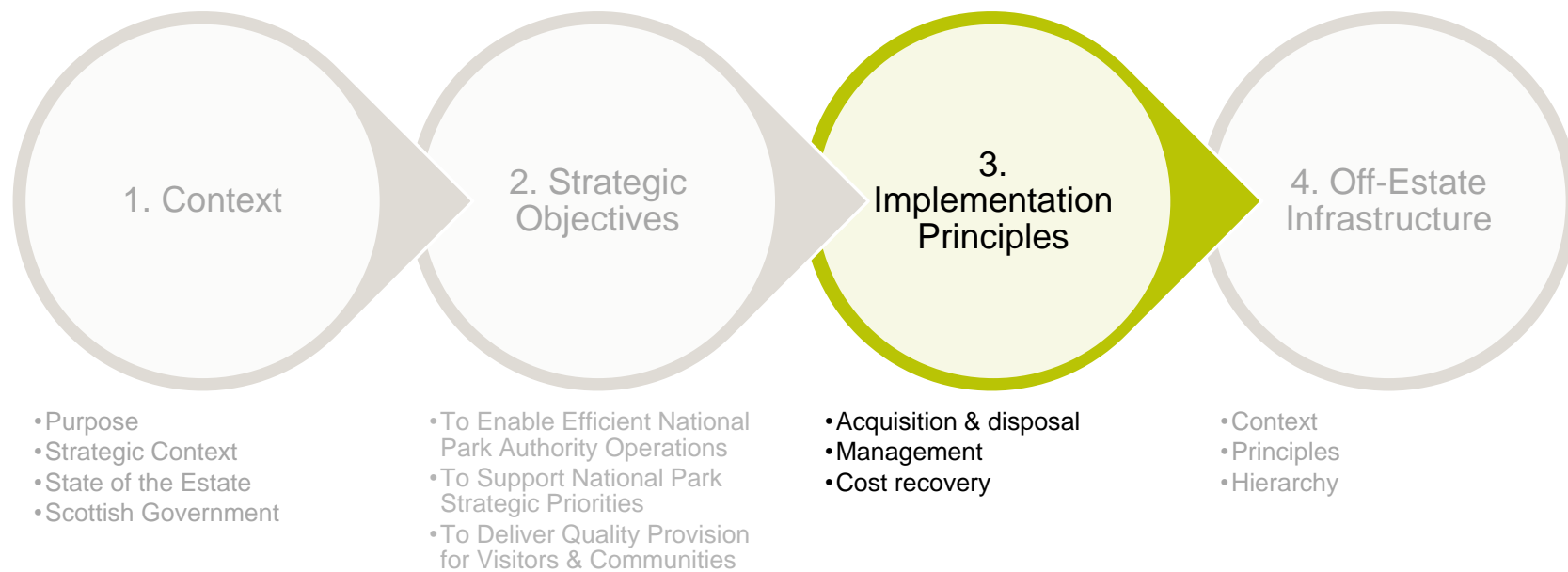


Objectives by 2030

- NPA assets are maintained and invested in to continue a safe, compliant and quality experience for users
- Sites respond to emerging visitor patterns and external impacts such as climate adaptation
- Resource is effectively allocated including through targeted divestment and revenue raising

Priority actions

- Implement a best practice approach to achieve good standards of repair and maintenance, to take us beyond basic compliance and Health & Safety standards, including on Estate parts of the recreational path network
- Use engagement with diverse groups including young people, ethnic groups, and people with disabilities to ensure our sites support their needs
- Create and implement a climate change adaptation plan for NPA property
- Divest of sites that no longer support NPA strategic priorities, working with communities to support any interests they may have in these sites
- Rationalise ownership and management responsibilities across the public Estate to realise efficiencies and joined-up working with other public bodies
- Where practicable, implement revenue raising arrangements such as donations, rental charges, or user fees that contribute to the recovery of the costs of service provision



Acquisition / Disposal Principles

- From time to time we may acquire or dispose of property, including where time-limited lease or maintenance arrangements are used. In doing so we will look to the following principles to guide our decision-making:

Acquisition

- Property may be acquired where an investment case clearly establishes how NPA ownership of the property would help achieve National Park aims and NPPP objectives
- The acquisition should align with the Scottish Government investment hierarchy and other (eg SPFM) requirements
- The NPA should be the body best placed and most likely to achieve the desired outcome
- There should be a clear and specific management and use plan in place, including resource allocated to undertake ongoing maintenance and development (as appropriate)
- In some cases acquisition may be temporary, as a vehicle to future ownership by a third party for development or use
- For long-term use, ownership is preferred over rental

Disposal

- NPA property may be disposed of where it no longer directly supports the three objectives of this Estates strategy
- Disposal will follow all relevant Scottish Government guidelines and requirements
- Where possible the NPA will aim to ensure that the disposal results in positive outcomes for interested communities and stakeholders
- Disposal will be prioritised based on properties where NPA ownership or servicing costs are high (net of income generation potential), or disposal helps achieve NPPP outcomes

Estates Management Principles (1)



- We will manage the Estate to meet all legislative requirements with staff and public Health & Safety as the priority. This is our baseline position
- We will implement minimum standards for asset care and maintenance across the estate that exceed the baseline position
- We will establish what good looks like, and put in place a plan to move from achieving the baseline and minimum standards to achieving good standard across our whole estate
- We will close any site or part of a site which we are unable to maintain in at least the baseline standard
- We will improve procedures to help us meet the standards set and make use of KPI's and smart reporting tools to demonstrate performance and guide decision-making

Estates Management Principles (2)



Our Tools

- Condition Surveys & Inspections Programme
- Site Risk Assessments
- Planned Preventative & Reactive Maintenance
- Critical Asset Reporting
- Estates Management System – ongoing development, implementation & digitisation for smarter working

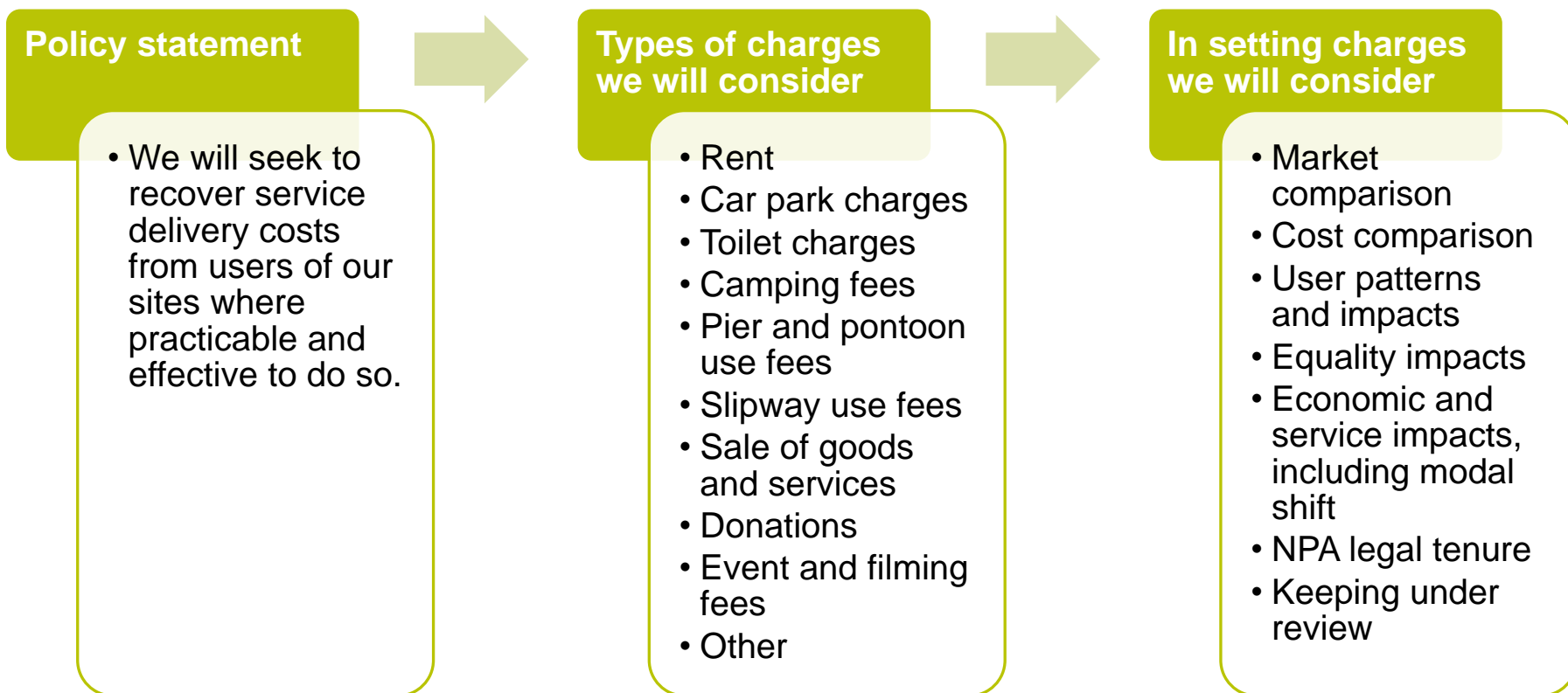
Our Communications

- Proactive Feedback – both internally and externally
- Clarity on Prioritisation

Cost Recovery Principles (1)

- Owning, maintaining, and updating sites **incurs ongoing and one-off costs**
- **Costs are varied** and include (but are not limited to) cleaning, vegetation management, wear and tear, repairs and replacement, signage, theft/vandalism, energy and other services, rates, and litter and waste management.
- These costs will depend on the **type of infrastructure**. For example:
 - a timber pier will incur high and irregular repair costs, but minimal monthly running costs
 - public toilets will incur regular and ongoing costs
- We will **seek to recover service delivery costs** from users of our sites where practicable and effective to do so
- We consider revenue raising to be **distinct from commercialisation**.
 - We are not a commercial organisation and there are only a handful of circumstances where it is beneficial to provide a commercial offering at our sites.
 - In these circumstances, a commercial offering must benefit both users as well as the National Park Authority. For example, The Cabin at Loch Lubnaig provides a positive visitor experience whilst removing the NPA's costly maintenance and running costs at a site that is disconnected from our other properties (eg Loch Lomond).
 - In contrast, limited revenue raising at sites can help offset the costs associated with running and maintaining sites

Cost Recovery Principles (2)





Off-Estate Infrastructure (1)

- There is infrastructure throughout the National Park that the NPA does not have formal ownership or management of (i.e. legal tenure) but we may decide it is appropriate – at our discretion – to use our resources to intervene in the wider interest of the National Park.
- This includes infrastructure that:
 - a) we have a strategic interest in, or
 - b) It facilitates delivery of our statutory duties (eg as an Access Authority), or
 - c) we have a role in its use or historic development/maintenance
- The main examples of this activity include:

1. Camping permit areas

- Providing site condition monitoring, vegetation and litter/waste management at camping permit areas where the landowner does not undertake these activities

2. Core paths and strategic routes (e.g. WHW)

- Using our Access Authority powers we may actively intervene to ensure access is maintained
- This includes using our resource and capital budget to replace derelict / unsafe infrastructure (e.g. bridges), without which access would be impeded

3. Historic visitor experience infrastructure

- We will maintain infrastructure we have historically placed in the National Park on non-NPA land for the purpose of enhancing the visitor experience
- Examples include the threshold signs at National Park entrances, scenic routes infrastructure and other visitor signage

Off-Estate Infrastructure (2)

- In all cases, there must be Executive-level approval including documentation and consideration of:
 - The activities we will carry out and rationale for doing so, along with capacity under which we carry these out
 - Budget and resource identification and prioritisation
 - Risks, including legal, reputational, operational, financial, environmental, and public
 - Explicit agreement on implications of any new burdens or liabilities and how these will be managed and resourced
- Except where the NPA has existing legal risk, we will have a presumption against taking a formal asset management role on infrastructure that is not part of our Estate. This would not necessarily preclude more minor maintenance tasks off-Estate either by our own staff or through volunteering activity that we co-ordinate.
 - If we consider the infrastructure requires formal and ongoing management by the NPA over the medium to long term, we should consider acquiring formal management or acquisition of it.
 - Notwithstanding this point, we are separately considering preparing a path monitoring plan and process for key non-NPA managed routes in the National Park, to be resourced by staff and volunteers. The considerations, risks and benefits of such a plan will be taken into account in its preparation and agreement.
- Once we have decided to intervene in off-Estate infrastructure, the task or activity will be prioritised using similar criteria to on-Estate work

Off-Estate Infrastructure (3)

- When we intervene on Off-Estate infrastructure, our relationship and engagement with the relevant land owners / land manager is key.
- In carrying this out there is a hierarchy of engagement and intervention that we should follow:

1. Influence the landowner to lead on the activity

- This is always the preferred route but we recognise there can be non-alignment of incentives and resources

2. Seek explicit landowner permission for the NPA to do the activity (except where legislation specifies that express landowner permission is not required, liaise with the landowner)

- Where permission is granted this should be documented including the activities to be carried out and the ongoing liability for the NPA (if relevant, requires Exec approval)

3. Use Access Authority powers for the NPA to do the activity

- We will inform the landowner in writing of the activities we will be carried out and clarifying the basis for doing so, also documenting any ongoing liability for either party

4. Acquire legal tenure for the land

- Where Access Authority powers may not apply but there remains an overarching interest, we may seek to acquire legal tenure to have control over the land through mutual agreement or using CPO powers