Participation Requests Reporting Template 2022/23 for Public Service Authorities

Section 32 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires public service authorities to produce an annual report on Participation Request activity and publish this no later than 30 June each year. This template has been created to gather participation request data for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Information provided will help inform policy and practice at local and national level as the data will be collated and shared by the Scottish Government's Community Empowerment Team. However, it is for each public service authority to make their own annual report publicly available by 30 June each year, whether using this template or not.

Please provide information in the sections below and email the completed template by 30 June 2023 to <u>community.empowerment@gov.scot</u> .

<u>Section One – Public Service Authority Information</u>

Organisation: Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority

Address: Carrochan, 20 Carrochan Road, Balloch G83 8EG

Completed by: Fiona Jackson

Role: Sustainable Development Advisor

Email: fiona.jackson@lochlomond-trossachs.org

Telephone: 01389 722 612

Date of completion: 30 June 2023

Are you the Participation Request Lead Contact for the organisation: ~~Yes~~/No

If not please provide the name, job title and email address for the lead contact for any queries:

Sandra Dalziel, Legal Manager - sandra.dalziel@lochlomond-trossachs.org

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Section 2: Participation Request Data for 2022/23

Please complete following overview table:

Total new applications received in 2022/23	Total applications received prior to 1 April 2022 which were still to be determined at 31 March 2023	Number of accepted applications in 2022/23	Number of applications agreed in 2022/23	Number of applications refused in 2022/23
0	0	0	0	0
Where you were unable to accept a participation request, was an alternative process put in place to discuss the group's issue and work with them or support offered to help them consider how to address their identified need? Please provide details:				

2.1 Please provide details of Participation Requests received using the legislation and outwith the legislation in the reporting year which resulted in changes to public services provided by or on behalf of your public service authority and tell us about those changes. Please also include details of requests received prior to 2022/23, which resulted in changes to the way of working being implemented in 2022/23.

Name of Community Participation Body	Was the Participation Request successful? (Y/N)	Previous way of working	Way of working following changes	What difference did those changes make for the users of the service? Did they improve service user experiences or outcomes?	Details of any participation requests considered outwith the formal process e.g. agreements reached that resulted in changes to services.
0	0	0	0	0	0

2.2 Please use this space to provide any further comments relating to the above data, such as:

- **describing the outcome improvement process (whether or not it resulted from a formal participation request)**
- **how the community participation body was involved in designing the outcome improvement process**
- **how the community participation body participated in the outcome improvement process including taking part in decisions and delivering actions**
- **details of any wider benefits, such as improved community engagement and ongoing participation.**

n/a

Section Three – Partnership Working & Promotion of Participation Requests

3.1a Please provide details of any engagement with support organisations such as local Third Sector Interfaces and public sector Community Learning and Development staff or national organisations such as the Scottish Community Development Centre.

PRs are a mechanism that should be retained to empower communities to influence service provision if necessary. The PR legislation has raised the profile within the Park Authority and highlighted opportunities to improve co-production and collaborative activities with communities and to support community empowerment.

3.1b Please tell us about any challenges you have had in accessing support.
It would be helpful if there was free support for both communities and public agencies, in a similar way COSS provides support.

3.2 Please provide details of action taken to promote the use of Participation Requests or support Community Participation Bodies in making a Participation Request.

For example this could include: Support before making a request, such as to determine whether a participation request is the most appropriate route; Support to make the request such as assist groups to complete forms, or identify appropriate outcomes; and/or Support to take part effectively in outcome improvement processes (whether or not they resulted from a formal participation request).

The Park Authority continues to support early opportunities to engage with and involve communities, however we know improvements can be made. We are acutely aware that participation relies on communities with high levels of capacity, so we continue to support community capacity and community development through regular/continued conversation, grant funding, signposting and direct advice.

Our Participation Request information and core internal procedures ensure staff can provide early support if a community body is thinking about a Participation Request. This support would be bespoke to the context to enable discussion around outcome improvement, the processes and criteria for submitting a valid Participation Request and where further independent support can be sourced.

3.3 Please let us know what actions you have been taking to ensure that your processes are inclusive.

For example, this could include accessible information and other support, which enable wider use of participation requests by all population groups including those with protected characteristics. We are particularly interested in any ways you have targeted those with protected characteristics to raise awareness of the PR process or support request submissions.

Park Authority engagement mechanisms include providing information and support in a variety of forms including via video, blogs, images, interactive mapping, story maps, website, social media etc. Alternative languages and formats or large print information can be provided on request.

Our youth engagement programme continues to support and develop our Youth Committee to support youth involvement/engagement, and the Ranger education and outreach engagement programme continues to support people experiencing disadvantage to be able to visit, learn and benefit from the positive experiences spending time in the National Park provides. A range of techniques are used, such as providing specialist support from Backbone to involve black/minority ethnic people in environmental activities; Junior Ranger and Rural Skills programmes; educational learning packs; Education Travel Grants for schools; John Muir Award. A Backbone representative has been shadowing our Board Members in anticipation of future Board input.

3.4 Please outline any plans you have to continue involving local people and local groups in outcome improvement processes as a result of your Participation Request policies (and also outwith formal participation requests).

The Park Authority engages with communities regularly and in bespoke methods through our operational activities such as via our Ranger Service, Volunteer Programmes, Nature and Land Use work, our community place planning support, via our tourism business team and intensively in relation to visitor management, access/recreation and planning teams.

Specific mechanisms have been formed (or we contribute to others' platforms) to develop conversations and to enable community input and influence of our and our partners' services; specifically: service design programmes, regular Visitor Management Forums, Local Place Plan Advisory Group, funding and support for local place plans, Future Nature Steering Group, Sustainable Transport Modal Shift Research, Engaging Communities on Land Use Project, Visitor Destination Groups, Luss Summits, Strathard Rural Development Framework, Callander Partnership, Youth Committee.

Currently, we are consulting and promoting discussion on our Draft National Park Partnership Plan in order to hear the views of all stakeholders including communities, young people, communities of interest etc.. A range of ways for communities to influence the future services provided by the Park Authority have been developed, including public meetings, interactive map, survey, offers of workshops and conversation meetings.

3.5 Please provide details about any work undertaken to consider wider reviews of participation practice, and any such methods used to engage with communities.

Community engagement and participation is a regular challenge due to the resources needed to make it happen meaningfully. Staff are often frustrated by the lack of investment in community development capacities of community groups to engage with us in an informed way, and in internal staff capacity or resources to support this.

There is much evidence and expertise available on good practice in engagement, participation, co-design etc, but they often cost money and time. Perhaps more guidance or resources could be put in place to help relevant authorities better plan, understand, prioritise, monitor, evaluate and demonstrate effective participation enabling them to improve ways of working and outcomes.

Section Four – Additional Information

4.1 Please use this space to provide any further feedback not covered in the above sections.

For example, we are interested in your reflections about what has gone well and what has gone less well in relation to Participation Requests over the past year?

n/a

Is there any aspect of the process that you intend to adapt or change in the year ahead? *n/a*

Have you identified any needs for guidance or support that would support the process? *See above*

If you have developed any case study material or published new information about Participation Requests please share links to those with us here. *n/a*

Any other information: n/a

Section Five – Community Empowerment Act Review

The following questions relate to the Scottish Government review of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. We would value your feedback as a public service authority concerned with part 3 (participation requests) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Please note, any comments provided here would be anonymised, and would only be used in the context of the review.

5.1   Has the legislation made it easier or more difficult to work with communities to improve services? Please provide some comments on your experiences as a public service authority engaging with this legislation.

We welcome the option for communities to utilise the PR process – it should be retained.

5.2   Where can things be further improved, and what needs to change?

We haven't had much experience, but more, multi-year community development and funding support for communities would be a long-term solution.

5.3   Are you aware of what support is available to you e.g. Scottish Government advice and resources, SCDC's Participation Request pack, Social Studies PR Toolbox, when engaging with this legislation, and how you can access this? Is there any support you think you would benefit from when engaging with this legislation. Please provide comments where possible. Yes.

5.4   What would you like to see now, to further empower Scotland's communities?

More, multi-year community development and funding support for communities would be a long-term solution..

Completed by: - Fiona Jackson   Role: Sustainable Development Advisor

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Date of completion: 30 June 2023

Please email the completed template by 30 June 2023 to community.empowerment@gov.scot

If you have any queries please contact Malcolm Cowie, Participation Request Policy Manager at Malcolm.cowie@gov.scot

Community Empowerment Team, Scottish Government