

**Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority
Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23**

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Performance Report

Foreword

2022/23 has been a truly pivotal and productive year for the National Park Authority as we developed our plans and programmes designed to step up our efforts to tackle the twin nature and climate crises while facilitating a just transition to a greener economy. Many building blocks for this were developed while we began work preparing for our next National Park Partnership Plan, at the same time significant outcomes were delivered on the ground.

The implementation of our own Mission Zero route map (to be a net zero organisation by 2030) saw significant investments at our Balmaha Visitor Centre including the installation of solar panels and air source heat pumps to significantly reduce our consumption of fossil fuels while plans were developed further significant investments for our Carrochan office and Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway for next year. Our work on tackling climate change was significantly broadened by considering how the National Park as a place can move towards net zero and in time become a net absorber of carbon. Working in collaboration with University of Lancaster and the wider UK National Park we now have a groundbreaking carbon model for the National Park which is informing our strategies both to reduce emissions and step up land use change to store more carbon in the landscape.

With one of the biggest emitters being transport we worked with a wide range of transport organisations that cover the Park to develop new thinking on how we can better plan for the travel needs of visitors as well as communities and businesses and so reduce emissions from car journeys. While we were unable to take forward pilot shuttle bus services this year, due to operator capacity, we commenced work on a strategic transport study which will inform future thinking and influence our partners on supporting the delivery of new services in years to come. We also continued to grow our delivery of peatland restoration projects with over 450 hectares restored helping reduce emissions from eroded areas.

During the year we worked with our partners to secure their commitments to our Future Nature strategy which seeks to deliver more ambitious restoration of habitats and eco-systems at scale. A particular highlight for nature in the National Park was supporting RSPB Scotland to translocate a family of seven Beavers to the Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve. We also worked with the UK Revere partnership to map opportunities for green finance and to develop potential models for future investment in the National Park. At the same time, we delivered over £200k of projects funded by the Nature Restoration Fund and collaborated with the Countryside Trust to take forward the Wild Strathfillan project.

With the first full visitor season without COVID restrictions it was welcome to see so many visitors to the National Park especially from overseas countries. Amongst our comprehensive responsible behaviour campaigns, significant effort was put into raising awareness of water safety issues with National Park Authority leading significant partner work and contributing to a national water safety plan to ensure consistent messaging, signing and provision of public safety equipment. At the same time intensive work to review the Loch Lomond Byelaws resulted in the successful completion of a consultation and submission of proposals to Scottish Ministers for approval. These changes sought to respond to safety risks associated with rapid growth in jet ski activity alongside the growing popularity of open water swimming and paddlesports at busy Lochside areas.

Our Place Investment Plan saw significant progress both with the engagement of stakeholders in Strathard/Trossachs and Callander to produce prioritised Strategic Tourism Investment and Development plans. At the same time, we facilitated eight communities to undertake Local Place Plans. Significant projects delivered included the replacement of Bracklinn Bridge as well as the substantial completion of Conic Hill Path improvements and the upgrade of Loch Achray/Ben Venue Car park, while local stakeholders were engaged in the design of a comprehensive upgrade of our site at Tarbet.

The organisation delivered this while adapting to significant changes in its operations. A successful pilot of hybrid working was mainstreamed, and this was supported by migrating digital systems to Office 365 and SharePoint while ensuring the highest standards of cyber resilience. Council elections and National Park Local elections saw

significant change in our Board requiring effective induction programmes to support significant Board decisions throughout the year. The most significant was the decision to approve our new draft National Park Partnership Plan 2024-2029 for consultation. This sets out clearly the challenges that will need to be tackled in the National Park over the next five years if we are to make the required progress towards national nature and climate targets while supporting our local economy to realise new opportunities. None of this work would have been possible without the ongoing commitment from our staff and Board Members and we thank them for their dedication through yet another productive year.

Gordon Watson
Chief Executive Officer

Heather Reid
Convener

Performance Overview

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority (“the Authority”) presents this Annual Report and Accounts for the year from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 in accordance with The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Board and Accountable Officer believe that future liabilities will be met from a combination of cash budget allocation from the Scottish Government, future grants from partner agencies, and income from chargeable activities.

This overview outlines the purpose of the Authority, its performance during the year and the key risks to the achievement of its objectives.

About Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park was created in July 2002 under The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 to safeguard an area of outstanding and diverse landscapes, habitats and communities, parts of which were coming under severe visitor and recreational pressures. This Act also created a non-departmental public body (NDPB), the Authority, to ensure the National Park aims are achieved in a coordinated way.

The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 sets out four National Park aims to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area
- Promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area
- Promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public
- Promote sustainable social and economic development of the area’s communities.

Our mission is to protect and enhance Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. The National Park covers an area of outstanding landscapes, habitats and communities and it’s our job to protect it and reduce the impact of visitor and recreational pressures. As a NDPB we are committed to inspire our communities, visitors and partners to work with us and enhance and promote this iconic National Park.

The National Park (Scotland) Act 2000 provides the legal framework for the creation of National Parks in Scotland. The Authority has legal status as a statutory body with statutory duties for planning and outdoor access. As a Planning Authority, we are responsible for deciding all planning applications in the National Park Area. As an Access Authority, we have a responsibility of upholding access rights as set out in the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and we encourage responsible access to outdoor spaces, while reducing the impact on habitats and protected species.

The National Park Authority Board is made up of seventeen Board Members. Five members are elected by the community and twelve are appointed by Scottish Ministers, six of these following nominations by the Local Authorities. There is currently one vacancy for a Ministerial appointment, and the process to fill this role is underway. Our Members are led by the Convener and Depute Convener. The Board agrees the overall direction of the Authority and oversees the work of the Chief Executive and National Park staff. The executive management of the Authority is undertaken by an Executive team that comprises the Chief Executive and four Directors. More details on our Board and Executive team are on page 30.

Our Strategy

The Authority sets its delivery targets on an annual basis by reference to the strategy outlined in the [National Parks Partnership Plan \(NPPP\)](#) and [Our 5-Year \(Corporate\) Plan](#).

The delivery targets for 2022/23 were expressed in an Annual Operational Plan supported by an annual budget that enables delivery and focuses on priorities for the year. Performance against these targets was monitored by the Executive Team and reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

The Annual Operational Plan focuses on key priorities and was structured around four themes in 2022/23:

- Renewing our strategic vision
- Tackling the twin crises of nature loss and the global climate emergency
- Investing in People and Places across the National Park
- Transitioning to a resilient future for the organisation

The Annual Operational Plan details specific activities and deliverables under each theme. Performance reporting to the Board includes a quarterly progress update and rating for each deliverable.

These targets align with the National Outcome Targets set by the [Scottish Government National Performance Framework](#). Performance against the National Performance Framework is considered through 81 national indicators. We input directly into three key outcomes and a further seven outcomes that we address as incidental outcomes. The Authority continues to support the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform portfolio's overarching aim to protect and promote Scotland's environment and to build a strong and sustainable net-zero economy.

During 2022/23, we worked towards establishing a new five-year National Park Partnership Plan in conjunction with stakeholders. In addition to this, we looked to see how we can best align our strategic documents, such as the National Park Partnership Plan, our Local Development Plan, the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Regional Land Use Partnership. We also undertook to further enhance our work in key areas to address the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Improved accountability is an important aim for all Public Bodies. As a public body, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority is required to demonstrate that we are conducting our operations as economically, efficiently, and effectively as possible.



Our Performance

This section provides a narrative summary of performance for each outcome and highlights delivery from across the four areas of focus identified through our Annual Operational Plan. Further detail on our performance within each outcome and against our Our 5-Year (Corporate) Plan is provided in the Performance Analysis section of the report.

Theme 1: Renewing our strategic vision

2022/23 saw the National Park Authority undergo a period of significant change in the configuration of our Board, at a time where we were looking to the future in drafting our new National Park Partnership Plan and Local Development Plan. We focused our attention on ensuring climate and nature are the focal point of the draft new plan, and we spend time engaging with lesser heard voices to ensure that people from those groups have the opportunity to influence the direction of travel.

In the run up to our Board elections, we undertook a suite of activities aimed at increasing the diversity of candidates standing for election. Whilst this activity resulted in more diversity in those seeking information about nomination, it disappointingly only resulted in one female candidate putting herself forward for election. She was not successful, and the gender balance of the current directly-elected Members remains 100% male, as it was following the 2017 elections. We have fed back to the Minister on some of the barriers we have found in relation to achieving a gender balance and increased diversity on our Board, and continue to consider other ways in which we can increase diversity within our Board.

As a result of the Board change, a comprehensive induction plan was put together, ensuring our Board were supported in their roles to make some significant decisions. Over the course of the year, they considered major planning applications, the draft National Park Partnership Plan and the proposed updates to the Loch Lomond (Navigation) Byelaws. This will continue throughout 2023/24, as we finalise an ongoing development plan for our Board Members, building on the feedback contained within their skills analysis forms.

In addition to this, we facilitated a work placement for a young person, Aiden Cronin. Aiden's placement focused on identifying future opportunities for the Youth Committee, as well as bringing the voice of young people to our Board meetings. This culminated in a presentation to the Executive Team and the development of operational plans to take forward the work of the Youth Committee.

Key Highlights include:

	Status
Create a new five-year National Park Partnership Plan that establishes the overarching vision for the National Park that we and our partners will work together to achieve	PA
Prepare a draft new Local Development Plan that will guide development within the National Park to ensure it furthers environmental, social and economic objectives.	PA
Encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to stand for election to the National Park Authority Board, and work with Local Authorities and the Scottish Government to nominate Board Members that bring skills and experiences we need to help us address our big strategic challenges	C
Implement clear transition, induction and training plans for our Board through a year of change	C
Engage widely in the development of new strategic plans, including with lesser heard groups and points of view to ensure our Plans consider their needs and perspectives	C
Further the work of our Youth Committee and the involvement of Young People in determining the future of the National Park	C

Key:

- C** Complete
- PA** Partially Achieved
- Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Theme 2: Tackling the twin crises of nature loss and the global climate emergency

Taking action for climate and nature has been a cornerstone of the work undertaken by the National Park Authority for a number of years; this year, we've stepped up a gear in relation to how we address both crises. We took Future Nature further, progressing delivery plans, monitoring frameworks and mapping which forms part of the Future Nature Route map, and we established a stakeholder working group to enable and facilitate the scale of change needed to halt nature loss. We also undertook a feasibility study with Revere to identify opportunities for Green Finance within the National Park Authority boundary.

In partnership with the Social Enterprise Academy, we trialled community engagement for land use management in Lochgoil; the "Lighting the Spark" event produced a local Land Use Vision alongside learning around engaging communities in land use decision-making, such as how to go about it, what information communities need to facilitate informed discussions, the support communities need and the resources we could develop to support it. The learning from this project will inform all our engagement activity in relation to engaging communities and landowners on wider land use issues. In addition to this, the engagement and vision developed by the community of Lochgoil is being used by the community to inform the preparation of its Local Place Plan, which has been of great impact.

We undertook a programme of work aimed at reducing our organizational carbon emissions and to increase our use of renewable technologies; this is our Mission Zero. We undertook work at Loch Achray to reduce our reliance on a diesel generator and installed photovoltaic panels. In addition to this, we installed both Air Source Heat Pumps and photovoltaic panels at Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway and Balmaha Visitor Centre, and we replaced windows at both sites to increase heating efficiency. This work is due to be finalised in May 2023. We were also successful in securing over £1.1m from the Scottish Central Government Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme, which will allow us to undertake significant work at our Carrochan HQ building during 2023/24 to tackle the largest emissions within our Estate.

Reaching Net Zero is one of the main drivers of the draft National Park Partnership Plan 2024-2029, presented to the Board in March 2023, and it is embedded throughout its vision, outcomes, objectives and priorities. The draft National Park Partnership Plan proposes a net zero target date of 2040 and the public consultation, running through the summer of 2023/24, will provide an opportunity for discussion on what this would mean with key stakeholders. The Carbon Footprint Assessment Report will be published as part of the consultation.

Key Highlights include:

Status

Develop our multi-year Future Nature delivery programme with ambitious landscape-scale nature restoration projects	C
Collaborate with UK National Parks to trial approaches to green finance investment in nature, including by progressing the Wild Strathfillan project alongside Revere	C
Progress our Regional Land Use Partnership pilot to develop a draft Regional Land Use Framework that aligns with Scottish Government objectives on climate change, biodiversity and a "green recovery"	PA
Deliver up to six new peatland restoration projects covering over 520 hectares	PA
Invest in our Estate to reduce carbon emissions and use renewable technologies	C
Begin work to establish what is needed and potential routes for the National Park as a whole to reach net zero emissions	C

Key:

- C** Complete
- PA** Partially Achieved
- Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Theme 3: Investing in People and Places across the National Park

The National Park Authority Board approved the multi-year capital investment plan in June 2022, referred to as our Place Programme. We were delighted to open the replacement Bracklinn Bridge, providing locals and visitors with a safe place to view the spectacular Bracklinn Falls as well as a means to complete the full Bracklinn Falls circuit route again. The award-winning new bridge is a simple and robust structure that fits well with the landscape of the Falls and is made from “weathering” steel; this material was selected due to its longevity – giving up to 120 years design life – and the bridge is rated as highly sustainable due to the efficient design and use of materials. In addition to this, we have made good progress with Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Design Studies in Callander and Strathard and the Trossachs; the former being on track for completion within Q2 of 2023/24 and the latter delayed slightly, with completion expected in Q1 of 2023/24.

We undertook to make improvements to the Conic Hill path during 2022/23, and we upgraded 424 metres of the path, with 99 metres of new aggregate path and 325 metres of stone pitching. The work is of an excellent quality and will provide a safer and more amenable experience for path users. Remaining sections of the path will be upgraded over the winters of 2023/24 and 2024/25.

During 2022/23, we supported eight communities with either funding, advice and GIS support to develop their Local Place Plans. Callander, Luss and Arden, Arrochar and Tarbet and Drymen have all finalised their local place plans and Kilmoronock, St. Fillans, Gartmore and East Loch Lomond have initiated work for their plan.

Working with Stirling Council, we tendered for a pilot shuttle bus service. Despite significant exploration into alternative models for delivery, the tender returns proved to be incompatible with requirements, due to a national shortage of bus drivers. In 2023/24, we intended to procure a shuttle bus service, for operation during the summer. Despite positive early conversations with contractors, unfortunately this tender again proved to be incompatible with requirements.

We completed our review of the Loch Lomond (Navigation) Byelaws in January 2023, with the Board approving the proposed changes to be submitted to Ministers. The proposals were submitted to Ministers on the 16th March, with a three month opportunity for additional comments to be sent to the Ministers for consideration. Meanwhile, we have turned our attention to focus on the preparatory work to implement the byelaws, based on the response to the formal submission.

Key Highlights include:

Status

Develop a multi-year capital investment plan for visitor facilities, including through a strategic approach a strategic approach for sub-areas of the National Park	C
Design and construct a replacement Bracklinn Bridge	C
Undertake improvements to the Conic Hill path to better support its growing usage	PA
Work with up to three communities to support their development of Community Place Plans	C
Work with partners to pilot at least one visitor shuttle bus services at congested visitor hotspots	Po
Engage with stakeholders to begin the preparation of the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Studies for Strathard, the Trossachs and Callander and the surrounding area	PA
Begin a review of the Loch Lomond (Navigation) Byelaws, working with stakeholders to identify and address existing and emerging issues on the Loch	C

Key:

- C** Complete
- PA** Partially Achieved
- Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Theme 4: Transitioning to a resilient future for the organisation

During the year, we implemented, reviewed, and refined our approach to hybrid working, ensuring that it met the needs of both the organisation and our staff. This included the collection and consolidation of staff and team feedback, which was used to refine our approach. As a result of this, we've seen both flexibility and productivity benefits. An area we continue to monitor is our sickness trends – because of our approach to hybrid working and our drive to protect the wellbeing of our staff, there is a need to remind staff that when they are unwell, they should not be working from home.

Our Estates strategy was presented to and approved by the Board in June 2023. It describes how the strategic contribution of our Estate can be leveraged for the benefit of the National Park, establishes the principles we will apply when taking decisions about our Estate, sets the priorities for the future development and maintenance of our Estate and establish criteria for the National Park Authority's involvement in off-Estate infrastructure. We will begin the process of implementation during 2023/24.

During 2022/23, we undertook to invest in fit for purpose digital systems to support the everchanging demands of our operational requirements. This saw us migrate to Microsoft 365, giving us greater governance and security controls and in the long term, improving our records management. We took a phased approach to this work as so not to overwhelm already busy staff.

We migrated 95% of all data held to SharePoint, with just the Project Management folders remaining. This work is being picked up as part of our review of project management, ensuring that we can use technology to achieve benefits in process improvement.

In addition to this, we carried out an independent Microsoft 365 Security Review and implemented the recommendations, as well as looked at our Cyber Resilience with assistance from our Internal Auditors. We have also enabled Device Isolation for end user computers and laptops which automatically blocks all network traffic if the device shows any signs of infection or issue with the antivirus.

We have also strengthened our internal policies, with the development of a new Information Security Policy and Acceptable Use Policy, as well as a new Backup and Disaster Recovery Policy. This resulted in a review and update to the Cyber Incident Response Plan. The National Park Authority also completed its Cyber Essentials Plus testing and our accreditation has been retained for a fifth year.

Key Highlights include:	Status
Produce an Estates Strategy that sets out how we target maintenance, repair and renewal activity for assets within our responsibility	C
Implement, review, and refine a hybrid model of home and office working that enables both flexibility and productivity benefits for individuals and the organisation	C
Invest in fit for purpose digital systems to support our operational needs	C
Develop and implement new measures that support secure remote working and cyber security risk mitigation	C

Key:

- C** Complete
- PA** Partially Achieved
- Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Key Risks

We manage our risks through a Corporate Risk Register. This ensures that risks to our ability to deliver our work are monitored through the year and reported to our Executive Team and Board on a regular basis. In 2022/23 there were five key risks which were rated as high during the year.

Key Risks	Risk Mitigation
Climate Change	Climate Change plays a significant role in the consideration of activities we undertake and how we can best mitigate against organisational impacts, such as extreme weather impacting on our infrastructure and ability to move around the Park. If we are not able to unite with key stakeholders, as well as the wider public to secure their co-operation to address the global climate emergency, this could result in the failure to achieve planned outcomes for both the climate and nature. We have begun to implement our Mission Zero Route Map which ensures that the National Park Authority plays our role in reducing emissions and tackling climate change, with the goal of being a Net Zero Organisation by 2030.
Nature crisis	To address the Nature crisis facing us, we have begun to develop our Future Nature Route Map, with implementation being phased. We have prioritised both financial and staff time investment in this area to ensure that we can achieve our plans. Again, we cannot address this in isolation and if we are not able to unite with key stakeholders and delivery partners, we will not be able to achieve the landscape scale projects needed to enhance biodiversity. Failure to act on this risk would have an impact on the National Park Authority, calling into question our role given our statutory aims.
Visitor Pressures	Increases in visitors to the National Park present challenges in terms of ensuring that visitors and communities both have a positive experience. Issues such as littering, parking and antisocial behaviour require to be addressed to ensure that this happens effectively. We have actively led on engaging partners in strategic discussions to improve the co-ordination of services and resources to be more responsive to the demands placed upon us collectively. We continue to communicate and engage with local stakeholders around the issues and the role they can play in assisting to address them. We also developed and implemented plans to deploy full time and seasonal resources to address the most acute pressures.
Business Continuity and Cyber Security	A key risk that we have actively managed this year is around business continuity and cyber security. As we formally move to our hybrid model after COVID-19, we continued to invest in new IT hardware and systems that increased our IT and organisational resilience. This includes a programme of ongoing training for our staff in relation to cyber security.
Budget	As a result of the ongoing annual budgeting cycles, we face year to year uncertainty in our revenue Grant in Aid. To address this, we maintain strong strategic relationships with Scottish Government and Ministers to share our achievements and aspirations to deliver against government priorities. In 2022/23, we were able to use our Grant-in-Aid to deliver significant pieces of work and to support the safe operation of our visitor sites, which experience significant pressure during the summer season.

For more information on how we identify and manage risks, please see our [Risk Management Framework](#).

Performance Analysis

Performance against Key Deliverables

As well as reporting on our contributions towards the National Performance Framework, we also monitor and report on our performance towards achieving our key deliverables. These are specific objectives which we aim to complete over the year and link to both Our 5-Year (Corporate) Plan and the National Park Partnership Plan.

Of the 31 key deliverables set out in our Annual Operational Plan that we planned to achieve over the full year, 23 are Complete (Blue), 7 have been Partially Achieved (Purple) and 1 has been postponed to 2023/24 (Grey). This equates to an 74% completion rate over the year. The progress on those Partially Achieved or Postponed to 2023/24 is below.

- We actively took the decision to delay the work in relation to the National Park Partnership Plan and Local Development Plan to ensure that we spent adequate time considering the issues we wanted to address. By doing so, we are able to have a better conversation with stakeholders as part of the consultation process.
- We made progress against our Regional Land Use Partnership pilot and are considering how this is visually represented within the Local Development Plan, ensuring land use delivers benefits for both climate and nature.
- Whilst we completed four peatland restoration projects, and restored 450.5 hectares of peat, which were in the actively eroding or drained bog categories, significantly reducing their greenhouse gas emissions, we did not achieve our target of 520 hectares of restoration.
- Our work to build a new strategic facility in the Trossachs at Loch Achray that delivered a step change in sustainable transport capacity was pivoted to making improvements at Ben Venue instead. The first phase of the works here was partially completed by the financial year end and were fully completed by Easter.
- Whilst we partially achieved the completion of works on Conic Hill by the financial year end, and are therefore reporting this work as partially achieved, we concluded this work by the end of April 2023. We are required to retender this work for future years due to cost increases and will undertake this work within the 2023/24 financial year.
- We cancelled the work on our Shuttle Bus pilot after the tender proved to be incompatible with requirements. This was due to a national shortage of bus drivers.
- The Strathard and Trossachs STID was substantially developed however delayed due to a lack of staff and consultancy time. This will be completed within the 2023/24 financial year.

2022/23 Key Activity by Annual Operational Plan Activity



Looking ahead, we will be finalising the new National Park Partnership Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Plan. Similarly, we will be undertaking a significant period of works at both our Headquarters, to enable further progress to be made against Mission Zero, and at Tarbet, to reconfigure the site to enable better use. Following the approval of the Loch Lomond Byelaws 2023 in August 2023 we will continue to prepare for their implementation from 1 November 2024, ensuring an effective enforcement framework and providing a flow of information to current and prospective users of the loch to raise awareness of the new byelaws.

Detailed Performance Analysis against our 2022/23 Corporate and Annual Operational Plans

This section of our Annual Report and Accounts considers the progress that has been made under the priorities set out in our Annual Operational Plan above, through the lens of Our 5-Year (Corporate) Plan and has been aligned as per the priority themes identified within Our 5-Year (Corporate) Plan.

Priority 1: Litter

Whilst litter continued to be an issue this year, there was a marked reduction compared with 2021/22. Litter removed by the National Park Authority was down 26% on last financial year during the visitor season. During 2022/23, volunteers gave over 664 hours to litter picking across 49 different opportunities. During the visitor season, they lifted 369 bags of litter. This is a 29% reduction when compared to the 2021/22 financial year, however, this reduction was partly due to less volunteering activity on litter picking due to the removal of COVID-19 restrictions, which enabled alternative volunteering opportunities to be offered.

Arrochar Community Development Trust also recruited two part-time wardens for the season, who collected litter from car parks, roadsides and pavements between Arrochar and Tarbet. Strathfillan Community Development Trust reported that there was significant litter left in the area by visitors, with approximately two black bags of litter (including human waste) collected every week along the Loch shores of Loch Lubhair and Loch Dochart.

As we look ahead to consider the future role of the National Park Authority in this work, we did not include any specific deliverables around litter within the 2022/23 Annual Operational Plan.

Priority 2: Visitor Infrastructure

Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development (STID) studies used as part of a wider approach and commitment to developing long term, strategic solutions to help manage visitor pressures and improve visitor experience in key areas of the National Park. A key part of this project is collaboration with stakeholders to inform the study and subsequent plans to be delivered. The studies aim to identify key infrastructure issues in a particular area, the barriers to be addressed in delivering the required infrastructure, the costs for the development and the timescales required for delivery. During 2022/23, STIDs were completed for West Loch Lomond and East Loch Lomond, with the Strathard and Trossachs and Callander and the surrounding areas STIDs due for completion in early 2023/24.

As a result of the West Loch Lomond STID, a pilot project was delivered considering how an 'aires' approach could help manage motorhome and campervan visitors to the Tarbet area. Those visiting the area and camping in vehicles will be made aware of the various overnight stay sites but directed to the waste and water facilities available at Tarbet Pier Picnic Site.

Annual Operational Plan Activity linked to this Priority	Annual Operational Plan Deliverables linked to this Priority	Status
3.1. Improve visitor infrastructure and enhance visitor experience across the National Park	Develop a multi-year capital investment plan for visitor facilities, including through a strategic approach for sub-areas of the National Park.	C
	Design and construct a replacement Bracklinn Bridge	C
	Subject to required consents and agreements, build a new strategic facility in the Trossachs at Loch Achray that delivers multiple benefits such as a step change in sustainable transport capacity and a reduction in dangerous car parking.	PA
	Undertake improvements to the Conic Hill path to better support its growing usage.	PA

Key:

C Complete **PA** Partially Achieved **Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Priority 3: Sustainable Organisation

We believe that as a National Park Authority, whose fundamental aim is to conserve and enhance the natural heritage of this special part of Scotland, we should be a leading organisation in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. In 2022/23, we undertook a significant programme of works to install Air Source Heat Pumps and Photovoltaic Panels at Balmaha Visitor Centre, which was completed by the end of March 2023. We also installed Air Source Heat Pumps at Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway, alongside additional heat retention works, such as upgrading the windows.

In addition to this, we installed photovoltaic panels at Loch Achray campsite, which was previously powered by diesel generator. Whilst the generator is still in place as a back-up, we have reduced the use of this because of the alternative technologies installed. Future works here include the installation of batteries. We have also begun to consider our pathway to being a Net Zero National Park, and this work will be carried on throughout the 2023/24 financial year.

Our Estates strategy, approved by the Board in June 2023 describes how the strategic contribution of our Estate can be leveraged for the benefit of the National Park and sets the priorities for the future development and maintenance of our Estate. This key document will be a guiding light to our work over the next 10 years, as we ensure that our Estate is sustainable and effectively utilised to support the organisation.

Similarly, we are delighted to have completed the implementation of our new hybrid model of working, which meets the demands of the organisation, as well as provides the flexibility that enables our staff to achieve a great work-life balance. To support this, we completed our migration to Office 365, with our data now being hosted on SharePoint, and we undertook a series of further developments to ensure our cyber security is as robust as possible.

Annual Operational Plan Activity linked to this Priority	Annual Operational Plan Deliverables linked to this Priority	Status
2.3. Implement our Mission Zero route map	Invest in our Estate to reduce carbon emissions and use renewable technologies.	C
	Develop and implement behaviour change tools and techniques that support low carbon transitions.	C
2.4. Develop our Net Zero National Park approach	Begin work to establish what's needed and potential routes for the National Park as a whole to reach net zero emissions.	C
4.1 Establish clear strategic approach to managing our assets	Produce an Estates Strategy that sets out how we target maintenance, repair and renewal activity for assets within our responsibility.	C
4.2 Support the individual work-life balance and wellbeing of our staff whilst delivering on the National Park outcomes	Implement, review, and refine a hybrid model of home and office working that enables both flexibility and productivity benefits for individuals and the organisation.	C
4.3 Ensure our digital capabilities meet the needs of the business	Invest in fit for purpose digital systems to support our operational needs.	C
	Develop and implement new measures that support secure remote working and cyber security risk mitigation.	C

Key:

C Complete

PA Partially Achieved

Po Postponed to 2023/24

Priority 4: Attractive, Accessible and Healthy Destination

The National Park Safe Recovery Action Group (NSPRAG) partners prepared a Joint Response Visitor Management Plan (JRVMP) setting out a range of actions to be undertaken by partners to help alleviate the expected visitor pressures. When planning for the 2022 visitor season, there was a desire to maintain the increased “boots on the ground” of recent years. Additional resources made available to the National Park Authority, partners and communities from the Scottish Government this year meant that staffing levels remained higher than pre-COVID.

The vast majority of visitors to the National Park still travel to and around the Park by car, resulting in ongoing pressures and congestion in hot spot areas. However, in comparison with 2020/2021, there was reduced pressure on roads and car parks. Argyll and Bute Council employed four seasonal wardens with one full time staff member in Luss/Arrochar. Parking wardens were deployed daily to Luss, Duck Bay and Arrochar to manage parking and congestion issues. The impact of this increased presence appears to be less requirement for enforcement.

This year we went out to tender inviting experienced bus operators to work with us to pilot a shuttle bus service within the National Park during peak visitor season. The tender exercise for this project brought to light significant challenges facing the bus sector at present, specifically around driver shortages across the sector. This meant that the pilot could not be progressed this visitor season and options for future years are now being explored. As part of our strategic development work, we engaged consultants to work on a comprehensive Sustainable Travel and Modal Shift Assessment and Options Appraisal. The study built upon existing travel and visitor data for the National Park to support our understanding of the barriers and opportunities for sustainable travel in the Park. It will form an evidence-led basis for how we work with partners to deliver improved alternatives to visitor car

journeys into and within the National Park area. Consultation with key stakeholders and community groups is underway.

The National Park Authority also worked with businesses on an industry-led initiative designed to recruit, train and retain hospitality staff to meet the workforce challenge following COVID-19 and Brexit. Named “Hospitality Unlimited” this work is led by the National Park Destination Group, chaired by Sarah Heward.

Annual Operational Plan Activity linked to this Priority	Annual Operational Plan Deliverables linked to this Priority	Status
3.3 Improve sustainable transport services for communities and visitors	Develop a strategic approach to reducing car use by visitors to lessen the impact on the climate, manage congestion and reduce irresponsible parking.	C
	Work with partners to pilot at least one visitor shuttle bus service at congested visitor hotspots	Po
3.4 Work with partners on joined-up approaches to business recovery and improving visitor services	Implement the Joint Response Visitor Management Plan for the 2022 visitor season.	C
	Engage with stakeholders to begin the preparation of the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Studies for Strathard, the Trossachs and Callander and the surrounding area.	PA
	Work with our partner West Highland Way (WHW) managing authorities to support tourism recovery by engaging with local businesses and communities on funding opportunities for the future sustainability of the route and its infrastructure.	C
	Work with the National Park Destination Group, its area groups and individual businesses on activities which expedite tourism business recovery and enhance visitor experience.	C

Key:

C Complete **PA** Partially Achieved **Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Priority 5: Placemaking and Sustainable Communities

During the year, we supported several communities to develop local place plans for their area. These offer communities the opportunity to develop proposals for their local area, expressing their aspirations and ambitions for future change.

Callander, Luss and Arden, Arrochar and Tarbet and Drymen have all finalised their local place plans, which contain the community’s proposals for the development and use of land within the respective areas. In addition to this, Kilmoronock, St. Fillans, Gartmore and East Loch Lomond have initiated work for their plan, and we anticipate that these will be finalised during 2023/24.

2022/23 also saw Callander’s Landscape Partnership, a programme of work that focused on the landscapes that surround Callander, improving the natural and cultural heritage and ensuring that more people can access the area come to an end. Made up of more than 19 individual projects in and around the town of Callander, the programme saw 15 partners working together to develop and deliver the vision via an ambitious set of projects and was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Annual Operational Plan Activity linked to this Priority	Annual Operational Plan Deliverables linked to this Priority	Status
3.2 Supporting our communities to improve their places	Ensure a legacy for Callander's Landscape Partnership – Support the Partnership's delivery of the agreed remaining projects; prepare for programme close, monitoring and evaluation; and ensure legacy actions are agreed and in place.	C
	Work with up to three communities to support their development of Community Place Plans.	C

Key:

C Complete **PA** Partially Achieved **Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Priority 6: Fundraising

We provide our expertise and resources to communities to maximise the funding and in-kind contributions that can be attracted to support projects that will deliver our National Park Partnership Plan outcomes. In 2022/23, we distributed over £270k in grants through our Green Recovery Fund, Tree Planting Grant Scheme and the Nature Restoration Fund, empowering communities to make a difference where it matters. These grants funded activities such as river profiling, sitka spruce, hemlock and rhododendron removal and green tourism initiatives.

The end of March also marked the completion of the Heritage Lottery-funded project, Callander's Landscape Partnership. We undertook to ensure that legacy arrangements were in place for all assets developed because of the funding, including the ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities.

During 2022/23, we set ourselves up to increase our capacity to deliver in 2023/24. In relation to our Mission Zero work, we submitted a funding application to the Scottish Government Central Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme for £1.1mil, to enable us to undertake a significant volume of works at our headquarters during the 2023/24 financial year. This application was successful, and we have a programme for delivery established. We also secured £750k from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund to enable us to undertake a programme of works at our Tarbet site starting in 2023/24, to improve the site for visitors, as well as realise biodiversity improvements.

Annual Operational Plan Activity linked to this Priority	Annual Operational Plan Deliverables linked to this Priority	Status
2.2 Work with others to maximise the nature potential of land within the National Park, including through nature-based solutions to climate change	Progress our Regional Land Use Partnership pilot to develop a draft Regional Land Use Framework that aligns with Scottish Government objectives on climate change, biodiversity, and a 'green recovery'.	PA
	Establish the Strathard Framework delivery plan with a community led partnership approach that integrates land use and development planning around priorities for climate and nature.	C
	Deliver up to six new peatland restoration projects covering over 520 hectares.	PA
3.2 Supporting our communities to improve their places	Ensure a legacy for Callander's Landscape Partnership – Support the Partnership's delivery of the agreed remaining projects; prepare for programme close, monitoring and evaluation; and ensure legacy actions are agreed and in place.	C
	Work with up to three communities to support their development of Community Place Plans.	C

Key:

C Complete **PA** Partially Achieved **Po** Postponed to 2023/24

Priority 7: Policy-making

As we moved through the development of our new Draft National Park Partnership Plan, we have sought to reduce the number of strategic documents the National Park Authority has. For example, the Local Development Plan could also be the Regional Land Use Framework for the National Park, and the Regional Spatial Strategy could be included within the Draft National Park Partnership Plan itself. By undertaking such, it is hoped that we can reduce the number of strategic documents we maintain, but also streamline the amount of information the general public are required to read to really understand the work of the National Park Authority.

In drafting the Plan we drew on existing knowledge and evidence available to us, and commissioned new research, both when we were developing the Plan's proposals and then for engaging people in the conversations of the consultation period. Research was commissioned to fill identified knowledge gaps, particularly noteworthy ones for drafting the Plan are listed below.

- [Greenhouse gas emissions assessment and target scenario for the National Park](#) (2023)
- Our most recent [Visitor Survey \(2019/20\)](#)
- [Housing Market Research](#) (2022)
- Sustainable transport options appraisal and model shift study (2023)
- State of nature baseline (2023)
- Mapping our nature network (2023)
- Economic transition and skills gaps (2023)

Annual Operational Plan Activity linked to this Priority	Annual Operational Plan Deliverables linked to this Priority	Status
1.1. Develop a future vision for the National Park	Create a new five-year National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) that establishes the overarching vision for the National Park that we and our partners will work together to achieve.	PA
	Prepare a draft new Local Development Plan (LDP) that will guide development within the National Park to ensure it furthers environmental, social and economic objectives.	PA
2.1 Implement our Future Nature Strategy	Develop our multi-year Future Nature delivery programme with ambitious landscape-scale nature restoration projects.	C
	Collaborate with UK National Parks to trial approaches to green finance investment in nature, including by progressing the Wild Strathfillan project alongside Revere.	C

Key:

C Complete

PA Partially Achieved

Po Postponed to 2023/24

Priority 8: Communication and Engagement

Every year, our communications play a vital role in delivering key messages to several key stakeholders, including local communities and visitors to the National Park. We used our social media channels and media activity to share practical information on core topics such as fire safety, parking and camping and there was a particular focus on water safety information. This resulted in regular articles across national, local and broadcast media. The National Park Authority website was well used as a hub of information. From 1st March - 30th September the website had more than 1.5 million page views (compared with 2m page views in 2021 during the same period). Nine of the top 10 visited pages during the season were visitor focused pages, including the Get a Permit, Find a Campsite and Short-Moderate Walks pages.

As well as giving visitors the practical information they needed to enjoy the National Park safely and responsibly, we used campaign posters, videos and photography of people 'doing the right thing' to inspire positive visitor behaviour. This focus on modelling responsible behaviour was well received by our audiences, resulting in a more positive, quality engagement on social media.

A camping video recorded with comedian Des Clarke and one of our Rangers was used to encourage people to camp responsibly in the National Park and we part funded a series of social media videos produced by Ramblers Scotland for young visitors, normalising responsible behaviour when visiting rural destinations. This approach allowed us to reach out to a younger audience in a fun, engaging way. The Ramblers videos were shared on platforms not currently used by the Park Authority – Snapchat and TikTok – and more than 109,000 people watched them all the way through.

We undertook to review the Loch Lomond (Navigation) Byelaws, which were submitted to the Minister for approval following our Special Board Meeting in January 2023, and we have also started the consultation on our new Draft National Park Partnership Plan, using a range of different methods to ensure that lesser heard voices are bought to the fore.

Annual Operational Plan Activity linked to this Priority	Annual Operational Plan Deliverables linked to this Priority	Status
1.2 Support the election and appointment of new Board Members with diverse skills and backgrounds	Encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to stand for election to the National Park Authority Board, and work with Local Authorities and the Scottish Government to nominate Board Members that bring the skills and experiences we need to help us address our big strategic challenges.	C
	Implement clear transition, induction and training plans for our Board through a year of change.	C
1.3 Ensure our Board and staff consider a wide range of voices in developing strategic plans and decisions	Engage widely in the development of new strategic plans, including with lesser heard groups and points of view to ensure our Plans consider their needs and perspectives.	C
	Further the work of our Youth Committee and the involvement of Young People in determining the future of the National Park.	C
3.5 Ensure the Loch Lomond (Navigation) Byelaws are fit for the future	Begin a review of the Loch Lomond (Navigation) Byelaws, working with stakeholders to identify and address existing and emerging issues on the Loch.	C

Key:

C Complete

PA Partially Achieved

Po Postponed to 2023/24

Financial Budget Performance

The results for the year to 31 March 2023 are set out on pages 58 to 93. The Authority receives a Grant In Aid budget from the Scottish Government, known as Departmental Expenditure Limit or DEL. This is to cover the cash costs of capital and operating expenditure, net of other income sources and funding from partner agencies to jointly fund projects, and non-cash costs of depreciation and amortisation.

Budget 2022/23	Resource DEL £000	Capital DEL £000	Non-Cash DEL £000	Total DEL £000	AME £000	Total Budget £000
Budget Allocation	9,367	2,619	834	12,820	2,555	15,375

The DEL cash budget allocation for 2022/23 was £11.724m (2021/22 - £10.734m), which was split as £9.405m for operational cash costs (2021/22 - £8.859m) and £2.319m for capital cash costs (2021/22 - £1.875m). Also included in the Resource and Capital DEL totals are amounts relating to the transition to IFRS16.

Funding included:

- additional funding of £0.63m for operational costs to fund additional staff resource and other measures to support visitor management (2021/22 - £0.5m)
- direct funding of £0.473m for work relating to the delivery of peatland restoration, conservation, and management in the National Park (2021/22 - £0.245m)
- direct funding of £0.077m for landscape restoration project securing positive outcomes for biodiversity, tackling climate change, green recovery, and regional land use management (2021/22 - £0.05m).
- direct funding of £0.25m to fund Capital projects contributing to the delivery of the National Park's Future Nature programme to secure positive outcomes for biodiversity and tackling climate change (2021/22 - £nil).

The non-cash budget allocated was £3.389m (2021/22 - £1.95m); £0.834m for DEL to cover our depreciation, amortisation and expenditure relating to accruing staff benefits charge for the year (2021/22 - £0.75m); and £2.555m for Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) to cover pension adjustments and impairments during the year (2021/22- £1.2m).

The Authority is expected to manage its budget in accordance with its Financial Memorandum and the Scottish Public Finance Manual and to deliver an outturn for the year within the Scottish Government budget limits. The tables below show how the budgets available to the Authority have been utilised during the year and how the results have been reported, in accordance with the relevant reporting guidelines, to our sponsoring department of Scottish Government, The Environment and Forestry Directorate.

As detailed above, Scottish Government budget allocation is split between cash (resource and capital) and non-cash (DEL and AME). However, the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure does not distinguish between these categories.

The Net Expenditure total in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 58 of £12.944m includes:

- non-cash elements such as depreciation and amortisation on plant, property and equipment and intangible assets (non-cash DEL),
- impairment losses on revaluation of assets (AME),
- pension costs which include the actuarial calculation of the service cost of the fund and the net interest on the plans assets and obligations offset by our employer contributions (AME), and

- adjustments relating to the application of IFRS 16 to our lease agreements.

Capital grants and capital expenditure on others' land is also included in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and this expenditure is not capitalised on the Statement of Financial Position. When these adjustments are taken into account, the cash revenue position against budget is an underspend of £29k.

Capital expenditure for Scottish Government budget comprises the cost of fixed additions capitalised on the Statement of Financial Position and the capital grants and capital expenditure on others' land, net of any capital income received. Total capital expenditure is £2.233m, which represents a cash underspend of £101k against the Scottish Government capital budget.

The tables below summarise performance against Scottish Government budget and reconciles the position in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure to budget.

Expenditure	Outturn		
	Resource DEL £000	Capital DEL £000	Total £000
Net Expenditure*	12,932		12,932
Less Non-Cash adjustments:			
Movement in holiday accrual	74		74
Depreciation and amortisation*	(869)		(869)
Loss on revaluation of asset*	(244)		(244)
Pension adjustments (Note 20)	(1,396)		(1,396)
Impact of IFRS 16	79		79
Other Adjustments:			
Cost of Fixed Asset additions (Notes 8 and 9)		1,051	1,051
Capital grant funding recognised in 22/23 for Fixed Asset additions	168	(168)	-
Net capital grants and capital expenditure on others' land	(1,369)	1,369	-
Impact of IFRS 16		(34)	(34)
Total Cash Expenditure	9,376	2,218	11,594
Total Cash Budget	9,405	2,319	11,724
Total Cash Underspend	29	101	130
Impact of IFRS 16	(79)	34	(45)
IFRS 16 Budget	(38)	300	262
Total DEL Expenditure	9,297	2,252	11,549
Total DEL Budget	9,367	2,619	11,986
Total DEL Underspend	70	367	437

* Refer to Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 58

Non-Cash Expenditure	Outturn	
	Non-Cash DEL £000	AME £000
Depreciation and amortisation*	869	
Loss on revaluation of asset*		244
Pension Adjustments (Note 19)		1,396
Total Non-Cash Expenditure	869	1,640
Total Budget	834	2,555
(Over)/ underspend	(35)	915

*Refer to Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 58

As noted in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 58, income for 2022/23 was £1.70m (2021/22 - £1.32m) which included contributions from planning fees, property rental income, income from partners, other generated income and recharges. Programme income included funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other partners towards the Callander Landscape Partnership project and income in relation to the West Highland Way. Project income include funding from Scottish Government for Mission Zero; Visit Scotland Rural Tourism Infrastructure Funding for feasibility and consultancy work at East and West Loch Lomond and for the Steamship Company at Loch Katrine; Sustrans for the development and improvement car parking at Ben Ledi; Esmée Fairburn Foundation for Future Nature; and NatureScot funding towards path improvements across the Park.

The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 58 details expenditure for the year. Total expenditure for 2022/23 was £14.63m (2021/22- £14.57m), which included depreciation and amortisation of £0.87m (2021/22 - £0.77m), impairment on assets of £0.24m (2021/22 – impairment of assets of £1.61m) and net pension adjustments of £1.40m (2021/22 - £1.62m).

Capital additions totalled £1.51m during the year (2021/22 - £0.61m) and this included continued investment in our IT infrastructure and hardware; investment in our marine fleet and navigation infrastructure and water safety equipment; and investment in renewable technology at our offices and sites as part of Mission Zero and design and consultancy work as part of our Place Programme. The additions are shown in Notes 8 and 9 within Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets.

In the current year a cash underspend of £130k is reported, with revenue being £29k underspent and capital £101k underspent. The capital underspend relates to our Peatland restoration and Nature Restoration Fund activity and was anticipated and reported to the Scottish Government and Board throughout the year. On the revenue side, there was a small cash underspend.

Non-cash AME is under budget (£0.915m) as a result of pension adjustments and asset revaluations. The non-cash DEL was broadly in line with budget.

The Statement of Financial Position on page 59 details the Authority's assets, liabilities and reserves at 31 March 2023. The net pension position has changed from a liability of £2.59m at 31 March 2022 to an asset of £0.436m at 31 March 2023. This is primarily as a result of a reduction in the pension fund liabilities of £12.64m. The large increase in the discount rate based on financial market conditions at 31 March 2023 has driven the reduction in pension obligations. More details are included in Note 19 of the Annual Accounts.

We managed to achieve £167k (2021/22 - £184k) of efficiency savings in 2022/23 which equates to 1.9% of core resource DEL (2021/22 – 2.2%) through continued review of vacant positions and timing of recruitment, with roles being reviewed and not automatically replaced.

Supplier Payment Performance

The Authority observes the Better Payment Practice Code which seeks to pay suppliers within 10 days of receipt of a valid invoice in accordance with Scottish Government targets set for measurement from December 2008. During the year ended 31 March 2023, the Authority paid 64% (2021/22 – 65%) of all its invoices within the terms of this payment policy. This reflects a change from weekly to bi-weekly payment runs to make better use of resources. Against the contracted payment terms of 30 days, the Authority paid 96% of invoices against this target (2021/22 – 95%).

Partnership Working

In addition to the work set out earlier in this Performance Report, we continue to work in collaboration with Cairngorms National Park Authority in relation to a number of internal and procured services and systems and in sharing and learning from good practice in policy and initiatives development. Both Park Authorities have agreed to review these arrangements with a view to exploring where further shared service benefits could be realised and in the context of the prospect of at least one new National Park being established in the coming years.

The Environment and Economy portfolio of Scottish Public Bodies has a valuable Leadership Group to support effective partnership working and share good practice within the portfolio. The organisation is participating in the EELG landscape review to explore where both short term and longer-term efficiencies can be achieved across the EELG family.

The National Parks Partnerships LLP was set up by the UK's 15 National Parks in order to create successful partnerships between the UK National Parks and businesses. During the year, National Parks Partnerships LLP have announced a new partnership between the UK National Parks and BMW UK which will support and develop sustainable travel through EV infrastructure and biodiversity, sustainability and wellbeing projects. The **Recharge In Nature** project is a three year initiative and commits to help improve the electric car charging infrastructure and support vital nature restoration, biodiversity, sustainability and well-being initiatives across all 15 National Parks. This collaboration reinforces our own commitment to stepping up our efforts for climate and nature. BMW have committed to install or upgrade EV charging posts across all 15 of the National Parks. The partnership will see the installation of charging points in priority locations in every National Park between 2022 and 2025. Priority locations and the number of charging points is being planned with each National Park. Through the Recharge in Nature fund, BMW UK will also directly support locally-led projects in each National Park in a range of areas including biodiversity, nature restoration, sustainable travel, improving sustainability and improving visitor wellbeing.

Staff Engagement

We have embraced the opportunity to work with staff to develop a hybrid working model for our return to the office following the pandemic. We sought feedback and ideas and worked together to create a model that not only works for the organisation but for our staff too.

We also took part in the Best Companies employee engagement survey again this year and are pleased to say that we reached 1 star status again this year which represents 'very good' levels of workplace engagement reflected in our Best Companies Index score of 680.9. Given the life changing events that we have all come through since 2020, we are delighted with this score.

Anti-corruption and Anti-bribery Matters

The Authority has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, bribery and corruption and our policies set out how we work to prevent, detect and manage these risks.

Sustainable Development

In addition to the work set out above in relation to sustainable organisation (pages 15-16), we continue to engage with the actions and reporting duties linked to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Mandatory [Public Bodies Climate Change Duties](#) Annual Reporting was completed and submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2022. The report covers the following areas: Governance, Management and Strategy; Emissions, Targets and Project; Adaptation; Procurement and Wider Influence; and Other Notable Activities. For transparency, within this reporting period we saw an increase in our emissions, in large part due to a prior data error as well as a need to use a more emissions-heavy backup generator due to faulty solar panels. Both issues have been discussed at Board and Executive level and plans are in place to rectify these.

Complaints and Information Request Performance

The Authority complies with the Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) as defined by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Most complaints are resolved at the initial stage of the procedure as frontline complaints which have a target response time of five working days. Some complaints are immediately escalated to the second stage of the CHP and handled as investigations if they are more complex in nature and cannot reasonably be answered within five working days. A complaint investigation has a twenty working day response time. The SPSO has five mandatory Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be used when reporting on complaints handling:

- Indicator One: Learning from complaints
- Indicator Two: The total number of complaints received
- Indicator Three: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and twenty working days
- Indicator Four: The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage
- Indicator Five: The outcome of complaints at each stage.

Indicator 1: Learning from complaints

There has been an increase in both the number of frontline complaints and complaint investigations in 2022/23, details in the table below, however this has not resulted in a drop in our compliance rates for responding within 20 working days.

54% of complaint investigations related to planning issues (2021/22 - 75%), and 85% of all complaint investigations were not upheld (2021/22 - 75%). We recognise that, at times, there will be people who share different views to that of the National Park Authority. In two cases, the complainants exercised their right to take their complaint to the SPSO on appeal. In both cases, the SPSO decided to take no further action on the complaint.

Most visitor management complaints are received during the peak visitor season from July to September, with no visitor management complaints recorded between October and March. The targeted approach to litter management from both the National Park Authority and external stakeholder partners continues to deliver positive results with a further drop in litter complaints, 12% down from 28% in 2021/22. Complaints about jet ski activity increased during the summer season, with 53% of complaints recorded around activity on Loch Lomond relating to jet ski use. Administration cover to monitor email enquiries over the weekend during the summer has again meant that enquiries and complaints were resolved as quickly as possible.

All complaint investigations are managed by a different team to the area of business that the complaints relate, which ensures that the complaint is managed impartially, and the day-to-day business of the team continues

separately from any investigation. We have clear systems in place to act on issues identified in complaints. In every instance, we;

- Seek to identify the root cause of complaints;
- Take action to reduce the risk of recurrence; and
- Systematically review complaints performance to improve service delivery.

Indicator 2: Total number of complaints received

Indicator 3: Number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and twenty working days

	Number received 2022/23	Number responded to within time limit (% of total received)	Number received 2021/22	Number responded to within time limit (% of total received)
Frontline complaints	114	97 (85%)	94	85(90%)
Complaint investigations	13	13 (100%)	8	8 (100%)
Total complaints	127	110 (87%)	102	93(91%)

Indicator 4: Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1 in 2022/23	3
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2 in 2022/23	20
Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation in 2022/23	18*

*Two investigation deadlines were extended; the complainers were advised of the new response deadline.

Indicator 5: outcome of complaints

2022/23	Upheld	Not upheld	Partially upheld	Resolved	Response not recorded
Frontline complaints	0	10	2	99	3
Complaint investigations	0	9	2	2	0
Total	0	19	4	101	3

During the year we changed our internal process for recording complaints. As a result there were 3 frontline complaints where no response has been recorded, of which one was received and addressed via telephone however no outcome was logged. We will continue to improve this process to ensure accuracy in the information reported.

The table below shows a breakdown of the number of information requests received. We achieved 97% compliance in responding to information requests and reviews within statutory deadlines in 2022/23 (2021/22 – 98%).

	Number received 2022/23	Responded to within time limit 2022/23	Number received 2021/22	Responded to within time limit 2021/22
Data Protection Subject Access Requests (SAR)	3	3	1	1*
Environmental Information Requests / Freedom of Information Requests	54	52**	51	50
Environmental Information Reviews/ Freedom of Information Reviews	2	2	2	2
Total requests and reviews	59	57	54	53

* Following receipt of a SAR, proof of identity is requested in accordance with standard processes. As no response was received the case was closed.

**The response deadline for one information request was missed by one day due to an oversight. An apology was issued with the response. The response deadline for another request was missed by a longer period, this was due to the inclusion of the request as part of a planning representation. An apology was issued when the matter was identified, and the response was issued within 20 days of the request being identified.

Health and Safety Performance

We continue to make good progress on development of initiatives and improvements and the ongoing focus on health and safety compliance.

All priority actions have been successfully completed:

- Introduction of focused health & safety compliance audits
- Introduction of an enhanced risk assessment strategy with improved employee access and support
- Continued development of our health and safety policies and arrangements

We also increased our focus towards improved employee engagement and park visitor support activity:

- Development and introduction of employee training opportunities
- Collaboration with partner organisations in hosting a visitor safety event
- Continued focus on water safety visitor information and promotion events
- Engagement and support to internal teams for infrastructure developments and park visitor experiences
- Improved staff communications and engagement

Over the past few years, we have made concerted efforts to heighten staff awareness of health and safety, including the importance of reporting. This has resulted in an increase in reports being submitted. The numbers for 2022/23 are similar to the previous year and shows that an improvement in submission levels is being maintained which is positive.

A breakdown of the types of incidents that have been reported is outlined in the table below.

Incident Type	2021/22	2022/23
Accident	10	12
Near Miss	10	5
Incident	17	22
TOTAL	37	39
RIDDOR Reportable	1	1

We closely monitor and investigate all submitted incidents and where necessary provide suitable targeted support.

Signed on behalf of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority


Gordon Watson (Oct 26, 2023 13:14 GMT+1)

Gordon Watson
Chief Executive and Accountable Officer

26 October 2023

Accountability Report

The Auditors review the Accountability Report for consistency with other financial information in the Accounts. This includes the full Corporate Governance Report and Parliamentary Accountability Report, and parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report.

Corporate Governance Report

This report explains the composition and organisation of the Authority's governance structures and how these support the achievement of our objectives.

Directors' Report

This section contains information relating to membership of the Board and the Executive Team of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.

Executive Management Team

The executive management of the Authority was undertaken by the Executive Team comprising:

- Chief Executive – Gordon Watson
- Director of Environment and Visitor Services – Simon Jones
- Director of Engagement and Innovation – Anna MacLean
- Director of Place – Stuart Mearns
- Director of Corporate Services – Pete Wightman.

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Board and Committees

Our Board is comprised of up to seventeen Members. Five Members are elected locally, the Scottish Government appoints six Members directly and appoints a further six following nominations by the four Councils in the Park area (Argyll & Bute, West Dunbartonshire, Stirling, and Perth & Kinross). The Members normally serve between four and five years. The Members' periods of office and attendance at Board and Committee meetings is noted on page 31. The membership of all committees and groups is kept under review and amendments made as required. Dr Heather Reid was elected as Convener of the Board in December 2022 and formally took on the role from 1st February 2023. Full details of the Members are listed on our [website](#).

Board Membership underwent significant change in 2022/23. The local elections for Board Members took place on 7 July 2022, with successfully elected candidates taking up their roles as Board Members from 8 July 2022 on a four-year term. The Local Authority elections took place on 5 May 2022, with the Local Authority-nominated Members taking up their roles on the Board from 1 October 2022. Five ministerially appointed Members were reappointed on 4-year terms from October 2022, and the final ministerially appointed position was vacated on 31 January 2023, with recruitment ongoing. From June 2022 we have operated a paid Board shadowing programme, targeted at increasing the diversity of our Board.

Configuration of Board at 31 March 2023					Statutory committee attendance 2022/23			Non-Statutory committee attendance 2022/23	
Name	Nature of appointment	Date of most recent appointment	End of term	Committee membership	NPA Board (7 meetings)	Planning & Access Committee (4 meetings)	Audit & Risk Committee (4 meetings)	Chairs and Exec (4 meetings)	Futures Group (2 meetings)
Bob Darracott (2)	(a)	05/07/2018	06/07/2022	CE, PI, LRB, F	100% (1/1)	100%	*	100%	100%
Martin Earl (1)	(a), (c)	01/10/2022	30/09/2027	CE, PI, LRB, F	100% (5/5)	75%	*	100%	100%
David McCowan (2)	(a)	05/07/2018	06/07/2022	A, PI, LRB	100% (1/1)	100%	100%	*	*
Willie Nisbet (2)	(a)	05/07/2018	06/07/2022	CE, PI, LRB	100% (1/1)	100%	*	100%	*
Billy Ronald (2)	(a)	05/07/2018	06/07/2022	F	100% (1/1)	*	*	*	50%
Claire Chapman (1)	(b)	01/11/2022	31/10/2026	CE, PI, LRB	86% (6/7)	75%	*	100%	*
Sarah Drummond (1)	(b)	01/11/2022	31/10/2026	CE, F	86% (6/7)	*	*	100%	100%
Ronnie Erskine (1)	(b)	01/11/2022	31/10/2026	A, CE, PI, LRB	71% 5/7	75%	100%	100%	*
Heather Reid (1)	(b)	01/11/2022	31/10/2026	CE	86% (6/7)	*	100%	100%	50%
Christopher Spray (1)	(b)	01/11/2022	31/10/2026	A, CE, PI, LRB	86% (6/7)	100%	75%	100%	*
James Stuart (2)	(b)	01/02/2015	31/01/2023	CE	100% (6/6)	*	*	100%	*
Diane Docherty (2)	(c)	01/10/2017	30/09/2022	PI, LRB	33% (1/3)	100%	*	*	*
Danny Gibson (2)	(c)	01/10/2017	30/09/2022	A	67% (2/3)	*	50%	*	*
Alistair Berrill (2)	(c)	01/08/2021	30/09/2022	PI, LRB	67% (2/3)	50%	*	*	*
Bobby Good (2)	(c)	01/03/2020	30/09/2022	PI, LRB	0% (0/3)	0%	*	*	*
Murray Lyle (2)	(c)	01/10/2017	30/09/2022	PI, LRB	33% (1/3)	0%	*	*	*
Iain Shonny Paterson (1)	(c), (a)	08/07/2022	09/07/2026	PI, LRB	86% (6/7)	50%	*	*	*

Hazel Sorrell (1)	(c)	01/10/2022	30/09/2027	PI, LRB	25% (1/4)	100%	*	*	*
William Sinclair (1)	(c)	01/10/2022	30/09/2027	A, PI, LRB	100% (4/4)	100%	100%	*	*
Maurice Corry (1)	(c)	26/10/2022	30/09/2027	A	100% (4/4)	*	100%	*	*
Rhona Brock(1)	(c)	01/10/2022	30/09/2027	F	75% (3/4)	*	*	*	n/a
David Mackie(1)	(a)	08/07/2022	09/07/2026	A, PI, LRB	83% (5/6)	50%	50%	*	*
David Fettes (1)	(a)	08/07/2022	09/07/2026	A, PI, LRB	83% (5/6)	50%	50%	*	*
Richard Johnson (1)	(a)	08/07/2022	09/07/2026	PI, LRB, F	83% (5/6)	100%	*	*	*
Gerry McGarvey (1)	(c)	01/10/2022	30/09/2027	PI, LRB, F	75% (3/4)	50%	*	*	*
Sid Perrie (1)	(a)	08/07/2022	09/07/2026	F	100% (6/6)	*	*	*	n/a
Zain Seghal (1)	(d)	01/06/2022	30/06/2023	*	71% (5/7)	*	*	*	*

*Attendance is not applicable as Board member is not a member of the specified Committee.

Nature of appointment: (a) Locally elected / (b) Appointed by Scottish Government / (c) Local Authority nominee / (d) Board Shadowing Project

Committee/Group membership: (A) Audit & Risk Committee/ (PI) Planning & Access Committee/ (CE) Chairs & Executive Group/ (F) Futures Group/ (LRB) Local Review Body

Board and Committee attendance is stated as: Percentage of meetings attended during each Member's membership of the body. Absence for reasons of Conflict of Interest is recorded as attendance.

Status: (1) Current Board Member at 31 March 2023; (2) Board Member during 2022/23 reporting period, not a Board Member at 31 March 2023

Notification of Interests

The Authority has detailed policies in place for Board Members and staff governing situations where personal or business interests may arise in the activities and decisions of the organisation. It is the individual responsibility of Board Members and staff to ensure their register of interests are accurate and to advise the Authority of any changes to their register of interests within one month of these occurring in accordance with the Board Members' [Code of Conduct](#) and the Staff Register of Interest Policy respectively.

In such situations, Board Members and staff are required to disclose the nature of the interest and, if appropriate, exclude themselves from any part of the discussion or decisions relating to that matter. Registers of Interest are held for the Executive Team and Board Members. Board Members' interests are a matter of public record and are published on the Authority's website. An annual review of interests takes place for all Board Members, the Executive Team and staff requesting that any changes to notifiable interests be updated and recorded. All staff are required to make a submission, regardless of whether they have interests to declare. These are collected electronically, stored securely, and distributed to the appropriate staff members to manage conflicts of interest.

Regular updates are made to Members' Registers of Interests, with declarations made throughout the year. The most recent updates were provided by Board Members before the 31st March 2023.

Responsibility for declarations lies with individual Members. All Board Registers of Interests are published on our website: [National Park Website - Board Register of Interest](#) (click on Member's name to view their Register of Interests).

Following the *Standards Commission for Scotland* publishing an updated Model Code of Conduct for Members of Boards of Devolved Public Bodies in December 2021, we updated the National Park Authority's Code of Conduct. The revised Code was approved by the Board, the Standards Commission and the Scottish Government, coming into effect from 22nd June 2022. Our Code of Conduct sets out the manner in which our Board Members are expected to conduct themselves in their role, and can be viewed on our website: [National Park Website - Code of Conduct for Board Members](#).

Information & Data Security

The Authority has had no instances of loss of data or personal information over the course of the year which required disclosure to the Information Commissioner (2021/2022 – nil).

There were four minor cases of emails being sent to incorrect recipients, The Data Protection Officer issued advice to staff in all cases. In three cases emails were sent externally, the recipient was asked to delete the email and the risk of harm was assessed to be low. In one case, information containing personal data was inadvertently shared with several staff as part of an email chain. All staff who received the message were directed to delete the email and confirm to the DPO this had been done.

In order to test, assess and improve on data security, penetration testing is done annually under the Cyber Security Essentials Plus programme. The Authority renewed its Cyber Security Essentials Plus certification in February 2023. The Data Security section of Governance Statement on page 40 sets out more information on the Authority's range of internal controls and the review mechanisms to ensure data security.

Whistleblowing Policy

No whistleblowing complaints were received during 2022/23 (2021/22 – nil).

Statement of Accountable Officer's Responsibilities

Under Section 25(1) of The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, the Scottish Ministers have directed Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority ("the Authority") to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction.

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the Authority and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year. The Authority's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, sets out the roles and responsibilities of Scottish Ministers, the sponsoring team in the department, the Board, the Convener and the Chief Executive as Accountable Officer.

The accounts of the Authority are audited by an auditor appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland in accordance with paragraph 25(2) of The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The auditor appointed for 2022/23 is Mazars LLP.

The Independent Auditor's Report is on pages 53-57 and details of the auditors' remuneration are given in Note 8 of the Annual Accounts.

The Board

Board Members have corporate responsibility for ensuring that the Authority complies with any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds and the aims and objectives set by Scottish Ministers.

The Convener

The Convener of the Authority is responsible to the Scottish Ministers for ensuring that the Authority's policies are compatible with those of the Scottish Ministers and that there is probity in the conduct of the Authority's affairs.

The Accountable Officer / Chief Executive

In preparing the Accounts, the Accountable Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and in particular to:

- Observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Scottish Ministers, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the Accounts;
- Prepare the Accounts on a going concern basis; and
- Confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

In accordance with section 15 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000,

the Permanent Secretary as the Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Administration, has designated the Chief Executive as Accountable Officer for Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority. The responsibilities of an Accountable Officer, including responsibility for propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accountable Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Authority's assets are set out in the Memorandum of Accountable Officer responsibilities issued by the Principal Accountable Officer on the appointment of the Accountable Officer. This includes requirement to comply with the guidance set out in the Scottish Public Finance Manual and Managing Public Money published by the HM Treasury.

The Accountable Officer also has a general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to safeguard the assets of the Authority and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors by the Accountable Officer

As the Accountable Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Authority's auditors are aware of the information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

Accountable Officer's statement on the Annual Report and Accounts

I confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and that I take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

Governance Statement

As Accountable Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in the Management Statement for Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority. In discharging this responsibility I am held accountable by the Authority's Board, and by Scottish Ministers.

In particular, the Authority's Board has Committees in place to develop policy and strategy, discuss emerging issues in relation to the management of governance and priority issues, maintain the sustainability and security of the organisation and advise the Board on risk, control, audit and governance. Each Committee has remits to ensure elements of the Authority's corporate governance, financial management, and internal control systems, including risk management systems, are in place and function effectively.

The [Scottish Public Finance Manual \(SPFM\)](#) is issued by the Scottish Ministers to provide guidance to the Scottish Government and other relevant bodies on the proper handling of public funds. It sets out the relevant statutory, parliamentary and administrative requirements, emphasises the need for economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and promotes good practice and high standards of propriety.

Board and Committee Structure

The National Park Authority Board is made up of seventeen Board members. The Board agree the overall direction of the Authority and oversee the work of the Chief Executive and National Park staff. The Board meet in public at least three times a year and the members are tasked with ensuring effective and proper governance of the organisation.

We have two statutory committees that are required to meet and are held in public:

- The Planning & Access Committee which meets approximately 6 times a year, as required, to consider certain planning applications, enforcement actions, policy papers, legal agreements and access matters. The Local Review Body is made up of members of the Planning & Access Committee and meets as required to hear appeals and reviews.
- The Audit & Risk Committee which meets up to four times a year to support the Accountable Officer in their responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance.

2022/23 saw a return to the majority of meetings being held in person, with the flexibility of virtual and hybrid meetings when appropriate. All but one of our statutory meetings were webcast live for public viewing; on the one occasion where this did not occur, it was because the meeting was held in a local community. In person attendance was encouraged and advance notice was provided on our website.

In addition, there are two other Committees as at 31 March 2023:

- The Chairs and Executive Group is a standing non-statutory group of the Board and is advisory only. Meetings are timed to ensure effective reporting to and advice on decision-making to the full Board and as a non-statutory group, meetings are not held in public. The meeting provides a responsive grouping of Board members and Executive team staff in order to be able to discuss emerging issues in relation to the management of governance and priority issues or developments; to maintain the sustainability and security of the organisation; and to advise the Board on strategic risk or opportunities.
- The Futures Group is a non-statutory group of the Board and is not held in public. The Futures Group provides an opportunity for Board members to contribute to early thinking on strategic topics, utilising external speakers and interactive workshops to engage Members.

The Operation of the Board and Committees

The governance structure allows a balance of Board time between the oversight of the organisation's performance, discussion and development of policy and strategy and in engaging with issues and stakeholders in the National Park. The structure ensures that the Board is well informed on organisation performance, whilst delegating more detailed responsibilities appropriately to statutory and non-statutory Committees.

The Board and Committees met on the following basis during 2022/23:

- The Board held seven formal meetings – four of which were scheduled and three of which were Special Meetings. Special Meetings were held at the beginning and end of the process of reviewing the Loch Lomond Byelaws and a Special Meeting was held to hear the major planning application for a Fish Farm at Loch Long – this meeting was held open to the public in the community at Arrochar. All other meetings were webcast live for public viewing. These meetings were supplemented by a strategic development day.
- The Audit & Risk Committee met four times to review corporate risk and governance, fraud risk, the Annual Accounts, Annual Report and accounting policies and the work of Internal and External Auditors. All meetings were open to the public and webcast live for public viewing.
- The Chairs and Executive Group met four times to discuss emerging issues in relation to governance, financial performance and strategies for the organisation.
- The Planning and Access Committee met four times to consider certain planning applications, enforcement actions, policy papers, legal agreements and access matters. All meetings were open to the public and webcast live for public viewing.
- The Local Review Body met five times to hear planning reviews. All meetings were webcast live for public viewing.
- The Futures Group met twice during the year.

The outcomes from the Board and its Committees during the year included consideration of;

- Our Place Investment Strategy
- The Loch Lomond (Navigation) Byelaw Review
- Our Revised Code of Conduct
- Role Profiles for Board Positions
- An update to our Future Nature route map
- Committee Membership and Board Leadership elections
- A Major Planning Application for a Fish Farm at Loch Long
- The Future of National Parks in Scotland Consultation Response
- The National Park Partnership Plan 2024-2029 Draft
- The Annual Budget and Annual Operating Plan for 2023/24
- The 2021/22 Annual Report and Accounts
- Our Board Schedules for 2024 and 2025

Internal Audit

Recommendations from independent Internal Auditors form a key and essential element in informing my review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control within the Authority. The Board's Audit & Risk Committee also plays a vital role in this regard, through its review of audit recommendations arising from reviews of internal control systems and its consideration of proposed management action.

In particular, the Audit & Risk Committee is tasked with overseeing the development of internal audit plans, reviewing the scope, efficiency and effectiveness of the work of Internal Audit, confirming the adequacy of internal control systems, promoting best practice and bringing any material matters to the attention of the full Board. Detailed findings of all audit reviews are made available to both management and the Audit & Risk Committee. The Internal Audit function independently follow up on the implementation of recommendations

and report their findings to the Audit & Risk Committee. The Audit & Risk Committee reports to the Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal controls.

The Internal Audit function is an integral element of the Authority's internal control systems. Audit Glasgow, part of the Glasgow City Council internal audit team, were awarded the contract for Internal Audit Services following the procurement process for three years from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023, with provision for a two-year extension. In December 2022, the Audit & Risk Committee agreed to a one-year extension to the contract, which will end on 31 March 2024, unless extended again.

The Internal Auditors presented the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2022/23 and the Audit Universe, which details the key areas that are being covered during their appointment. Over the course of the year to 31 March 2023, Internal Audit have reported to the Audit & Risk Committee on their independent reviews on Reputational Management, Establishment Visits, Cyber Resilience and Payroll. Audits were completed on Carbon Management and Procurement during the year, with the findings being reported to the Audit & Risk Committee in June 2023. One audit, pertaining to Procurement, found the control environment to be unsatisfactory. Management took prompt steps to address this risk, with high priority recommendations planned for implementation within three months.

As part of the internal audit process, each member of the Executive team prepares an annual statement of assurance that is presented to myself as CEO and Accountable Officer, and shared with the Audit & Risk Committee. These annual statements indicate that reasonable assurance can be placed on the adequacy, effectiveness, robustness, and proportionality of each of the Services arrangements for control, governance and risk management in the year.

External Audit

Mazars are in the first year of their contract as the Authority's External Auditor. This follows a tender exercise conducted by Audit Scotland in 2021/22 on behalf of the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission for Scotland, in which Mazars were appointed auditor for the Authority from 2022/23 until 2026/27.

Fraud, Bribery and Corruption

The remit of the Audit & Risk Committee also includes receiving reports and advising the Board of any fraud, bribery or corruption, successful or attempted. One impersonation fraud attempt occurred, which as per our policy was not considered significant enough to report to the Audit & Risk Committee, but a summary was given to Internal Audit and a verbal update was provided to the Chair.

Best Value

The Authority is subject to a duty of Best Value as set out in the SPFM and the Best Value in Public Services, Guidance for Accountable Officers (Best Value Guidance), issued by the Scottish Government in March 2011. The Authority demonstrates compliance with Best Value Guidance by preparing a summary annual report for review by the Audit & Risk Committee. The Audit & Risk Committee received the Annual Report on Best Value for 2022/23 in June 2023 confirming our compliance with the Best Value Guidance to

Accountable Officers. The main monitoring tool we use to demonstrate continuous improvement is our Annual Operational Plan update which is also reported to the Board.

Board Continuity and Development

2022/23 saw a large amount of change in Board membership and Committee make up, with Local Government elections, the Authority's local elections and the expiry of ministerial appointees' terms. In order to manage and plan for this period, a number of operational activity plans were developed and implemented:

- Board Appointments Plan 2022
- Board Equality and Diversity Plan
- Board Training and Development Plan (including Induction Plan)
- Board Skills Analysis and Succession Planning

A Board Shadowing Pilot Project with an emphasis on increasing diversity and engagement was launched in June 2022, and a Work Placement Programme - which was developed with McLaren High School - saw a member of our Youth Committee work closely with the Board throughout the year.

Risk Management

All bodies to which the SPFM is directly applicable must operate a risk management strategy in accordance with the relevant guidance issued by Scottish Ministers. The general principles for a successful risk management strategy are set out in the SPFM.

The Board recognises the importance of corporate risk management in the activities of the organisation. The Board has provided leadership on the importance of risk management at the highest level within the organisation through adoption of risk-based monitoring reports for delivery of the Annual Operational Plan objectives, National Park Plan delivery, and for wider assessment of organisational performance.

The Audit & Risk Committee and Executive Team lead on embedding risk management processes throughout the organisation. Both these groups consider the management of strategic risk and seek to ensure that the required actions to manage risk at a strategic level are appropriately reflected and incorporated in operational delivery plans.

As noted in the Key Risks on page 12, the Executive prepare a Corporate Risk Register, which is reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee quarterly to provide scrutiny and oversight of the risks throughout the year. This includes scheduled risk deep dives; in 2022/23, Audit & Risk Committee asked for focus on the Loch Lomond Byelaw Review and undertook an awareness session in relation to Water Safety.

As noted in the Performance Analysis on pages 13 to 20, the Authority has also adopted a risk based approach to the management and monitoring of its Annual Operational Plan, and key aspects of organisational performance and delivery. Any increased risk to achievement of targets is assessed, reported to the Executive Team, and, where required, remedial action determined and implemented.

Data Security

Measures are in place to ensure that information is managed in accordance with relevant legislation. The Authority's policy is to maintain the highest level possible of data security in its operations. Over the course of 2022/23 we have continued to implement improvements to increase our data and systems security such as;

New administrative controls such as;

- New IT Acceptable Use and Security policies.
- Separation of standard user and administrative accounts within the Information Services team, ensuring privileged accounts are not being used for daily tasks.
- Vulnerability Management and tracking
- Cyber Incident log
- Secure configuration of Microsoft 365 tenancy, introducing new technical controls such as;
- Secure configuration of Microsoft 365 tenancy
- Multifactor authentication
- Conditional access policies
- Role Based Access Control (RBAC)
- Geofencing (access from outside the UK is blocked)

The Park Authority continues to work with auditors and independent accreditation bodies in order to ensure the continued improvement of our data security.

The Authority's Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation was successfully renewed again in January 2023. This certifies that the Park Authority is assessed as meeting the Cyber Essentials Plus implementation profile and therefore, at the time of testing, our ICT defences were assessed as satisfactory against commodity based cyber-attack.

The Park Authority conducted an independent review of the security posture of our Microsoft 365 Tenancy.

The Park Authority completed a full Cyber Resilience Internal Audit.

The Authority continues to provide on-going regular Cyber Security Training to all users.

The Authority has had no instances of loss of data or personal information over the course of the year which required disclosure to the Information Commissioner (2021/2022 – nil).

There were four minor cases of emails being sent to incorrect recipients; the Data Protection Officer issued advice to staff in all cases. In three cases emails were sent externally, the recipient was asked to delete the email and the risk of harm was assessed to be low. In one case, information containing personal data was inadvertently shared with several staff as part of an email chain. All staff who received the message were directed to delete the email and confirm to the Data Protection Officer this had been done.

Conclusion

As Accountable Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review is informed by:

- The Executive and Managers within the organisation who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, which includes, but is not limited to the risk management framework, feedback from whom is obtained through regular meetings of the Executive team, Project Board meetings and discussed, as appropriate, at Operational Managers meetings.
- The work of the Internal Auditors, who submit regular reports to the organisation's Audit & Risk Committee which include independent and objective opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's systems of internal control together with recommendations for improvement.
- Comments made by the External Auditors in their management letter and other reports.

I have also been advised on the effectiveness of the system of internal control by both the Board and the Audit & Risk Committee. Appropriate action is taken to address recommendations made and ensure continuous improvement of our systems. I can confirm that these systems of controls were in place for the year under review, and will remain in place up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

The Internal Auditors review for 2022/23 concluded that the Authority has a system of internal control designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. Internal controls cannot eliminate the risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The Internal Auditors, as part of their reviews, have identified improvements to the internal control environment, which have been accepted by management. Internal Audit will monitor the implementation of these improvements through future follow up audits.

The Internal Auditor's annual report for 2022/23 states that based on the audit work undertaken and the assurances provided by the Executive Team, but excluding the issues noted above, it is our opinion that reasonable assurance can be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance and control environment which operated during 2022/23 within Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority.

Remuneration and Staff Report

This report sets out the Authority's remuneration policy for directors, reports on how the policy has been implemented and sets out the amounts awarded to directors. The remuneration and staff report contain both audited information and information which is not subject to audit. The areas which are not subject to audit are highlighted with a '#' next to the heading. The areas not subject to audit are the Remuneration Policy, Board Members' Expenses and Trade Union facility time disclosures, within Employment Policies/ Consultation.

Remuneration Report

Remuneration Policy

The Chief Executive's remuneration and Board Members' fees are directed by the Scottish Government's Public Sector Pay Policy for Senior Appointments. This body also sets, each year, the award for the Chief Executive and Board Members. The Chief Executive's contract is on a permanent basis with a three-month period of notice. The annual pay remit for staff is also subject to Scottish Government approval and negotiation with our recognised Trade Union. In 2022/23, the Convenor, as authorised by the Board, implemented the 0.9% pay award available to Board Members in line with Scottish Government Pay Policy (2021/22: 1%). Board members receive a set monthly payment based on a daily fee and agreed monthly time commitment.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The Authority operates a Local Government Pension Scheme provided by Strathclyde Pension Fund, which is administered by Glasgow City Council and is a defined benefit scheme. Details of the contributions to and movements in the fund in the year are stated in Note 19 of the Annual Accounts. Details of the actuarial assumptions used in pension valuations are included in Notes 1.21 and 19 of the Annual Accounts.

Disclosure of Remuneration – Chief Executive and Executive Team

Year ended 31 March 2023	Salary band at 31/3/23 £000	Salary band paid during 2022/23 £000	Allowances band £000	Accrued Pension Benefits (1) £000	Total Remuneration Band £000
Chief Executive Gordon Watson	95-100	95-100	0	0 ⁽³⁾	95-100
Directors					
Simon Jones	65-70	65-70	0-5	11	80-85
Anna MacLean	60-65	60-65	0	9	70-75
Stuart Mearns	65-70	65-70	0	2	70-75
Pete Wightman	65-70	60-65 ⁽²⁾	0	13	70-75

Year ended 31 March 2022	Salary band at 31/3/22 £000	Salary band paid during 2021/22 £000	Allowances band £000	Accrued Pension Benefits (1) £000	Total Remuneration Band £000
Chief Executive Gordon Watson	90-95	90-95	0	0 (3)	90-95
Directors					
Simon Jones	60-65	60-65	0-5	15	80-85
Anna MacLean	55-60	55-60	0	12	65-70
Stuart Mearns	60-65	60-65	0	15	75-80
Pete Wightman	60-65	55-60 (2)	0	17	75-80

(1) The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as: (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual).

(2) Pro-rata reflects flexible working arrangement.

(3) Although the pension and lump sum has increased, along with the cash equivalent transfer value, the accrued pension benefit for the year has not increased after inflation has been excluded.

There were no other emoluments paid to the Chief Executive and the Executive Team in the year ended 31 March 2023 (2021/22 – nil).

Year ended 31 March 2023	Real increase/ (decrease) in pension value £000	Real increase / (decrease) in related lump sum £000	Total accrued pension at 31 March 2023 £000	Total related lump sum at 31 March 2023 £000	Cash equivalent transfer value at 31 March 2023 £000	Real increase/ (decrease) in cash equivalent transfer value (1) £000
Chief Executive Gordon Watson	(0-2.5)	(5-7.5)	55-60	80-85	899	(19)
Directors						
Simon Jones	0-2.5	0-2.5	10-15	0-5	137	9
Anna MacLean	0-2.5	0-2.5	10-15	0-5	119	5
Stuart Mearns	0-2.5	0-2.5	15-20	0-5	183	2
Pete Wightman	0-2.5	0-2.5	0-5	0-5	38	4

Year ended 31 March 2022	Real increase in pension value £000	Real increase in related lump sum £000	Total accrued pension at 31 March 2022 £000	Total related lump sum at 31 March 2022 £000	Cash equivalent transfer value at 31 March 2022 £000	Real increase in cash equivalent transfer value (1) £000
Chief Executive Gordon Watson	(0-2.5)	(2.5-5)	50-55	80-85	834	(8)
Directors						
Simon Jones	0-2.5	0-2.5	5-10	0-5	113	9
Anna MacLean	0-2.5	0-2.5	5-10	0-5	100	7
Stuart Mearns	0-2.5	0-2.5	10-15	0-5	161	10
Pete Wightman	0-2.5	0-2.5	0-5	0-5	26	6

(1) Excluding inflation and Executive contributions.

Gordon Watson, Simon Jones, Anna MacLean, Stuart Mearns and Pete Wightman are ordinary members of the Strathclyde Pension Fund.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

The CETV is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries. The real increase in the value of the CETV reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Compensation on Early Retirement / Loss of Office

There were no exit packages in the year ended 31 March 2023 (2021/22 – nil). Exit costs are accounted for in full in the year of departure. Where the Authority has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the Authority and not by the Strathclyde Pension Fund.

Payments to Past Directors

There were no payments to past directors in the year ended 31 March 2023 (2021/22 – nil).

Fair Pay

The mid point of the highest paid Director's salary banding has increased by 1.4% between 2021/22 and 2022/23, reflecting the Scottish Government's public sector pay award. For the employees of the organisation as a whole, at 31 March 2023, the average percentage salary change from the previous year is an increase of 4.6%. This increase was due to the annual pay award. Excluding seasonal and agency staff, the average salary has decreased by 9.6%, which is as a result of the change in staff mix between years with more staff employed at lower grades or banding levels as at 31 March 2023, as well as our move to create permanent seasonal ranger positions, which enables us to retain skilled rangers between seasons and reduces the recruitment burden at the start of the year.

The median total remuneration (the difference between the mid-point of pay taking into account all roles within an organisation) of all staff was £31,011 at 31 March 2023 (2021/22 - £30,035). The pay multiple between the mid-point of the highest paid director's banding and the median total remuneration of all staff was 2.9 (2021/22 – 3.1). The decrease in the multiple is as a result of the increase in the median salary, which reflects the staff mix at 31 March 2023. At 31 March 2023, there were 12 seasonal staff employed by the Authority (2021/22- 40).

The tables below analyse the ratios between the highest paid director's remuneration and the remuneration of those employees on the 25th, 50th and 75th percentile of pay for the Authority's employees during the financial year.

Pay Ratio (including seasonal staff)	31 March 23	31 March 22
25 th Percentile	3.7 : 1 £25,880	3.9 : 1 £23,862
50 th Percentile	3.1 : 1 £31,011	3.1 : 1 £30,035
75 th Percentile	2.4 : 1 £40,473	2.4 : 1 £38,601

The decrease in the pay ratios at the 25th percentile is due to a higher number of lower staff employed at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. Seasonal ranger headcount decreased from 40 at the end of 2021/22 to 12 at the end of 2022/23. This number fluctuates over the year to meet the demands of the season. At its highest within the 2022/23 financial year, we employed 54 seasonal staff, compared to 56 in 2021/22.

When seasonal numbers are excluded from the calculations, pay ratios have remained broadly the same across financial years. When the impact of seasonal staff fluctuations are excluded, the Authority believes that the median pay ratio reflects the pay and progression policy for employees as a whole.

Pay Ratio (excluding seasonal staff)	31 March 23	31 March 22
25 th Percentile	3.5 : 1 £27,759	3.5 : 1 £26,374
50 th Percentile	2.9 : 1 £33,276	2.8 : 1 £33,280
75 th Percentile	2.4 : 1 £40,473	2.4 : 1 £38,601

The remuneration for roles within the National Park Authority is provided in bandings (excluding pensions). Below are the maximum bandings for the lowest and highest paid staff members.

Band	Grade Minimum (£)	Grade Maximum (£)
A	19,311	25,115
CEO	85,333	96,152

Analysis of Board Members' Fees and Expenses

Board member	Nature of Appointment	2022/23 Fees £000	2022/23 Expenses (1) £	2021/22 Fees £000	2021/22 Expenses (1) £
Bob Daracott	(a)	0-5	-	15-20	-
Martin Earl	(a)/(c)	5-10	96	10-15	146
David McCowan	(a)	0-5	-	5-10	-
Willie Nisbet	(a)	0-5	-	15-20	-
Billy Ronald	(a)	0-5	-	5-10	-
Claire Chapman	(b)	10-15	843	5-10	403
Sarah Drummond	(b)	5-10	1,098	5-10	421
Ronnie Erskine	(b)	10-15	1,068	10-15	262
Heather Reid	(b)	10-15	150	5-10	-
Christopher Spray	(b)	5-10	705	5-10	255
James Stuart	(b)	15-20	4,257	20-25	2,306
Diane Docherty	(c)	0-5	-	5-10	-
Danny Gibson	(c)	0-5	-	5-10	-
Murray Lyle	(c)	0-5	-	5-10	-
Bobby Good	(c)	0-5	-	5-10	-
Iain Shonny Paterson	(c)/(a)	5-10	-	5-10	-
Alistair Berrill	(c)	0-5	-	5-10	231
Zain Sehgal	(d)	0-5	765	-	-
William Sinclair	(c)	0-5	605	-	-
Maurice Corry	(c)	0-5	-	-	-
Garry McGarvey	(c)	0-5	-	-	-
Hazel Sorrell	(c)	0-5	-	-	-
Rhona Brock	(c)	0-5	-	-	-
David Mackie	(a)	5-10	-	-	-
David Fettes	(a)	5-10	254	-	-
Richard Johnson	(a)	5-10	189	-	-
Sid Perrie	(a)	5-10	-	-	-
			10,031		4,024

Nature of appointment: (a) Locally elected / (b) Appointed by Scottish Government / (c) Local Authority nominee / (d) Board Shadowing Pilot.

(1) Some Board Members choose not to claim reimbursement of expenses from the Authority and in some cases are eligible to claim reimbursement of expenses from other sources.

Staff Report

Employment Policies/ Consultation

The Authority has a Joint Negotiating and Partnership Forum (JNPF) in place, through which it ensures effective two-way communications with UNISON Trade Union representatives in resolving any issues arising and also on consulting on new initiatives. There was one Trade Union representative during the year, and they are paid for facility time. Total facility time for 2022/23 was 47.5 hours, which as a percentage of working hours was between 1 and 50% (2021/22: 35 hours).

During 2022/23 key matters on which UNISON representatives were consulted were:

- Hybrid Working,
- Equality and Diversity,
- Pay negotiations,

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to supporting and promoting diversity on our Board, Executive Team and within our workforce. The Authority is an equal opportunities employer. We are also committed to meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Mainstreaming report sets out how we are mainstreaming equality and the progress we have made to deliver against the outcomes we have set ourselves. Our [latest mainstreaming report](#) was published in April 2023.

We continue to roll out 'Promoting equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion' training across the organisation and have a developed programme of Diversity and Inclusion awareness days throughout the year to tie in with significant events such as International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Last year a Board Diversity Plan was developed for Board Appointments and elections to seek ways to have a more diverse Board. Aside from gender, we have worked to increase the accessibility of our governance structures and have seen an increase in the number of Board Members with declared disabilities and caring responsibilities. A Board Training Programme for 2023-24 will be developed and will include a commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for all Board Members.

Our policies ensure that all staff are treated equally irrespective of their sex, marital/civil partnership status, age, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, work pattern, employment status, gender identity (transgender), caring responsibility or trade union membership. Employment and promotion are on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

We are committed to mainstream equality and diversity in every aspect. We have a ParkForAll working group where representatives from throughout the organisation, chaired by a Director, provide leadership and cultural change support to the organisation to deliver against our equalities duties ensuring equality is embedded into all work areas. Together our policies, strategies and approaches will support us in changing behaviours and culture to create a fully inclusive organisation and becoming representative of the society we serve, at all levels.

The Authority is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and avoiding unlawful discrimination within the organisation. We are committed to avoiding unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for learning and development, pay, benefits discipline and selection for redundancy. This

includes, but is not limited to, disabled candidates and employees. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy and ensure that we take reasonable steps to avoid features in our premises or policy or practice which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who are not disabled. We welcome applications for employment from all backgrounds. Person specifications are limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates are assessed objectively against the requirements of the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability.

Staff Composition

The Authority's gender split of staffing at the end of the financial year was:

Headcount	31 March 2023			31 March 2022		
	Female#	Male#	Total	Female#	Male#	Total
Executive Team	1	5	6	1	4	5
Managers	14	6	20	18	7	25
Other Employees	78	75	153	84	77	161
Total	93	86	179	103	88	191

Other Staff Details

Staff Numbers	2023	2022
Average Number of Board Members during the Year	16	17
Average Number of Full Time Equivalent Employees during the Year	178.25	149.6
Analysis of Average Number of Full Time Equivalent Employees		
Permanent	127.05	118.6
Fixed Term	15.73	16.4
Seasonal	35.48	14.6
Total	178.26	149.6

Numbers of staff with salaries above £70,000 (including Chief Executive)	2023	2022
£90,001 - £95,000	1	1
£70,001 - £90,000	-	-

Board Member and Staff Costs (Note 6)	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
Board Members' Fees		158,295	163,135
Social Security Costs		4,147	4,196
Total Board Members		162,442	167,331
Permanent Staff Salaries		4,547,706	4,118,249
Social Security Costs		478,513	415,423
Pension Costs		850,354	760,423
Total Permanent Staff		5,876,572	5,294,095
Other Staff Salaries		1,082,499	1,002,752
Social Security Costs		93,870	79,707
Pension Costs		174,830	169,693
Total Other Staff		1,351,199	1,252,152
Apprenticeship Levy		13,951	10,746
(Decrease)/ increase in holiday accrual		(73,959)	(195)
Deduct: Included in Programme and Project figures		(85,246)	(173,198)
Deduct: Included in Fixed Assets additions (capitalised salaries)		-	-
Total Permanent and Other Staff costs before adjustments for pensions reporting		7,082,517	6,383,600
<u>Adjustments for Pensions Reporting</u>			
Add: Current Service Costs	21	2,314,000	2,403,000
Less: Employer's Contribution	21	(1,007,000)	(923,000)
Total Permanent and Other Staff costs after adjustments for pensions reporting		8,389,517	7,863,600
Total Board Member and Staff Costs		8,551,959	8,030,931

Staff Turnover

Staff turnover, excluding seasonal staff, was 15.2% (2021/22- 8.6%). This is an increase on last year, although still below the national average of 16.8%. It is believed that the pandemic had a major effect on the labour market with many people opting to change career or retire early and we will continue to monitor national trends in relation to this.

Wellbeing

During the year, the Authority recorded an average loss of 5.2 days per employee for sickness absence. Although this is an increase on last year it is not unexpected with the return to office working and relaxation of pandemic restrictions there has been an increase in COVID and COVID-like illness this year as we return to a normal way of life and our immune systems get used to everyday germs again.

The health and wellbeing of our staff continues to be a priority. We are currently engaging wellbeing services to support our staff returning from the pandemic, the stress of the cost-of-living crisis along with juggling work and home life balance.

We continue to support our staff by providing:

- Clear, consistent and regular communication to staff,
- Flexible HR policies
- Additional HR support to managers and staff
- Opportunity to engage the services of our Employee Assistance Programme 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for free and confidential advice and support.

Expenditure on Consultancy and Off Payroll Arrangements

The Authority had no consultancy remuneration or off payroll arrangements in the year ended 31 March 2022 (2021/22 – nil).

Parliamentary Accountability Report

Regularity of Expenditure

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority is held to account by the Scottish Ministers, in accordance with the requirements of The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The Authority is expected to manage its budget in accordance with its Financial Memorandum and the Scottish Public Finance Manual and to deliver an outturn for the year within the Scottish Government budget limits.

The financial budget performance and details on income and expenditure are included on pages 21 to 24. A net cash underspend of £130k was reported for the year to 31 March 2023, with revenue being £29k underspent and capital £101k underspent. Non-cash expenditure was £0.8m under budget.

Income for 2022/23 includes planning fees, property rental income, income and grant funding from partners, recharges and generated income, which includes boat registration, launch fees, camping income and car parking charges.

Expenditure for 2022/23 includes Board Member and staff costs, operating costs, project expenditure and programme expenditure in relation to the Callander Landscape Partnership and the West Highland Way. Non-cash expenditure includes depreciation and amortisation, impairment on property revaluation, movement in the holiday accrual and pension adjustments.

Gifts and Charitable Donations

Gifts totalling £706 were made in the year (2021/22 - £297). There were no charitable cash donations made in the year (2021/22- nil).

Losses, Special Payments and Write-offs

There was a bad debt provision for £14,442 in the year (2021/22 – £66,419) and no bad debt write offs (2021/22 - nil). There were no special payments or stock write-offs in the year (2021/22 – two special payments totalling £37,191 and no stock write-offs). There no losses arising from asset write-offs (2021/22- £4,507).

Remote Contingent Liabilities

There were no remote contingent liabilities as at 31 March 2023.

Signed on behalf of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority


Gordon Watson (Oct 26, 2023 13:14 GMT+1)

Gordon Watson
Chief Executive and Accountable Officer
26 October 2023

Independent Auditor's Report

Independent auditor's report to the members of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority the Auditor General for Scotland and the Scottish Parliament

Reporting on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on the financial statements

We have audited the financial statements in the annual report and accounts of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority for the year ended 31 March 2023 under the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The financial statements comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayer's Equity and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards, as interpreted and adapted by the 2022/23 Government Financial Reporting Manual (the 2022/23 FReM).

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the body's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards, as interpreted and adapted by the 2022/23 FReM; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)), as required by the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We were appointed by the Auditor General on 18 May 2022. Our period of appointment is five years, covering 2022/23 to 2026/27. We are independent of the body in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. Non-audit services prohibited by the Ethical Standard were not provided to the body. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern basis of accounting

We have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the body's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

These conclusions are not intended to, nor do they, provide assurance on the body's current or future financial sustainability. However, we report on the body's arrangements for financial sustainability in a separate Annual Audit Report available from the [Audit Scotland Website](#).

Risks of material misstatement

We report in our separate Annual Audit Report the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement that we identified and our judgements thereon.

Responsibilities of the Accountable Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accountable Officer's Responsibilities, the Accountable Officer is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting framework, and for such internal control as the Accountable Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Accountable Officer is responsible for assessing the body's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless there is an intention to discontinue the body's operations.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities outlined above to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Procedures include:

- using our understanding of the central government sector to identify that the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers are significant in the context of the body;
- inquiring of the Accountable Officer as to other laws or regulations that may be expected to have a fundamental effect on the operations of the body;
- inquiring of the Accountable Officer concerning the body's policies and procedures regarding compliance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework;
- discussions among our audit team on the susceptibility of the financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur; and
- considering whether the audit team collectively has the appropriate competence and capabilities to identify or recognise non-compliance with laws and regulations.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the body's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

Irregularities that result from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error as fraud may involve collusion, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. The capability of the audit to detect fraud and other irregularities depends on factors such as the skilfulness of the perpetrator, the frequency and extent of manipulation, the degree of collusion involved, the relative size of individual amounts manipulated, and the seniority of those individuals involved.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Reporting on regularity of expenditure and income

Opinion on regularity

In our opinion in all material respects the expenditure and income in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

Responsibilities for regularity

The Accountable Officer is responsible for ensuring the regularity of expenditure and income. In addition to our responsibilities in respect of irregularities explained in the audit of the financial statements section of our report, we are responsible for expressing an opinion on the regularity of expenditure and income in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

Reporting on other requirements

Opinion prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland on audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report

We have audited the parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report described as audited. In our opinion, the audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report have been properly prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

Other information

The Accountable Officer is responsible for the other information in the annual report and accounts. The other information comprises the Performance Report and the Accountability Report excluding the audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report.

Our responsibility is to read all the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon except on the Performance Report and

Governance Statement to the extent explicitly stated in the following opinions prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland.

Opinions prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland on Performance Report and Governance Statement

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Performance Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers; and
- the information given in the Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We are required by the Auditor General for Scotland to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

Conclusions on wider scope responsibilities

In addition to our responsibilities for the annual report and accounts, our conclusions on the wider scope responsibilities specified in the Code of Audit Practice are set out in our Annual Audit Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and for no other purpose. In accordance with paragraph 108 of the Code of Audit Practice, we do not undertake to have responsibilities to members or officers, in their individual capacities, or to third parties.

Tom Reid

Tom Reid (Audit Director)
For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

Mazars LLP – 100 Queen Street – Glasgow – G1 3DN

26 October 2023

Annual Accounts

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Expenditure			
Programme Expenditure	3	(301,737)	(336,564)
Project Expenditure		(2,367,793)	(1,402,661)
Board Members and Staff Costs	6	(8,551,959)	(8,030,931)
Other Operating Costs	7	(2,294,204)	(2,404,952)
Depreciation and Amortisation	8/9	(869,028)	(770,869)
Provision for Impairment of Assets		(244,069)	(1,614,634)
Loss on Disposal of Property, Plant & Equipment		-	(4,507)
Total Expenditure		(14,628,790)	(14,565,118)
Income			
Planning Fees		468,950	162,547
Programme Income	3	301,737	336,564
Project Income		322,563	399,530
Other Income	5	576,137	416,203
Profit on Disposal of Property, Plant & Equipment		25,898	1,670
Net Gain on Reversal of Property Impairment on Revaluation of Assets		-	-
Total Income		1,695,285	1,316,514
Net Expenditure		(12,933,505)	(13,248,604)
Interest Receivable		6,321	741
Interest Payable		(5,580)	-
Net Expenditure for Year		(12,932,764)	(13,247,863)
Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure			
Net Gain/(Loss) on Revaluation of Property		659,380	156,322
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) on Pension Scheme		6,890,000	5,314,000
Total Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure		7,549,380	5,470,322
Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure		(5,383,384)	(7,777,541)

No activities were discontinued during the year.

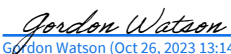
The notes on pages 62 to 93 form part of these Accounts.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Non-current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	8	10,490,916	9,411,989
Intangible assets	9	4,564	3,548
Investments	10	-	-
Trade and other receivables	11	83,994	21,591
Pension fund asset		2,908,000	-
Total Non-current Assets		13,487,474	9,437,128
Current Assets			
Inventories		6,529	5,162
Trade and other receivables	11	616,361	567,281
Cash and cash equivalents	12	2,142,408	1,964,846
Total Current Assets		2,765,298	2,537,289
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	13	1,750,338	1,710,986
Total Current Liabilities		1,750,338	1,710,986
Non-current Assets less Net Current Liabilities		14,502,434	10,263,431
Non-current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	13	480,844	167,105
Pension fund liability	19	-	2,586,000
Total Non-current Liabilities		480,844	2,753,105
Assets less Liabilities		14,021,590	7,510,326
Taxpayers' Equity			
General Reserve		5,523,893	5,072,621
Revaluation Reserve		5,469,697	5,015,705
Donated Asset Reserve		120,000	8,000
Pension Reserve	19	2,908,000	(2,586,000)
Total Taxpayers' Equity		14,021,590	7,510,326

The Accountable Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 26 October 2023.


Gordon Watson (Oct 26, 2023 13:14 GMT+1)

Gordon Watson

Chief Executive and Accountable Officer

The notes on pages 62 to 93 form part of these Accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Net Expenditure before Interest		(12,933,505)	(13,248,604)
Adjustments for items not involving the Movement of Cash			
Pension adjustments in Other Income	5	89,000	144,000
Net pension adjustments in Staff Costs	6	1,307,000	1,480,000
Depreciation and Amortisation	8/9	869,028	770,869
(Gain) on revaluation of assets			-
Provision for impairment of assets		244,069	1,614,634
Net Loss/ (Gain) on sale of property, plant & equipment		(25,898)	2,837
Net gain on sub-lease		(17,150)	
Movements in Working Capital			
(Increase)/ decrease in trade and other receivables		(44,079)	(65,362)
Increase in trade and other payables		2,360	127,600
(Increase)/ decrease in inventories		(1,367)	(88)
Movement in Non-current Assets and Liabilities			
(Increase)/ decrease in trade and other receivables > 1 year		(580)	(2,148)
(Decrease) in trade and other payables > 1 year		17,956	(29,560)
Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities		(10,493,166)	(9,205,822)
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Bank interest received		5,275	741
Lease payments received from finance leases		5,000	
Purchase of property, plant & equipment and intangible assets		(1,017,030)	(605,176)
Proceeds from sale of property, plant & equipment		25,898	-
Net Cash Outflow before Financing		(11,474,023)	(9,810,257)
Cash flows from Financing Activities			
Payment of lease liabilities		(72,415)	
Cash allocation applied to Operating Costs	2	9,405,000	8,859,000
Cash allocation applied to Capital Expenditure	2	2,319,000	1,875,000
Net Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents		177,562	923,743
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	12	1,964,846	1,041,103
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Period	12	2,142,408	1,964,846

The notes on pages 62 to 93 form part of these Accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	General Fund	Revaluation Reserve	Donated Asset Reserve	Pension Reserve	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2021	5,824,334	4,997,533	8,000	(6,276,000)	4,553,867
Cash allocation*	10,734,000	-	-	-	10,734,000
Net expenditure after interest	(13,247,863)	-	-	-	(13,247,863)
Gain on indexation of property	-	382,047	-	-	382,047
Loss on revaluation of property	-	(282,470)	-	-	(282,470)
Release of revaluation reserve to general reserve to offset increased depreciation on revalued assets	138,150	(138,150)	-	-	-
Write back of depreciation on revaluation	-	56,745	-	-	56,745
Pension fund actuarial gain	-	-	-	5,314,000	5,314,000
IAS 19 pension adjustment	1,624,000	-	-	(1,624,000)	-
Balance at 31 March 2022	5,072,621	5,015,705	8,000	(2,586,000)	7,510,326
Balance at 1 April 2022, as previously reported	5,072,621	5,015,705	8,000	(2,586,000)	7,510,326
Impact of change in accounting policy	60,648	-	110,000	-	170,648
Adjusted balances at 1 April 2022	5,133,269	5,015,705	118,000	(2,586,000)	7,680,974
Cash Allocation*	11,724,000	-	-	-	11,724,000
Net Expenditure after interest	(12,932,764)	-	-	-	(12,932,764)
Gain on indexation of property	-	-	-	-	-
Loss on revaluation of property	-	284,958	2,000	-	286,958
Release of revaluation reserve to general reserve to offset increased depreciation on revalued assets	203,388	(203,388)	-	-	-
Write back of depreciation on revaluation	-	372,422	-	-	372,422
Pension fund actuarial gain	-	-	-	6,890,000	6,890,000
IAS 19 pension adjustment	1,396,000	-	-	(1,396,000)	-
Balance at 31 March 2023	5,523,893	5,469,697	120,000	2,908,000	14,021,590

* The Authority receives a budget from the Scottish Government (known as Departmental Expenditure Limit or DEL) to cover the cash costs of capital and operating expenditure, net of other income sources and funding from partner agencies to jointly fund projects.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting Policies

In accordance with the direction issued by Scottish Ministers under Section 25 of The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and Accounts Direction issued by Scottish Ministers, these accounts have been prepared in compliance with the principles and disclosure requirements of the HM Treasury Financial Reporting Manual (FRM), which follows generally accepted accounting practice (GAAP) as defined in International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) applicable in the UK and the Companies Act 2006, to the extent that it is meaningful and appropriate in the public sector context. The particular accounting policies adopted by Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts.

The accounts are prepared using accounting policies, and, where necessary, estimation techniques, which are selected as the most appropriate for the purpose of giving a true and fair view in accordance with the principles, set out in International Accounting Standard (IAS) 8 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors. Changes in accounting policies, which do not give rise to a prior year adjustment are reported in the relevant note.

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Board and Accountable Officer believe that future liabilities will be met from a combination of cash budget allocation from the Scottish Government, future grants from partner agencies, and income from chargeable activities. The Board and Accountable Officer's assessment of the going concern basis has been based on confirmation of Grant in Aid and prudent financial forecasts.

1.1. Accounting Convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets, and, where material, investments to fair value as determined by the relevant accounting standard.

1.2. Accounting Period

The accounting period commenced on 1 April 2022 and ended on 31 March 2023.

1.3. Non-Current Assets: Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment

Expenditure is capitalised on the acquisition or creation of property, plant and equipment

- (i) only where it is probable that the future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Authority
- (ii) and the cost of the asset can be measured reliably.

On initial recognition, property, plant and equipment are valued at cost, including any costs directly attributable to bringing them into working condition. The capitalisation threshold is £500 for individual or pooled assets.

Operational land and buildings are valued at current value in existing use, which is interpreted as market value in existing use defined in the RICS Red Book as Existing Use Value (EUV). For specialised assets, current value in existing use is interpreted as the present value of the asset's remaining service potential, which can be assumed to be at least equal to the cost of replacing that service potential. Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) is considered the most appropriate measure of current value in existing use for operational specialised assets.

Where an asset is not being used to deliver services and there is no plan to bring it back into use, with no restrictions on sale, and is not held for sale or investment, the asset is considered as surplus and is valued at fair value using IFRS 13 Fair Value Measurement.

A quinquennial valuation is carried out on land and buildings by a professional valuer. The value of non-specialised assets is assessed as market value based on the quinquennial valuation supplemented by an interim professional valuation in year 3. The value of specialised assets is assessed as depreciated replacement cost (DRC) based on the quinquennial valuation supplemented by an interim professional valuation in year 3 and annual indexation in years 1, 2 and 4 using published indices.

A full revaluation is undertaken where there is a risk around material movement in the property valuation. More details on valuation are provided in Note 1.21.

Depreciated historical cost, less any impairment, is used as a proxy for current value in existing use based on the low carrying value of: Vehicles and Marine Vessels; Equipment, Plant and Machinery; Furniture and Fittings; IT Hardware and Infrastructure.

Subsequent Expenditure

Expenditure on improvements, repairs and renewals of non-current assets is charged as an expense, unless it is considered to have replaced part of an asset. If it has replaced part of an asset, it will be capitalised and the cost and cumulative depreciation or amortisation of the asset it has replaced will be removed.

Assets under construction

Assets in the course of completion are valued at cost. On completion they are transferred to the appropriate asset category and reviewed for impairment, which for any property assets will include valuation in accordance with the policy above. No depreciation or amortisation is charged until the asset is in operational use and any impairment or gain has been recognised.

Intangible assets

Expenditure on intangible assets, which includes copyright, IT systems and software, and our website, has a threshold for capitalisation of £500.

Following the initial recognition of an intangible asset, where an active (homogeneous) market exists, intangible assets other than those that are held for sale should be carried at current value in existing use at the reporting period date. Where an active market exists current value is based on the market value in existing use. Where no active market exists, intangible assets are revalued, to the lower of depreciated replacement cost and value in use where the asset is income generating. Where there is no value in use, the asset should be valued using depreciated replacement cost.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation or amortisation is provided on a straight-line basis on all non-current assets (other than freehold land) at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each asset over its estimated useful life, as detailed in the table below. Depreciation and amortisation is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on the carrying value of the non-current assets with a full year being charged in both the year of acquisition and disposal. Any element of depreciation or amortisation arising from any increase in valuation and in excess of the depreciation or amortisation that would be charged on the historic cost value of the asset is taken to the Revaluation Reserve.

Type of Asset	Asset lives (years)
Freehold Land	Not depreciated
Freehold Buildings	50 or expected life determined by valuer if shorter
Leasehold Buildings	50 or period of lease if shorter
IT Hardware	3 – 5
IT Infrastructure	5
Vehicles	5
Vessels	5 – 25
Machinery, Equipment, Furniture & Fittings	3 – 5
Copyright	5
Website, IT systems and software	3

Impairment

We assess at each reporting date, and when any assets in the course of completion transfer into use, whether there is an indication that any assets may be impaired. This assessment is made through discussions with property and other colleagues to identify any events which have occurred that would indicate that impairment may have taken place, and also from the quinquennial, interim and initial valuations undertaken in accordance with the valuation policies above.

Where the carrying amount of an asset exceeds its recoverable amount, the asset is considered to be impaired and written down to its recoverable amount. Impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, except for assets previously revalued, where the revaluation increase was taken to the asset revaluation reserve. In this case the impairment is recognised in the revaluation reserve up to the amount of any previous revaluation.

Leased Assets

From 1 April 2022 we have applied IFRS 16 using the modified retrospective approach where we are the lessee and therefore comparative information has not been restated and continues to be reported under IAS 17.

Policy applicable from 1 April 2022

IFRS 16 provides a single lessee accounting model, with a right of use asset and a lease liability being recognised on the commencement of a lease. The distinction between operating and finance leases remains for lessors. More details are provided in note 1.7.

Policy applicable before 1 April 2022

We classify leases where substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to us as finance leases. On initial recognition, the leased asset is measured at an amount equal to the lower of its fair value or the present value of the minimum lease payments. The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay. Subsequent to initial recognition, the asset is accounted for in line with the valuation policy above.

There are two leased assets being held under a finance lease, with the minimum rent on these assets being £1 and £5 per year. Given the non-material nature of the finance lease creditor, this has not been recognised. Other leases are operating leases and are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

1.4. Investments

Investments are recognised in line with IFRS 9 Financial Instruments (Note 1.16) and are recognised when the Authority becomes party to the contractual provisions of the investment.

Investments are de-recognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire, or when the financial asset and substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership are transferred.

The investment in National Parks Partnerships LLP is measured at fair value through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. The capital contributions are non-refundable and the fair value is assessed as nil.

1.5. Inventories

Inventories are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

1.6. Value Added Tax (VAT)

Irrecoverable VAT is included with the relevant cost and charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure in the period in which it is incurred. In the limited circumstances where VAT is recoverable, VAT is excluded.

The net amount of VAT recoverable from, or payable to, HMRC is included as part of receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

1.7. Leases

As noted above, we have applied IFRS 16 from 1 April 2022 using the modified retrospective approach where we are the lessee and therefore the comparative information has not been restated and continues to be reported under IAS 17. The details of accounting policies under IAS 17 are disclosed separately if they are different from those under IFRS 16 and the impact of the changes is disclosed in Note 1.22.

Policy applicable from 1 April 2022

At inception of a contract, we assess whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To assess whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, we assess whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset – this may be specified explicitly or implicitly, and should be physically distinct or represent substantially all of the capacity of a physically distinct asset. If the supplier has a substantive substitution right, then the asset is not identified;
- We have the right to obtain all of the economic, or equivalent, benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and
- We have the right to direct the use of the asset. We have this right when we have the decision-making rights that are most relevant to changing how and for what purpose the asset is used. In the rare cases where the decision about how and for what purpose the asset is used is predetermined we have the right to direct the use of the asset if either:
 - We have the right to operate the asset; or
 - We designed the asset in a way that predetermines how and for what purposes it will be used.

As a lessee:

We recognise a right-to-use asset and lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-to-use asset is initially measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for any lease payments made at or before the commencement date, plus any initial direct costs incurred and an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or site on which it is located, less any lease incentives received. For peppercorn leases, which are defined as leases for which the consideration paid is nil or nominal (that is, significantly below market value), we recognize a right-to-use asset and initially value it at current value in existing use or fair value in line with our accounting policy for property, plant and equipment described in 1.3.

The right-to-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful economic life of the right-to-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-to-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property and equipment. In addition, the right-to-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain remeasurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the discount rates advised by HM Treasury. We use the discount rates advised by HM Treasury.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments, including in-substance fixed payments;
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or the rate as at the commencement date;
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- The exercise price under a purchase option that we are reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if we are reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless we are reasonably certain not to terminate early.

The lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. It is remeasured when there is a change in future lease payments arising from a change in an index or rate, if there is a change in our estimate of the amount expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee, or if the Group changes its assessment of whether it will exercise a purchase, extension or termination option.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in the Statement of Consolidated Net Expenditure if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

We present right-of-use assets that do not meet the definition of investment property in 'property, plant and equipment' and lease liabilities in 'trade and other payables' in the statement of financial position.

Short-term leases and leases of low-value assets

We have elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases and leases of low-value assets. We recognise the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Policy applicable before 1 April 2022

In the comparative period we applied IAS 17 as follows:

Operating Leases

Operating lease rentals are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure over the term of the lease.

Finance Leases

(i) Lease payments

The annual finance expense that would be allocated to the two assets held under a finance lease is £1. The minimum lease payments have not been apportioned between the finance expense and the reduction of the outstanding liability.

(ii) Determining whether an arrangement contains a lease

At inception of an arrangement, the Authority determines whether such an arrangement is or contains a finance lease in accordance with IAS 17.

As a lessor:

When we act as a lessor, we determine at lease inception whether each lease is a finance lease or an operating lease.

To classify each lease, we make an overall assessment of whether the lease transfers substantially all of the risk and rewards incidental to ownership of the underlying asset. If this is the case, then the lease is a finance lease; if not, then it is an operating lease. As part of this assessment, we consider certain indicators such as whether the lease is for the major part of the economic life of the asset.

When we are an intermediate lessor, we account for our interests in the head lease and the sub-lease separately. We assess the lease classification of a sub-lease with reference to the right-of-use asset arising from the head lease, not with reference to the underlying asset. If a head lease is a short-term lease to which we apply the exemption described above, then it classifies the sub-lease as an operating lease.

We recognise lease payments received under operating leases as income on a straight-line basis over the lease term as part of 'other income'.

The accounting policies applicable as a lessor in the comparative period were not different from IFRS 16. However, when we were an intermediate lessor the sub-leases were classified with reference to the underlying asset.

1.8. Scottish Government Departmental Expenditure Limit

The Authority receives Grant in Aid from the Scottish Government, known as Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL), to finance net expenditure.

The DEL cash allocation is credited to the General Reserve in the Statement of Changes on Taxpayers' Equity. The net expenditure on activities funded by the DEL cash allocation is charged to this fund.

1.9. Income

Income from activities is accounted for in the year to which it relates and not to when cash payments are received.

Where income has been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a receivable for the corresponding amount is recorded in the Statement of Financial Position. Where cash has been received in advance of the activity, no income is recognised and a payable for the corresponding amount is recorded in the Statement of Financial Position.

Operating income is income that relates directly to the operating activities of the Authority. It includes fees and charges for services provided to external customers.

All income from contracts with customers is recognised in accordance with IFRS15, which depicts the transfer of goods and services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the Authority expects to be entitled to in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised in accordance with that core principle by applying the following steps:

- Identification of contract with a customer
- Identification of the performance obligations in the contract
- Determine the transaction price
- Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations in the contract
- Recognise revenue when the performance obligation is satisfied and control of the goods or service has been passed over.

Grant income is recognised in line with IAS 20 when it is receivable. If entitlement of grant income is subject to performance conditions, the income is recognised as the performance conditions are met.

Where the purchase or construction of capital assets are financed in whole or in part by grants, the funding element is recognised as income and taken through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. Deferral of grant income occurs when:

- conditions have been imposed by the funder that require return if not complied with,
- these conditions have not been satisfied at the year end, and
- there is reasonable assurance that the Authority is willing and able to comply with the conditions in future.

Once the conditions are satisfied, the income will be recognised immediately.

1.10. Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for and charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure in the year to which it relates, and not to when cash payments are made or received. Staff costs are accounted for in the year that salaries are earned, together with the employer costs.

Where expenditure has been recognised but cash has not been paid, a payable for the corresponding amount is recorded in the Statement of Financial Position. Where cash has been paid in advance of the activity or expenditure, no expense is recognised and a receivable for the corresponding amount is recorded in the Statement of Financial Position.

1.11. Pension Costs

The Authority participates in a Local Government Pension Scheme, Strathclyde Pension Fund, which is administered by Glasgow City Council and is a defined benefit scheme. Employer's contributions to the pension fund and the pension liability are accounted for under the requirements of International Accounting Standard 19, Employee Benefits.

The expected cost of providing staff pensions to employees contributing to the pension fund is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on a systematic basis over the expected average remaining lives of members of the funds in accordance with IAS 19 Employee Benefits and recognises retirement benefits as the benefits are earned and not when they are due to be paid. The actuary conducts a formal triennial valuation of the fund and calculates the required rate of employer's contributions (Notes 1.21 and 19). The contribution charges are recognised in the financial years in which they arise.

1.12. Short-term Employee Benefits

A liability and expense are recognised for accrued but unused annual leave and flexi leave balances at the 31 March, in accordance with the underlying policy.

1.13. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Financial Position comprise cash at commercial banks and in hand.

Cash received from the Scottish Government DEL cash budget (Grant in Aid), income from other sources and contributions is held as short term, liquid cash at commercial banks. The Authority has no powers to borrow money or to invest surplus funds. The cash held funds the Authority's obligations as these fall due.

1.14. Trade Receivables

In line with the recognition of income, trade and other receivables are recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance where the income relates to the financial year ended 31 March 2023.

1.15. Trade Payables

In line with the recognition of expenditure on an accruals basis, trade and other payables are recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance where the expenditure relates to the financial year ended 31 March 2023.

1.16. Financial Instruments

The Authority does not hold any complex financial instruments. The only financial instruments are financial assets in the form of an investment in other entities, trade and other receivables, and financial liabilities in the form of trade and other payables.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Authority becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

Financial assets are de-recognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire, or when the financial asset and substantially all of the risks and rewards are transferred. A financial liability is de-recognised when it is extinguished, discharged, cancelled or expires.

Trade and other receivables, which do not have a financing component are measured at the transaction price.

All income and expenses relating to financial assets that are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure are presented within finance income (interest received), except for impairment of trade receivables which is presented in other operating costs. Trade receivables are assessed for impairment individually to determine likelihood of payment, with write offs taken to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. Trade debtors under review are written off to the bad debt provision.

1.17. Provisions, Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities

Provisions are recognised when the Authority has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event; it is probable that an outflow of economic resources will be required from the Authority; and amounts can be estimated reliably. The timing or amount of the outflow may still be uncertain.

No liability is recognised if an outflow of economic resources as a result of present obligations is not probable. Such situations are disclosed as contingent liabilities unless the outflow of resources is remote.

Contingent assets are disclosed where a possible asset arises from past events and whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Authority.

1.18. Assets Held on Behalf of Third Parties

Where the Authority holds an asset on behalf of a third party and the Authority does not have beneficial rights to the asset and cannot use the asset for its own purposes, the asset is not recognised on the Statement of Financial Position. However, disclosure of the nature and extent of these assets and the underlying activity is included in the Accounts.

Where the Authority holds an asset on behalf of a third party that is controlled by the Authority and there is a present obligation as a result of past events, both the asset and liability are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

1.19. Segmental Reporting

IFRS 8 Segmental Reporting requires operating segments to be identified on the basis of internal reports about components of the Authority that are regularly used by the chief operating decision makers in order to allocate resources and assess their performance. The Authority reports on three segments of Visitor Experience, Conservation and Rural Development (Note 4).

1.20. Interest in Other Entities

IFRS12 requires disclosures about an entity's interests in subsidiaries, joint arrangements, associates and unconsolidated structured entities. The Authority is a Designated Member of National Parks Partnerships LLP and holds an equal share in the Partnership, along with the other 14 UK National Parks (Note 11). This investment does not meet the criteria of a subsidiary, joint venture or associate and has been recognised as an investment, in line with the investment policy (Note 1.4).

1.21. Critical Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires the Board and the Accountable Officer to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of the accounting policies outlined above and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

Critical accounting judgements relate to the selection and application of accounting policy, whereas estimates relate to material estimation and associated assumptions, based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant.

There are limited areas where judgement and estimates have to be made, however these relate to material valuations and disclosure.

Judgements

a) Valuation of Land and Buildings

As detailed in Note 1.3, assets are subject to formal revaluation with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying value is not materially different than if a full revaluation were to be undertaken. All land and buildings are valued using professional valuations in accordance with IAS 16 every five years supplemented by an interim valuation in year three. Valuations are also carried out on initial recognition of new land and buildings and where there is a risk around material movement in property valuations. Ryden LLP provide the Authority's property valuations and are a Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Regulated firm.

Ryden LLP must ensure that all processes and valuations are fully compliant with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards 2020 (The Red Book), with the latest edition having taken effect from 31 January 2022. Assets are valued on the basis of either market value in

existing use or Depreciated Replacement Cost, except for when assets are considered as surplus or held for sale (Note 1.3).

A full property portfolio re-valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2023.

During year ending 31 March 2022 the valuation basis of two properties changed.

- One property, previously valued on a Depreciated Replacement Cost basis was considered a surplus property at 31 March 2022. The building is leased by the Authority and is vacant at 31 March 2023. There is no clear plan to bring asset back into future use as an operational asset. The asset is therefore assessed as being surplus and valued under IFRS 13 Fair Value Measurement. Given the head lease in place, the fair value of the property has been assessed as nil and the asset has been fully impaired.
- The second property was previously valued on a Depreciated Replacement Cost basis as a specialised asset. At 31 March 2023, the asset is considered as surplus and options for disposal of the property are being investigated. The asset is therefore assessed as being surplus and valued under IFRS 13 Fair Value Measurement. A formal valuation has been carried out by Ryden LLP at 31 March 2023.

The Board and Accountable Officer do not consider there to be any other critical accounting judgements requiring disclosure at 31 March 2023.

Estimates

The following are the critical estimates that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in the accounts.

a) Valuation of Land and Buildings

The valuation report provided at 31 March 2023 highlights that although it is being provided in a market that is experiencing some uncertainty, the valuer's does not consider the assets which are being appraised to be subject to material valuation uncertainty at the valuation date.

A variance of 10% in the indexation of land and buildings carried out as at 31 March 2023 would total £25k.

b) Pension Valuations

The pension valuations are provided by the pension scheme's actuaries, Hymans Robertson. The pension liability has been calculated by the actuary in line with IAS 19 requirements and includes a number of assumptions. Details of assumptions including discount rate, life expectancies and increases in inflation and salary rates rate are included in Note 19.

The actuary conducts a formal triennial valuation of the fund, the most recent valuation being conducted as at 31 March 2020. The formal valuation calculates the employer's assets and liabilities on a detailed basis using individual member data and calculates the required rate of employer's contributions to the fund for the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2024. The balance sheet position as at 31 March 2023 and the projected cost for 2023/24 are based on the roll forward from the valuation at 31 March 2020. In preparing the valuation, no allowance is made for the effect of changes in membership since the last formal valuation date.

The roll forward allows for changes in financial assumptions, additional benefit accrual and estimated cash flows over the period. The assets are valued at bid value as required by IAS 19 and the projected unit credit method of valuation is used. Investment returns on the Fund

is based on actual Fund returns for the year to 31 March 2023. The pension liabilities are valued on an actuarial basis, using the actuary's standard assumptions, appropriate for the Authority's liability profile.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below:

Change in assumptions as at 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to Employer Liability	Approximate monetary amount £000
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	2%	598
1 year increase in member life expectancy	4%	1,011
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0%	64
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	2%	542

1.22. Changes in Accounting Standards

a) Standards, amendments, and interpretations effective in 2022/23

The Authority has applied IFRS 16 with a date of initial application of 1 April 2022. As a result, the Authority has changed its accounting policy for lease contracts as detailed below.

The Authority applied IFRS 16 using the modified retrospective approach, under which the cumulative effect of initial application is recognised in retained earnings or in donated asset reserve for peppercorn leases at 1 April 2022. The details of the changes in accounting policies are disclosed below.

As a lessee:

As a lessee, the Authority previously classified leases as operating or finance leases based on its assessment of whether the lease transferred significantly all of the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the underlying asset to the Authority. Under IFRS 16, the Authority recognises right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for most leases - i.e. these leases are on-balance sheet.

Leases classified as operating leases under IAS 17

At transition, lease liabilities were measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments, discounted at the HM Treasury nominal discount rate as at 1 April 2022. Right-of-use assets are measured at either:

- Their carrying amount if IFRS 16 has been applied since the commencement date, discounted using the lessee's incremental borrowing rate at the date of initial application
- the Authority applied this approach to all in-scope leases.

The Authority used the following practical expedients when applying IFRS 16 to leases previously classified as operating under IAS 17.

- Applied a single discount rate
- Applied the exemption not to recognise right-of-use assets or liabilities for leases with less than 12 months of lease term

Leases previously classified as finance leases

For leases that were classified as finance leases under IAS 17, the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset and the lease liability at 1 April 2022 are determined at the carrying amount of the lease asset and lease liability under IAS 17 immediately before that date.

As a lessor:

The Authority is not required to make any adjustments on transition to IFRS 16 for leases in which it acts as a lessor, except for a sub-lease. The Authority accounted for its leases in accordance with IFRS16 from the date of initial application.

Under IFRS 16, the Authority is required to assess the classification of a sub-lease with reference to the right-of-use asset, not the underlying asset. On transition, the Authority reassessed the classification of sub-leases previously classified as operating leases under IAS 17. The Authority concluded that one sub-lease is a finance lease under IFRS 16.

Impacts on financial statements

On transition to IFRS 16, the Authority recognised an additional £483,100 of right-of-use assets and £366,078 of lease liabilities, recognising the difference in retained earnings and in the donated asset reserve for peppercorn leases.

When measuring lease liabilities, the Authority discounted lease payments using the HM Treasury nominal discount rate.

- b) Standards, amendments, and interpretation early adopted in 2022/23
There are no new standards, amendments or interpretations early adopted this year.
- c) Standards, amendments and interpretation effective in 2023/24.
There are no new standards, amendments or interpretations effective in 2023/24.

2. Scottish Government Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash DEL allocated to meet operational expenditure	9,405,000	8,875,000
Cash DEL allocated to meet capital expenditure	2,319,000	1,875,000
	<u>11,724,000</u>	<u>10,750,000</u>
Deduct amounts earmarked at source for specific operational projects	-	(16,000)
Total cash DEL received (resource and capital DEL)	<u>11,724,000</u>	<u>10,734,000</u>

The cash DEL (Grant in Aid) in 2022/23 included

- direct funding for peatland restoration, conservation and management in the National Park totalling £473,000 (2021/22- £245,000) and
- £77,000 to fund a landscape scale restoration project securing positive outcomes for biodiversity, tackling climate change, green recovery and regional land use management (2021/22- £50,000) and
- £250,000 (2021/22 - £nil) to fund Capital projects contributing to the delivery of the National Park's Future Nature programme to secure positive outcomes for biodiversity and tackling climate change.

In addition, cash DEL to meet operational expenditure included £630,000 to fund additional staff resource and other measures to support visitor management (2021/22 - £500,000).

3. Programme Income & Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Net
	£	£	£
West Highland Way	71,236	71,236	-
Callander Landscape Partnership	230,501	230,501	-
Total 2023	<u>301,737</u>	<u>301,737</u>	<u>-</u>
West Highland Way	63,706	63,706	-
Callander Landscape Partnership	272,858	272,858	-
Total 2022	<u>336,564</u>	<u>336,564</u>	<u>-</u>

The Authority is a member of the West Highland Way Management Group and manages the programme income and expenditure for this specific purpose.

The Authority is a member of the Callander Landscape Partnership, alongside 14 other partners from across the community, public bodies, voluntary sector organisations, local businesses, and landowners. The Partnership was successful in securing National Heritage Lottery Funding to turn the town of Callander into the outdoor capital of the National Park, with a more accessible and conserved landscape ready for visitors and locals to enjoy and explore. The Authority is the lead partner and manages the programme income and expenditure for this specific purpose.

4. Analysis of Net Expenditure by Segment

	Board members and staff costs	Other operating & programme costs	Project Expenditure	Income	Net Segmental Expenditure
	£	£	£	£	£
Visitor Experience	5,125,145	1,267,097	1,026,223	(645,676)	6,772,789
Conservation	1,422,737	100,665	914,385	(190,179)	2,247,607
Rural Development	2,004,078	1,228,180	427,185	(922,534)	2,736,910
Total 2023	8,551,959	2,595,941	2,367,793	(1,758,388)	11,757,305
Visitor Experience	4,735,523	1,560,410	737,986	(661,886)	6,372,033
Conservation	1,143,867	40,373	604,811	(211,265)	1,577,786
Rural Development	2,151,541	1,140,733	59,864	(585,693)	2,766,445
Total 2022	8,030,931	2,741,516	1,402,661	(1,458,844)	10,716,264

Net Segmental Expenditure as above

Items not attributable to segmental activity:

Deficit of return on pension assets over interest	89,000
Depreciation and amortisation	869,028
Impairment of asset	244,069
Net loss on disposal of property, plant, and equipment	(25,898)
Interest receivable	(6,321)
Interest payable	5,580
Net Expenditure for the Year	12,932,764

5. Other Income

	2023	2022
	£	£
Shared services recharge	104,249	48,000
Boat registration and launch fees	75,019	71,754
Sale of goods	15,478	15,316
Property rental and recharges	155,849	173,323
Deficit of return on pension assets over interest	(89,000)	(144,000)
Camping charges	117,229	108,781
Car park charges	33,379	25,602
Recharges	72,325	42,554
Grants and other miscellaneous income	91,609	133,268
	576,137	416,203

6. Board Members and Staff Costs	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
<u>Board Members</u>			
Fees*		158,295	163,135
Social Security Costs		4,147	4,196
		162,442	167,331
<u>Permanent Staff</u>			
Salaries		4,547,706	4,118,249
Social Security Costs		478,513	415,423
Pension Costs		850,354	760,423
		5,876,572	5,294,095
<u>Other Staff</u>			
Salaries		1,082,499	1,002,752
Social Security Costs		93,870	79,707
Pension Costs		174,830	169,693
		1,351,199	1,252,152
Apprenticeship Levy		13,951	10,746
Decrease in holiday accrual		(73,959)	(195)
Deduct: Included in Programme and Project figures		(85,246)	(173,198)
Total Permanent and Other Staff Costs before pension adjustments		7,082,517	6,383,600
<u>Adjustments for Pensions Reporting</u>			
Add: Current Service Costs	21	2,314,000	2,403,000
Less: Employer Contributions	21	(1,007,000)	(923,000)
Total Permanent and Other Staff Costs after pension adjustments		8,389,517	7,863,600
Total Board Member and Staff Costs		8,551,959	8,030,931

* Refer to Remuneration Report on page 42.

7. Other Operating Costs	2023	2022
	£	£
Travel & Subsistence	26,879	26,330
Conferences, Courses & Training	107,952	88,728
Other Staff Costs	46,471	68,795
Property Rent & Rates	191,868	208,350
Energy Costs	112,298	89,753
Property Repairs & Development	105,893	135,405
Other Property Costs	290,232	449,163
Grounds Maintenance	92,079	81,102
Tools & Equipment Consumables	45,471	41,959
Transport Costs	170,635	181,385
Uniforms & Clothing	30,181	12,788
Catering & Hospitality	24,082	6,967
Printing & Stationery	28,710	16,161
Published Materials & Subscriptions	95,572	45,496
Telecommunications & Data	70,152	72,188
Legal & Professional Fees	409,109	326,212
Software & IT Supplies	337,010	340,489
Goods for Resale	9,582	10,264
Advertising - Statutory	19,694	22,682
- Other Advertising	416	660
Other Administration Costs	26,173	45,321
Contributions	16,850	49,970
Audit Fee - Internal	7,394	16,965
- External Audit remuneration for audit services	15,060	12,470
Bad Debt Provision Expense	14,442	55,349
	2,294,204	2,404,952

No non-audit fees were paid to External Audit during 2022/23 (2021/22 - £Nil).

8. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Freehold Land & Buildings £	Leasehold Buildings £	Surplus Assets £	Vehicles & Marine & Vessels £	Equipment Plant & Machinery £	Furniture & Fittings £	IT Hardware & Infrastructure £	Assets under Construction £	Total Tangible Assets £
Cost or Valuation									
At 1 April 2021	5,502,000	4,623,500	-	1,280,771	373,833	855,168	1,258,215	120,034	14,013,521
Disposals at Cost	-	-	-	(50,130)	(21,859)	(5,472)	(130,957)	-	(208,418)
Additions at Cost	-	-	-	236,385	36,967	84,345	111,832	137,317	606,846
Transfer Asset into Use	56,106	-	-	84,659	-	-	63,770	(204,535)	-
Reclassification to Surplus Asset	(442,104)	(1,655,000)	2,097,104	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment Charge	-	-	(1,655,000)	-	-	-	-	-	(1,655,000)
Revaluation (Decrease)	-	-	(242,104)	-	-	-	-	-	(242,104)
Indexation Increase	204,779	177,268	-	-	-	-	-	-	382,047
At 31 March 2022	5,320,781	3,145,768	200,000	1,551,685	388,941	934,041	1,302,860	52,816	12,896,892
Accumulated Depreciation									
At 1 April 2021	-	-	-	956,018	278,083	817,538	929,003	-	2,980,642
Disposals	-	-	-	(46,991)	(21,859)	(4,104)	(130,957)	-	(203,911)
Charge for Year	124,103	180,170	-	152,236	43,180	39,566	225,662	-	764,917
Reclassification to Surplus Asset	(16,379)	(40,366)	56,745	-	-	-	-	-	-
Written back on Revaluation:									
- Impairment Charge	-	-	(40,366)	-	-	-	-	-	(40,366)
- Revaluation	-	-	(16,379)	-	-	-	-	-	(16,379)
At 31 March 2022	107,724	139,804	-	1,061,263	299,404	853,000	1,023,708	-	3,484,903
Net Book Values									
31 March 2022	5,213,057	3,005,964	200,000	490,422	89,537	81,041	279,152	52,816	9,411,989
31 March 2021	5,502,000	4,623,500	-	324,753	95,750	37,630	329,212	120,034	11,032,879

	Freehold Land & Buildings £	Leasehold Buildings £	Right-to-use Land & Buildings £	Surplus Assets £	Vehicles & Marine Vessels £	Equipment Plant & Machinery £	Furniture & Fittings £	IT Hardware & Infrastructure £	Assets under Construction £	Total Tangible Assets £
Cost or Valuation										
Balance at 1 April 2022, as previously reported	5,320,781	3,145,768		200,000	1,551,685	388,941	934,041	1,302,860	52,816	12,896,892
Impact of change in accounting policy			483,100							483,100
Adjusted balance at 1 April 2022	5,320,781	3,145,768	483,100	200,000	1,551,685	388,941	934,041	1,302,860	52,816	13,379,992
Disposals at Cost					(107,540)					(107,540)
Additions at Cost	218,727	63,734	33,528		87,428	26,069	4,765	155,056	456,411	1,045,718
Transfer Asset into Use Reclassification to Surplus Asset	10,767	2,333							(13,100)	-
Impairment Charge	(200,000)	(214,568)								(414,568)
Revaluation	120,225	166,733								286,958
Indexation Increase										
At 31 March 2023	5,470,500	3,164,000	516,628	200,000	1,531,573	415,010	938,806	1,457,916	496,127	14,190,560
Accumulated Depreciation										
At 1 April 2022	107,724	139,804	-	-	1,061,263	299,404	853,000	1,023,708	-	3,484,903
Disposals					(107,540)					(107,540)
Charge for Year Reclassification to Surplus Asset	124,961	170,434	68,101		144,179	48,668	36,559	272,302	-	865,204
Written back on Revaluation:										
- Impairment Charge	(39,150)	(122,996)								(162,146)
- Impairment Reversal	(8,355)									(8,355)
- Revaluation	(185,180)	(187,242)								(372,422)
At 31 March 2023	-	-	68,101	-	1,097,902	348,072	889,559	1,296,010		3,699,644
Net Book Values										
31 March 2023	5,470,500	3,164,000	448,527	200,000	433,671	66,938	49,247	161,906	496,127	10,490,916
31 March 2022	5,213,057	3,005,964	-	200,000	490,422	89,537	81,041	279,152	52,816	9,411,989

Assets under construction are assessed for impairment on completion. The revaluation reserve reflects the increase in value of land and buildings over their historical costs. Freehold Land and Buildings contain one piece of land at Kenmore Wood that was donated to the Authority and is valued at £10k (2021/22 - £8k) on an existing use value. The donated asset reserve reflects the corresponding entry.

As detailed in Notes 1.3 and 1.21 land and buildings are subject to formal revaluation with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying value is not materially different from the valuation should a full revaluation be undertaken. Land and buildings are subject to quinquennial revaluation, supplemented by an interim valuation in year 3. Specialised properties are also indexed in years 1,2 and 4 using published indices. A full revaluation is undertaken where there is a risk around material movement in property valuations. The last full valuation of property was conducted at 31 March 2023. At 31 March 2023, two properties were identified as surplus, with no plan to bring the assets back into use as operational assets. The properties were valued under IFRS13 Fair Value Measurement at 31 March 2023, with one being fully impaired.

9. Intangible Assets

	IT Systems & Software £	Website £	Copyright £	Total Intangible Assets £
Cost or Valuation				
At 1 April 2021	191,014	78,312	60,788	330,114
Disposals at Cost	(28,152)	-	-	(28,152)
Additions at Cost	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	162,862	78,312	60,788	301,962
Accumulated Depreciation				
At 1 April 2021	189,037	75,692	55,885	320,614
Disposals	(28,152)	-	-	(28,152)
Charge for Year	1,478	1,740	2,734	5,952
At 31 March 2022	162,363	77,432	58,619	298,414
Net Book Values				
31 March 2022	499	880	2,169	3,548
31 March 2021	1,977	2,620	4,903	9,500

	IT Systems & Software £	Website £	Copyright £	Total Intangible Assets £
Cost or Valuation				
At 1 April 2022	162,862	78,312	60,788	301,962
Disposals at Cost	-	(7,225)	-	(7,225)
Additions at Cost	840	-	4,000	4,840
At 31 March 2023	163,702	71,087	64,788	299,577
Accumulated Depreciation				
At 1 April 2022	162,363	77,432	58,619	298,414
Disposals	-	(7,225)	-	(7,225)
Charge for Year	780	880	2,164	3,824
At 31 March 2023	163,142	71,087	60,783	295,012
Net Book Values				
31 March 2023	559	-	4,005	4,564
31 March 2022	499	880	2,169	3,548

10. Investments in Other Entities

The Authority holds an investment in National Parks Partnerships LLP. At incorporation, the Authority and the other 14 UK National Parks contributed £10,000 for an equal share in the entity with a further capital call in March 2018. The investment was fully impaired as at 31 March 2018, as the capital contributions cannot be withdrawn or paid back. Under IFRS 9, the investment is measured at a fair value through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. The fair value is assessed as nil, which is the same as the carrying value in the prior year.

11. Trade Receivables and Other Assets

	2023	2022
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade receivables	367,611	273,426
Less provision for bad debts	(127,200)	(95,470)
Trade receivables net	240,411	177,956
Other receivables	2,688	5,029
VAT receivable	4,454	52,043
Prepayments and accrued income	363,808	332,253
Finance lease receivable	5,000	
Total	616,361	567,281
Amounts falling due after one year:		
Prepayments	27,173	21,591
Finance lease receivable	61,821	-
Total	83,994	21,591

12. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2023	2022
	£	£
Bank Accounts	2,141,683	1,964,246
Imprest Accounts	725	600
Total	2,142,408	1,964,846

All balances were held at banks or in hand (2021/2022 - all).

Not included in cash and cash equivalents disclosed above are amounts held by the Authority as a custodian on behalf of others of £841,956 (2021/22 - £829,346). These sums are not recognised as cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Financial Position, as they are not considered assets of the Authority. Further details are provided in Note 15.

13. Trade Payables and Other Liabilities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Amounts payable within one year:		
Trade payables	1,470,396	552,042
Accruals and deferred income	236,878	1,152,383
Lease liabilities	36,992	-
Funds held for third parties	6,073	6,561
	1,750,338	1,710,986
Amounts falling due after more than one year:		
Deferred Income	185,062	167,105
Lease liabilities	295,782	-
	480,844	167,105

14. Capital Commitments, Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities

Capital Commitments

There was £120k of committed but unspent capital expenditure at 31 March 2023 (31 March 2021 – £165k). In addition to planned expenditure for 2022/23, this includes expenditure related to the new patrol boat. There was no committed capital grant expenditure as at 31 March 2023 (31 March 2022 – £28k) in relation to the Authority's grant scheme for 2022/23, where applicants were unable to complete works during the financial year.

Contingent Liabilities

Holding assets results in repair and maintenance obligations, which are addressed based on priority of risk and need. Although no contingent liabilities have been identified, there is an inherent risk of liability, however remote, through ownership of assets.

The Authority is defending a legal action raised in the Court of Session by the The Forestry Partnership 2008 LLP in relation to claimed access rights through our Glenoglehead site for the unrestricted transportation of felled timber from the adjacent forestry plantation. Depending on the outcome of the legal case, there may be a future liability for legal costs, which may be material. The parties are currently in mediation to try to agree a suitable outcome.

15. Assets Held on Behalf of Third Parties

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash	841,956	829,346

The Authority holds cash of £841,956 (made up of £537,918.22 for restoration and aftercare and £268,692.95 for Greater Cononish Glen management, plus interest accruing) as a planning requirement for the development of a gold and silver mine in Cononish Glen. The cash is held within a 120-day deposit account at 31 March 2023.

As at 31 March 2022 the Authority held cash totalling £829,346 (made up of £537,918.22 for restoration and aftercare and £268,692.95 for Greater Cononish Glen management, plus interest accruing).

Once the Operator's Obligations relating to the Decommissioning and Restoration Obligations in relation to the Greater Cononish Glen Management Plan have been respectively completed and discharged in accordance with the s75 Agreement, the Authority will repay the respective funds to the Operator.

If the Operator fails to discharge these obligations, the funds are calculated to be sufficient to meet any costs incurred in respectively implementing these obligations and will be used to complete the restoration and land management plans as set out in the s75 Agreement. The Authority cannot use the funds for any other purpose other than as set out in the s75 Agreement. Interest accruing on the deposit is deemed to form part of the deposited funds and therefore subject to the same conditions.

At the end of the production either:

- The applicant will complete the restoration works and discharge their obligations and the Authority will return the deposit to them; or
- If the applicant fails to discharge its restoration obligations, the Authority may provide the funds to the landowners and/ or Crown Estate Scotland (Interim Management) to complete this work, failing which the Authority may itself use the funds to restore the site.

In July 2022 the Authority wrote to all parties to the s75 Agreement to advise that it considered that a review of both the Restoration and Aftercare bond amount and the Greater Cononish Glen Management Plan bond amount was required, due to changes to material costs, labour costs or other costs including inflationary changes that would be reasonably incurred by the Park Authority in implementing the GCGMP. Since 31 March 2023, the Restoration and Aftercare Bond review has completed, which concluded that it should be increased from £537,918.22 to £623,767.46.

The Authority has no beneficial interest or rights to the asset and cannot use the funds for its own purposes. As such, the cash is not included within the Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2023.

16. Lease Liabilities

The Authority has entered into leases in the normal course of our operating activities.

Obligations under non-cancellable Leases are:

	Vehicles		Land & Buildings	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Within One Year	-	31,157	42,199	74,072
Two to Five Years	-	-	56,590	54,293
After Five Years	-	-	315,491	126,256
Total undiscounted lease liabilities	-		414,280	
Less interest element	-		(81,187)	
Present value of obligations	-		333,093	

These leases relate to electric vehicles and properties for our operations including stores, offices, campsites, visitor facilities and piers and pontoons.

Year ended 2023 is reported under IFRS 16. The previous year is reported under IAS 17.

Rents receivable under non-cancellable leases are:

	2023	Land & Buildings
	£	2022
		£
Within One Year	90,377	82,878
Two to Five Years	197,936	99,129
After Five Years	44,412	41

These leases relate to the rental of properties to commercial operators for the provision of visitor facilities and the sub-lease of office capacity to tenants.

17. Related Party Transactions

The Authority is a Non-Departmental Public Body of the Scottish Government (NDPB). Our sponsoring body is the Scottish Government Environment and Forestry Directorate. The Scottish Government and Scottish Government Environment and Forestry Directorate are regarded as related parties with whom there have been various material transactions during the year in the normal course of business.

During the year, the Authority has had a number of material transactions with other entities for which the Directorate is regarded as the sponsor as below:

- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Cairngorms National Park Authority
- NatureScot
- Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

In addition, the Authority has had a number of material transactions with other government departments, central government bodies, local government and other non-departmental public bodies during the normal course of business including:

- Argyll & Bute Council
- Audit Scotland
- The Broads National Park Authority
- Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
- Forestry and Land Scotland
- Forth Valley and Lomond Leader
- Glasgow City Council
- Historic Environment Scotland
- HM Revenue and Customs
- Lake District National Park Authority
- Met Office
- National Heritage Lottery Fund
- The Registers of Scotland
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Police Authority
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Stirling Council
- Sustrans
- The Valuation Office Agency
- Visit Scotland
- West Dunbartonshire Council

- West Lothian Council

Details of material transactions with other Government bodies and companies where Board members, Directors, and senior staff, have an interest, are disclosed, as follows:

Board Member/ Director	Organisation	Role	Nature of Supply	Income to the Authority	Expenditure from the Authority
Iain Shonny Paterson/ William Sinclair/ Maurice Corry/ Bobby Good	Argyll & Bute Council	Councillors	Rates, waste, design and conservation advice		£74,158
William Sinclair	COSLA	Member	Recruitment advertising		£4,320
William Sinclair	Strathclyde Partnership for Transport	Board Member	Contribution	£15,000*	
Rhona Brock/ Murray Lyle	Perth and Kinross Council	Councillor	Contribution		£25,000
Martin Earl/ Gerry McGarvey/ Alistair Berrill/ Danny Gibson	Stirling Council	Councillors	Contribution/ Waste, rates	£30	£77,255***
Hazel Sorrell/ Diane Docherty	West Dunbartonshire Council	Councillors	Contribution/ Services including rates, waste, rental, and repairs		£137,236
Gordon Watson	National Park Partnership LLP	Board Member and Interim Chair	Subscriptions		£12,000
James Stuart	Lake District National Park	Board Member	UK National Parks Subscriptions	£558	£6,335
James Stuart	Royal Yacht Association for Scotland	Interim Director	Subscriptions		£754****
James Stuart	Scottish Forestry	Adviser to the CEO	Grant/ Contributions and recharges	£500	£79,002
Heather Reid	Nature Scot	Board Member	Contribution/ Grant	£42,000*	£10,900
Heather Reid/ Chris Spray	Loch Lomond & the Trossachs Countryside Trust	Director	Recharge/ Contribution	£2,147**	£57,500

* Included in trade debtors at 31 March 2023 /**£703 is included in trade debtors at 31 March 2023/*** £1,793 is accrued at 31 March 2023/**** £268 is prepaid at 31 March 2023

The nature of the Authority's operations, and the composition of its Board make it very likely that transactions will take place in the normal course of business with other organisations in which a

member may have an interest. All the transactions involving companies, or organisations in which a member may have an interest, are conducted at arm's length in the normal course of business.

The Authority has detailed policies in place for Board Members and staff governing situations where personal or business interests may arise in the activities and decisions of the organisation. Board Members and staff are required to disclose the nature of the interest and, if appropriate, exclude themselves from any part of the discussion or decisions relating to that matter.

18. Financial Instruments and Exposure to Risks

The Authority's cash operating and capital expenditure is met from the DEL cash budget allocation from the Scottish Government, from other income sources and from contributions from partner agencies to jointly fund projects. The Authority has no powers to borrow money or to invest surplus funds. Other than financial assets and liabilities which are generated by day-to-day operational activities, the investment in National Parks Partnerships LLP (Note 10) and the cash held as a planning condition for the development of the gold and silver mine at Cononish Glen (Note 15), the Authority holds no financial instruments.

Liquidity Risk

The Authority's net revenue resource requirements are financed by Scottish Government, as is its capital expenditure. The Authority is therefore not exposed to material liquidity risks.

Credit Risk

The Authority's funders are mainly Scottish Government Departments, Executive Agencies, or other Public Bodies. The Authority is therefore not exposed to any material credit risks.

Foreign Currency Risk

The Authority is not exposed to foreign currency risk.

The Authority's financial assets and liabilities are categorised by group under IFRS 9

	2023
	Amortised Cost
	£
Financial Assets	
Trade and Other Receivables	700,355
Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>2,142,408</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>2,842,763</u></u>

	2023
	Other Liabilities
	Amortised Cost
	£
Financial Liabilities	
Trade and Other Payables	<u>2,231,182</u>
Total Liabilities	<u><u>2,231,182</u></u>

	2022
	Amortised Cost
	£
Financial Assets	
Trade and Other Receivables	588,872
Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>1,964,846</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>2,553,718</u></u>

	2022
	Other Liabilities
	Amortised Cost
	£
Financial Liabilities	
Trade and Other Payables	<u>1,878,091</u>
Total Liabilities	<u><u>1,878,091</u></u>

The carrying amount of the following financial assets and liabilities is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value:

- trade and other receivables,
- cash and cash equivalents,
- trade and other payables.

19. Pension Scheme

The Authority participates in a Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), Strathclyde Pension Fund, which is administered by Glasgow City Council and is a defined benefit scheme.

In accordance with International Accounting Standard 19 (IAS19), the Authority is required to disclose information concerning assets, liabilities, income, and expenditure related to pension

schemes for its employees. The Fund’s actuary has provided the pension accounting figures in line with the IAS 19 requirements.

The actuary conducts a formal triennial valuation of the fund, the most recent valuation being conducted as at 31 March 2020. The formal valuation calculates the employer’s assets and liabilities. The balance sheet position as at 31 March 2023 and the projected cost for 2023/24 are based on the roll forward from the valuation at 31 March 2020. The roll forward allows for changes in financial assumptions, additional benefit accrual and estimated cash flows over the period.

In 2022/23, the Authority paid an employer’s contribution of £1,025,184 (2021/22 - £930,116) representing 19.3% (2021/22 - 19.3%) of employees' pensionable pay to the Strathclyde Pension Fund. The employer's contribution rate is determined by the Fund's actuary based on the triennial actuarial valuation completed as at 31 March 2020. The purpose of the valuation is to assess the value of the assets and liabilities of the Fund and calculate the required rate of employer’s contributions from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2024. Following this valuation, it was confirmed that the Authority’s contribution rate would remain at 19.3%.

The Statement of Financial Position recognises the following for the pension scheme:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Fair value of plan assets	35,710	35,329
Present value of funded liabilities	(25,214)	(37,853)
Present value of unfunded liabilities	(52)	(62)
Adjustment for effect of asset ceiling	(7,536)	-
Net pension fund asset/(liability)	<u>2,908</u>	<u>(2,586)</u>

The pension reserve within Taxpayers’ Equity reflects the corresponding entry to the net pension fund asset.

Movement in the present value of defined benefit and unfunded obligations:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Opening defined benefit obligation	37,915	38,209
Current service cost	2,314	2,403
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	1,073	807
Actuarial (gain)/loss from actuarial remeasurements	(15,972)	(3,471)
Contributions by members	333	306
Benefits paid	(397)	(339)
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>25,266</u>	<u>37,915</u>

Movement in the fair value of plan assets:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Opening fair value of plan assets	35,329	31,933
Interest income on plan assets	984	663
Actuarial gain from actuarial remeasurements	(1,546)	1,843
Contributions by employer	1,004	920
Contributions by members	333	306
Contributions by employer for unfunded benefits	3	3
Benefits paid	(394)	(339)
Closing fair value of plan assets	<u>35,713</u>	<u>35,329</u>

The amounts, excluding the employer contributions, recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure are as follows:

	2023	2021
	£000	£000
Current service cost	2,314	2,403
Interest cost on obligation	1,073	807
Interest income on plan assets	(984)	(663)
	<u>2,403</u>	<u>2,547</u>

Employer's contributions totalling £1,007k are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure (2021/22 - £923k), resulting in a total expense of £1,396k (2021/22 - £1,624k).

The net expense is recognised in the following line items in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure:

	2022	2021
	£000	£000
Board Member and Staff Costs	2,314	2,403
Other Income – deficit of return on pension assets over interest cost	89	144
	<u>2,403</u>	<u>2,547</u>

It should be noted that the pension surplus figure has been specifically produced for the purpose of meeting IAS 19 disclosure requirements. The actuarial valuations take into account the appropriate employer rate and this, together with revenues generated from the investments, will be utilised to meet the Fund's commitments.

Fair value of employer assets

The asset values below are at bid value as required under IAS19.

Asset Category	31 March 2023				31 March 2022			
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets £000	Prices not Quoted in Active Markets £000	Total £000	%	Quoted Prices in Active Markets £000	Prices not Quoted in Active Markets £000	Total £000	%
Equity Securities	6,974	64	7,038	20%	7,768	17	7,785	22%
Private Equity		8,777	8,777	25%	-	6,916	6,916	20%
Real Estate								
UK Property		2,944	2,944	8%	-	2,979	2,979	8%
Investment Funds and Unit Trusts								
Equities	154	11,680	11,834	33%	196	12,886	13,082	37%
Bonds		4,118	4,118	11%	-	3,568	3,568	10%
Commodities		14	14	0%	-	12	12	0%
Infrastructure		229	229	1%				
Other		79	79	0%	-	88	88	0%
Cash and Cash Equivalents	494	183	677	2%	887	12	899	3%
Total	7,622	28,088	35,710	100%	8,851	26,478	35,329	100%

The actuarial gains and losses recognised in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Actuarial (loss)/gain on the fair value of the plan assets	(1,546)	1,843
Actuarial gain/(loss) on the defined benefit obligation	15,972	3,471
Adjustment for effect of asset ceiling	(7,536)	-
Actuarial gain/(loss) recognised in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity	<u>6,890</u>	<u>5,314</u>

The balance sheet position as at 31 March 2023 and the projected cost for 2023/24 are based on the roll forward from the valuation at 31 March 2020 performed by the independent actuaries to the Strathclyde Pension Fund. The actuarial assumptions were as follows:

	2023	2022
	% pa	% pa
Inflation/ Pension Increase Rate	2.95%	3.15%
Salary Increase Rate	3.65%	3.85%
Discount Rate	4.75%	2.75%

	2023	2022
Life Expectancy at age 65:		
Current Pensioners Male	19.3	19.6
Current Pensioners Female	22.2	22.4
Future Pensioners Male	20.5	21.0
Future Pensioners Female	24.2	24.5

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below:

Change in assumptions as at 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to Employer Liability	Approximate monetary amount £000
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	2%	598
1 year increase in life expectancy	4%	1,011
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0%	64
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	2%	542

Information about the Defined Benefit Obligation

	Liability split	
	£000	Percentage %
Active members	14,875	59.0%
Deferred members	5,479	21.7%
Pensioner members	4,860	19.3%
Total	25,214	100.0%

Projected defined benefit cost for the year to 31 March 2024

The table below shows an analysis of the projected amount to be charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year to 31 March 2024.

Period ended 31 March 2024	Assets	Obligations	Net (liability) / asset	
	£000	£000	£000	% of pay
Projected current service cost *		1,036	(1,036)	(19.9%)
Total Service Cost		1,036	(1,036)	(19.9%)
Interest income on plan assets	1,717		1,717	33.0%
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation		1,221	(1,070)	(23.5%)
Total Net Interest Cost	1,717	1,221	496	9.5%
Total included in Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	1,717	2,257	(540)	(10.4%)

* The service cost figures include an allowance for administrative expenses of 0.2% of payroll.

The contributions paid by the Employer are set by the Fund Actuary at each triennial actuarial valuation (the most recent being 31 March 2020) or at any other time as instructed to do so by the Administering Authority. The contributions payable over the period to 31 March 2023 are set out in the Rates and Adjustments certificate. For further details on the approach adopted to set contribution rates for the Employer please refer to the 2020 actuarial valuation report dated 31 March 2021. The estimate of Employer's contribution for the year to 31 March 2024 is approximately £1,004,000.

20. Post Balance Sheet Event

On 15 and 23 August 2023 the Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity approved the Loch Lomond Byelaws 2023 which will come into effect on 1 November 2024. In the meantime, the Loch Lomond Byelaws 2013 will remain in force. The Authority will continue to prepare for the implementation of the 2023 Byelaws, ensuring an enforcement framework will exist and providing a flow of information to current and prospective users of the loch to raise awareness regarding the new byelaws.

**LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY****DIRECTION BY THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS**

1. The Scottish Ministers, in pursuance of The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, hereby give the following direction.
2. The statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2022, and subsequent years, shall comply with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the edition of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) which is in force for the year for which the statement of accounts are prepared.
3. The accounts shall be prepared so as to give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and of the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.
4. This direction shall be reproduced as an appendix to the statement of accounts. The direction given on 12 January 2006 is hereby revoked.

Signed: Donald Henderson, Deputy Director of Nature Division
by the authority of the Scottish Ministers

Dated: 02 August 2023