

LLTAF Update: August 2024

Strategic Updates

Core Paths Budget

No change at this point in the year. We have a small capital budget of £5,000 which is likely to be used for signage and small-scale infrastructure such as replacement gates.

Core Paths and Private Level Crossings

We have received a directive from the Scottish Government requiring Access Authorities to review their core paths plan in the light of a new legal position. This indicates that core paths that cross private level crossings are no longer considered legitimate, the implication being that they should be removed or diverted. Fortunately only one core path in the National Park is affected – at Tyndrum Lower Station – the this short section of core path can be removed from the Core Paths Plan without significantly affecting access to the wider network.

National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP)

The public launch of the [NPPP](#) had to be delayed due to the ministerial changes that resulted from the break down in the SNP-Greens coalition.

Sustainable Travel

We were finally able to launch a three-month pilot [shuttle bus](#) service in the Trossachs at the beginning of July. The two-bus Trossachs Explorer service runs between Callander and Aberfoyle and has been very successful to date, attracting good numbers of passengers who have cited a variety of reasons for using the service. Older and retired people have been particularly keen, making both local and longer journeys from outwith the Park. As with all bus services in Scotland, under 22s and over 60s go free with the appropriate Scottish travel pass.

Whilst there have been some mechanical issues with one of the buses, the operator has been able to supply a replacement vehicle, albeit not always as quickly as we would like. Snagging problems were expected, which is part of the purpose of a pilot, but overall, we are delighted with the popularity of the service and the proof of concept it is providing. A small team from Strathclyde University has been engaged to assess and monitor use, and non-use, of the service, and they are being assisted by our Volunteer Rangers who are travelling on the bus, providing information to passengers and encouraging them to provide survey data.



LLTAF Recruitment

The recruitment process resulted in the successful appointment of 4 new members: Kira Samide, Emma Sandhu, Rachel Taylor and Calum Langdale. Their brief biographies have been added to the [LLTAF pages](#) of the website.

Area Reports

Loch Lomond, Breadalbane and Cowal

Upholding Access Rights:

Glen Dochart

The local CDT and Sustrans recently completed a feasibility study examining options to establish an off-highway cycle path between Crianlarich and Dalrigh.

Glen Falloch

The NPA are trying to establish contact with Glen Falloch Estate to remedy several access issues including, the installation of a self-closing gate off the A82 near Glen Falloch Weir, and deer fence stiles near Derrydarroch and Allt Andoran

Glenoglehead / Acharn Forest

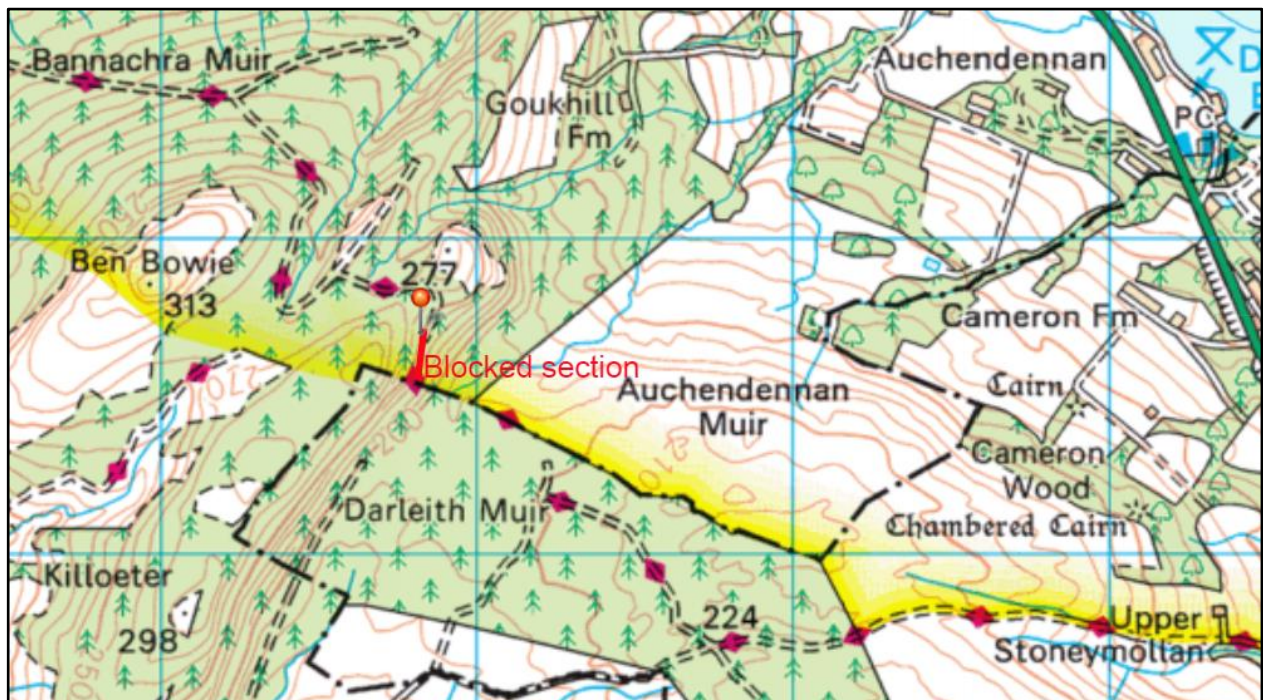
Discussions on the management of harvesting are on-going – the NPA was recently consulted on a proposal to establish an aggregate quarry in a remote part of the forest (close to a section of the Rob Roy Way). The development is unlikely to have a significant negative effect on access rights or use of the RRW, however the area Officer developed an access management plan with the forest planners to ensure the current access situation will remain relatively unchanged.

Strone - Rights of Way

The current situation remains unchanged – residents continue to use two 'through-routes' to access woodland and the informal paths between Strone Shore Rd. and the Back Rd. Core Path.

Gouk Hill / Three Lochs Way

Following storms earlier in the year, a short section of path from Darleith Moor to Ben Bowie / Bannachra has been blocked by windblown trees for c.6 months. The NPA has received several complaints about the issue from walkers, and despite attempting to contact the forest manager on several occasions, the area Officer has not received a response to date - the matter is now being escalated.



Arrochar / Succoth transmission line upgrade

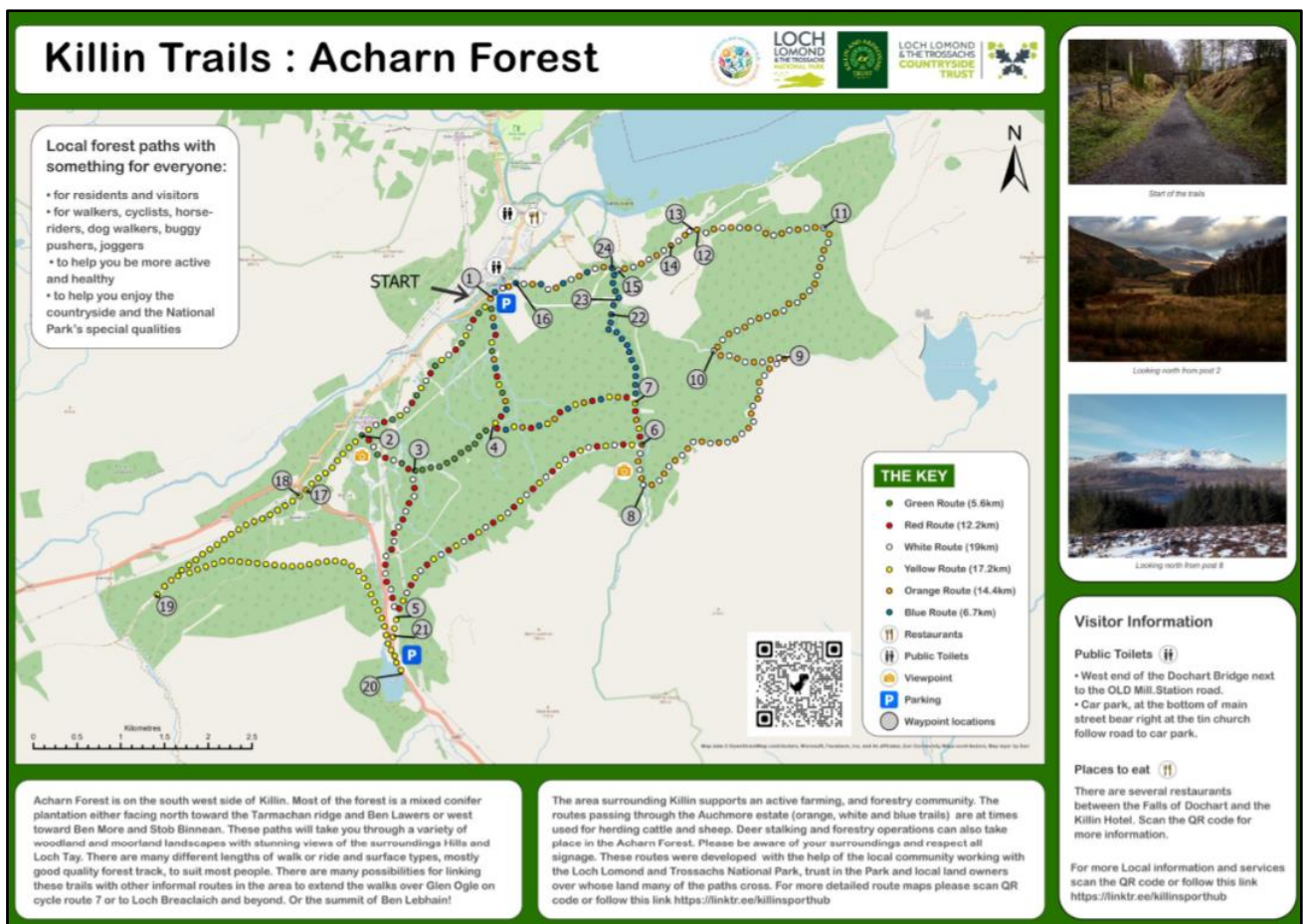
The Tighness / Arrochar / Glen Loin lattice tower upgrade work continues with large-scale improvements are taking place in Succoth and Glen Loin. The short 3LW and Core Path diversions are working well and the NPA has not received any complaints about the disruption to date.

Forest Planning

The NPA has recently commented on several large-scale forestry proposals to address the spread of *phytophthora ramorum* in the National Park and to establish new broadleaf woodlands e.g. NW Killin. The NPA's position is to maintain recreational access wherever possible, if paths or core paths need to be closed due to overriding H&S concerns, then public access must be carefully managed by using signed alternatives or short-term diversions.

Killin / Acharn Forest – recreational waymarking

Supported by the NPA, the Killin Sports & Recreational Hub recently completed an excellent project to improve recreational waymarking around the town and Acharn Forest. The following trail map has been installed in the Glenoglehead and Killin car parks to illustrate the extensive network of recreation paths and trails in the Acharn area. Once in the forest, the key path junctions feature high-quality, numbered / colour-coded way marker posts. Many thanks to Davy Fettes (NPA Board Member and Killin Sports & Recreation Hub Chair) for leading the project.



East Loch Lomond and the Trossachs

Upholding Access Rights:

Ballimore, Balquhiddier

We are still awaiting manufacture of the access advisory signs for either end of the path diversion. As soon as we have them the Land Operations Team will install them with some additional waymark posts to keep people on route.

Loch Voil, Balquhidder

The update on the access and visitor management proposals as outlined at the last meeting is as follows:

- The Craigrue layby/ passing place - the passing place sign has still not been installed by Stirling Council. I have contacted them several times and on 1 August they reiterated their agreement to install it.
- Camping Management Zone (CMZ) signs and 'no access' signs - the three additional CMZ signs are ready to be installed. These signs will be between Dhanakosa and Rhuveag.
- We now have agreement with two of three landowners for access advisory signs with messages tailored for specific locations and issues. The NPA's Land Operations Team has agreed to undertake this work and we are just waiting for the final landowner's approval. These signs will be installed at the same time as the CMZ signs and the hope is this will be done by the end of August.

Borland Hill path, Gartmore

The landowner has still not responded to our correspondence about the locked gates. According to our enforcement procedures, we have drafted an intention to serve notice letter to the landowner, signed by senior management, that we will use the powers available to us to enter his land and replace all the padlocked and broken gates.

Loch Ard shoreline, Kinlochard

We are working with both our Legal and Planning Teams to deal with and potentially enforce against a breach of a planning condition which has blocked access to a section of the Loch Ard shoreline. We met with the landowner in late January and legal discussions have taken place since then with proposals set out by us that would satisfy both the planning and access issues. A further site visit took place on 16 August with a potentially workable solution on the table.

Access Infrastructure Projects

Conic Hill Path

Work started on the second phase of the Conic Hill path repair on 30 October 2023. The current status for the overall project is:

- All 312 metres of main stone pitching on path section 4 installed by 31 March 2024 has been fully packed and pointed with cobbles and spoil won from site excavations as well as some imported crushed stone and dust brought in with the April helicopter lifts. Landscaping and re-seeding on worn areas with an upland grass seed mix has taken place and these sections have been roped off and signed for the public to keep off while restoration takes place, and it seems to be working well. There is still some snagging work to do on this section including sweeping the path surface of excess packing stone and gravel, clearing cross drains and identifying the location of a spring underneath the pitching and removing seepage water from the surface (see photos below). The remainder of work on the timber steps was completed in June 2024.
- For the remaining 283 metres of path section 4, we have instructed the contractors to complete this in 50 metre sections with all packing and pointing of pitching, revetment and landscaping done before moving on to the next section. This means the public will have an extending complete path to walk on as the construction work moves up the hill. As of early August a further 60 metres of path had been fully built.



Lower path section 4 completed, 21 May 2024



Completed pitching and landscaping, 21 May 2024



Trampling of landscaped path edges, 23 July 2024



Excess gravel to be swept off path surface, 9 July 2024

- Visitor numbers have been very high over the summer period and trampling of path edges continues to be an issue. We have also had what appears to be deliberate damage to the lower section of the path with pitching stone dislodged from previously solid sections of path and the latch on the new gate hit with large stones so the gate no longer catches. The pitching stone has been replaced and re-set.



Pitching stone pulled out on path section 2, July 2024

- The next steps are to get a revised programme of works from the contractors up to completion of path sections 4 and 5. Their indicative timeframe has changed from an end of October completion to end of December. There will also be a period for snagging works and restoration of the stone storage site as well as some additional landscaping on path sections 2 and 3 to encourage people to stay on the pitched surface and to restore previous sections of path braiding and desire lines. We anticipate this works will take us close to the 31 March deadline for all works to be completed.