



2024-25 Annual Operational Plan Progress to 31 March (End of Year)

Agenda Item 9 – Appendix 1

National Park Authority Board Meeting

09 June 2025

Paper for information

Annual Operational Plan 2024/25: Progress to End of Year

Rating Key:

Complete	Partially Achieved	Not Complete	Continued to 2025/26
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AOP Activity	AOP Deliverable	Final Update to End March 2025	Rating
Restoring Nature			
Restoring Nature for Climate	Continue to expand the delivery of the Peatland Action programme of work, aiming to deliver 690 hectares of restoration at sites across the National Park	All 8 projects have been completed with a total of 697 ha of degraded peatland put on the road to recovery. Relevant project data has been submitted to and verified by Nature Scot and the Scot Gov monthly reports and check-ins have been completed.	Complete
	Work with partners and stakeholders to create a 5-year woodland delivery and monitoring plan to increase and record the	A final draft of the delivery plan was presented to the Future Nature Operational Group and is complete.	Complete

	rate of woodland creation and improve woodland quality.		
	Produce a joint vision and shared ways of working for a landscape-scale approach to improving our water environment with key Future Nature partners including local Rivers and Fisheries Trusts.	A full draft of the shared vision was presented to Future Nature Operational Group and is complete, We are now planning to build a delivery plan for pilot projects in the coming year.	Complete
Restoring Nature for Healthy Ecosystems	Continue to deliver key landscape partnership projects including beginning large scale delivery in Wild Strathfillan and applying for development funding for a Loch Lomond Rainforest project.	Wild Strathfillan completed a successful year of delivery and plans are in place for surveys across Lomond Rainforest in the year to come.	Complete
	Finalise a National Park Priority Area Herbivore Action Plan with support from agencies and relevant Deer Management Groups and continue with programme of Herbivore Impact Assessment training for land managers.	Work is ongoing to finalise the Herbivore Delivery Plan with Partners. We continue to support grant funding applications for two deer larders for use in the East Loch Lomond DMG and LLTNPA area.	Continued to 2025/26
	Deliver a capital programme of Nature Restoration including projects such as Invasive Non-Native Species control in The Great Trossachs Forest and habitat restoration and water course tree planting with the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts.	A strong pipeline of projects has been developed. Ongoing work continues successfully with Rivers and Fisheries Trusts through our core funding.	Complete
	Development of a National Park Nature Network and an approach to securing biodiversity enhancement through the use of developer gains through the planning system, for inclusion in the draft Local Development Plan.	The final Biodiversity Enhancement report for Local Developments has been approved. It offers a strong foundation for enhancing biodiversity through local developments and will be progressed with wider LDP work. An outline approach to the National Park Nature Network is included in the LDP Evidence Report.	Complete

Restoring Nature through Sustainable, Regenerative Land Use	Develop the regenerative land use programme covering soil health, biodiversity audits and soil carbon knowledge exchange for year 1 and trial on 3 pilot land holdings working with the owners / managers.	Programme is on hold due to staff vacancy and team resource being used to support wider organisational objectives.	Continued to 2025/26
	Working with the Palladium group continue the exploration of a trial ethical green finance mechanism to bring additional carbon market funding for woodland creation in the Park.	Work on funded projects to explore and develop green finance understanding are now complete. We will continue to seek opportunities and support groups looking to understand and deliver those opportunities for local communities and nature restoration.	Complete
AOP Activity	AOP Deliverable		Rating
Creating a Low-Carbon Place			
Connecting Everyone with Nature and Climate	Implement the updated Loch Lomond Byelaws – including fully operational user database and operational readiness for 1 November 2024.	<p>Successful launch of the new online Registration Gateway. Snagging and bug fixes continued throughout March and into Apr/May. Project team continue to work through Digital Assurance Office recommendations from final Beta report.</p> <p>2nd phase (Ranger enforcement app) delayed prototype release. Aiming for completion before end of June 2025.</p> <p>Lease agreements were signed in late March. Boat team installed Milarrochy and Luss 6kph zones. Due to patrol priorities the remaining sites (Rowardennan, Sallochy and Manse Bay) will be installed in 25/26.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
	Conduct an internal review of the Camping Management Byelaws and begin early stakeholder engagement in preparation for	Postponed workshops until Q1 of 25/26.	Continued to 2025/26

	the statutory review due to take place in 2026.		
	Continue to develop and support the West Highland Way management group to enhance the sustainability of the route. With the group, set up a new charitable organisation to establish an expanded programme of fundraising to support the maintenance of the path.	<p>Transition continues with a revised anticipated date of July.</p> <p>Fundraising will start once the Trust is operational, fundraising plans being developed by Trustees.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
Improving popular Places and Routes	Complete the upgrades to the path on Conic Hill, concluding all works on the ground and fully reopening.	<p>The project is complete and the contractors have vacated Conic Hill. The stone storage site was restored in March and snagging continued into early April. There are a number of snagging issues still to be resolved and we will be picking these up with the contractor during the 12 month 'warranty' period.</p> <p>Signs encouraging people to stay on the path and generally behave responsibly. are being installed.</p>	Complete
	Complete Phase 1 of the works at Tarbet and complete the design of Phase 2.	<p>The EV charger installation and associated network upgrade remains delayed.</p> <p>EV chargers did not go live in Q4 and are now expected to go live to public in summer 2025.</p> <p>Tarbet Phase 2 design work remained deferred to Spring.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
	Continue the masterplanning work to be undertaken at Rowardennan and explore the works to be undertaken at Balmaha as part of the Place Programme.	Rowardennan Masterplan planning application and funding application were both submitted in Q4. As previously noted, these applications relate to a first phase of works focussed on	Continued to 2025/26

		<p>inclusion and active travel through better visitor facilities, including toilets.</p> <p>Stirling Council continue to work on short-term interventions at Balmaha car park, with plans to upgrade parking meters. In parallel, as part of the emerging Mobility Partnership, the NPA is working with Stirling Council and Forestry and Land Scotland on a Car Park Study to consolidate data across car park owners along the East Loch Lomond corridor and explore economics of future car park operations. This draft of this Study survey was substantially complete in Q4.</p>	
	Establish a partnership to oversee the preparation of a masterplan for the Balloch Pierhead area, which will also consider wider linkages and co-ordinated actions.	The Improvement Action Plan for Balloch Pierhead report was completed in March. A summary is to be included in the June 2025 Board Report.	Complete
	Complete the Park-wide strategic tourism infrastructure consolidating study in the form of an overview Route Map, focused on the priority areas identified in the National Park Partnership Plan, to deliver the Place Programme.	The Route Map final draft was included in the June 2024 Board Report and was approved.	Complete
	Continue work to maintain and improve the Core Paths Network within the National Park, including priority sections at Gartmore and the West Highland Way.	Gartmore House core path re-instatement complete. Design stage of the current phase of barrier reduction on NCN 7 complete and planning application submitted as planned. Design work for remaining phases of Lochearnhead Railway Path progressed and landowner negotiation in progress. Awaiting external funding decision for construction phase.	Partially Achieved

Low Carbon Travel for Everyone	Working with partners such as Transport Scotland, Sustrans, Local Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships produce targeted sustainable travel and mobility strategies and action plans.	<p>Funding is expected to be awarded by SPT to continue development of the NP Mobility Partnership programme into 2025/26.</p> <p>A third meeting of the Leadership Group is due to take place in June.</p> <p>Officer Working Groups, focussing on bus and parking, have been established and will continue to meet throughout 2025/26.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
	Develop and deliver partnership arrangements around targeted shared resources which enable a new National Park Mobility Partnership and create a Route Map for enhanced sustainable transport in the National Park	<p>Continuing to establish relationships with a range of stakeholders including Third Sector Interfaces, Climate Action Hubs and operators in advance of holding a first meeting of the Stakeholder and Insights Forum in 2025.</p> <p>The Mobility Route Map is under development and will be progressed further in 2025/26.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
	Work with partners to establish a multi-year programme of piloting and developing new sustainable transport services, including community transport alongside land and water bus initiatives.	<p>Funding has been secured from Tactran for a second year of the Trossachs Explorer pilot.</p> <p>Following an accelerated procurement process, McColls have been appointed as the bus operator. This will deliver a 13-week pilot, launching in July and connecting Drymen and Callander.</p> <p>Separately, funding has been secured by Tactran to continue development of the NP Journey Planner pilot in 2025/26.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
AOP Activity	AOP Deliverable		Rating
Designing a Greener Way of Living			
Transitioning to a Greener Economy	Work with partners to explore new funding models in the areas of natural capital and	Work continues with a primary focus on the completion of an application to the National	Continued to 2025/26

	green investment, including developing understanding of impacts and governance requirements. Including exploring Green Finance mechanism for the NP with partners such as Revere.	Lottery Heritage Fund which is on track for delivery in 2025/6	
	Develop green tourism action plans in conjunction with local tourism and hospitality industry partners, working in partnership with the National Park Destination Group (NPDG).	<p>Awaiting finalisation of proposal from UKNP/GTBS to discuss with Destination Group</p> <p>This continues to be developed with input from NP Sustainable Tourism Manager. VisitScotland's Net Zero Manager will be invited along to Destination Group meeting to explore using VisitScotland tools to assist businesses with their Net Zero journey.</p> <p>Case studies are ongoing. Storymap continues to be a popular vehicle for sharing with walkers on the WHW route.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
Supporting Thriving Rural Communities	Write, design and undertake consultation on an updated Gaelic Language Plan.	Consultation on Gaelic Language Plan closed on 13 th May 2024. Final recommended Plan presented to Board for approval in June 2024.	Complete
	Support remaining communities to produce Local Place Plans - including Croftamie, East Loch Lomond, and Balloch & Haldane.	<p>Community Steering groups continue to make progress against agreed milestones on their LPPs for Croftamie, Ardentinn, East Loch Lomond, Port of Menteith and Trossachs</p> <p>East Loch Lomond produced a first draft of the LPP in March, Port of Menteith LPP consultation period concluded end of March and Trossachs LPP completed their consultation period and finalised their LPP.</p>	Continued to 2025/26

		<p>Initial capacity building work achieved as planned for Balloch, with the Community Council supported to produce a workplan ready to commence with their LPP in 2025/6.</p> <p>Work on the following LPPs will carry forward into 25-26, Balloch & Haldane, Croftamie, East Loch Lomond, Ardentinny</p>	
	Scope out options for delivery support for community-led projects, Local Place Plans and programme activity - such as Community Climate Action Hubs - in collaboration with partners and the Local Place Plan Advisory Group.	A framework was developed to map all the actions listed in every registered LPP to date and support resources available to NP communities. An assessment process has been drafted to prioritise which projects can be supported by NPA staff to deliver the greatest impact on NPPP priorities, which will be followed by the development of a support Action Plan in collaboration with communities and partners. Continued support to the climate action hubs ensured consistent support is developed across all NP communities.	Complete
Developing and Investing in the National Park	Prepare, and submit to Scottish Government, the Evidence Report for the Local Development Plan.	<p>A further revised Development Plan Scheme was prepared and then published in March.</p> <p>Work continued drafting a series of topic papers and associated Local Development Plan specific Geographic Information System (GIS) tools.</p> <p>The Local Development Plan specific GIS system was set up and accessible to officers.</p> <p>The topic drafts papers were shared with Key Agencies in March within Q4, ahead of any required updates prior to planned public engagement in spring/early summer.</p>	Continued to 2025/26

	Begin to prepare an innovative and engaging draft Local Development Plan for consultation which drives forward the Outcomes of the National Park Partnership Plan.	Work focus remains on the Evidence Report stage. Consultancy support to inform the approach towards supporting an increase in renewable energy technologies in the National Park completed.	Continued to 2025/26
AOP Activity	AOP Deliverable		Rating
A Developing and Efficient National Park Authority			
Mission Zero	Continue to undertake the capital works required to meet our Mission Zero commitments, including the conclusion of work at Carrochan.	<p>Monitoring equipment stuck in customs at the end of the FY so work could not commence. Equipment remains in customs. Project team to decide whether to carry on with the contract. Ongoing engagement with contractors for Carrochan to secure most efficient operations.</p> <p>Balmaha Visitor Centre: meter issue still to be resolved before EV chargers can become operational, this has been escalated within EDF energy as it seems there has been a mix up regarding which teams have been dealing with it.</p> <p>Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway: carrying out electrical upgrades for EV chargers continuing to be delayed due to legal wayleave issues, NPA have supplied draft servitude plan to Scottish Power for review which needs to be agreed by both parties before electrical upgrade & metering works can be carried out and EV chargers can become operational.</p>	Continued to 2025/26
	Review priorities and timeline for the second phase of our 10-year MZ programme to be a net zero organisation by 2030.	Project Initiation Document signed off and Invitation To Tender is in development.	Partially Achieved

Net Zero National Park	Continue the development of the National Park Authority's Climate Adaption Plan.	Assessment of Climate Change Risks being included in the evidence base and topic papers of the Evidence Report for the Local Development Plan. Otherwise work focus remains on mitigation and is ongoing.	Continued to 2025/26
	Start the development of a draft Net Zero National Park Route Map outlining the approach to achieving a net zero national park.	Strong progress made at joint work sessions with UK National Parks (UKNPs). This included strategic alignment and accelerating route maps/climate action plans (collective approach to finalise a suite of 15 agreed, one for each UKNP). Also covered accelerating delivery on climate, our role as NPs, the intersection with nature recovery work, knowledge exchange and peer support.	Complete
	Undertake the migration of services into the cloud, removing need for local disaster recovery for critical services/infrastructure.	Required authorisation from Scottish Government received for idox migration. Migration will begin in 2025/26. H&S Reporting roll out in June after successful testing. Server estate tidying ongoing. Resource booking service migrated to cloud.	Partially Achieved
Becoming a More Efficient Organisation	Undertake a strategic review of our assets, alongside our business processes and structures, to progress our Estates Strategy	Estates Fleet Strategy has been finalised. This will be used to assist in fleet management going forwards. Work on Site Management Plans has been delayed due to staff absence. Updated land-based PPMs are complete.	Partially Achieved
	Develop/invest in our digital skills and infrastructure and review our manual processes to achieve at least 5% efficiency saving by	Health and Safety Reporting App to be rolled out in June.	Complete

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leveraging workflow tools to automate cross organisation processes - Enhancements to existing systems, such as finance, estates and HR to maximise automation opportunities <p>Exploring potential benefits associated with creating central data repository to be used for reporting</p>	<p>Asset Management Solution deployed on 1st April, with the Ranger Service undertaking Live Testing of the online “Log a Work Order” portal. This will be rolled out to all staff in May. Further development is planned for 2025/26, which includes integration of the Fixed Asset Register, along with onboarding of Ranger Assets (including Marine). This process will replace all other forms of fault reporting within the organisation.</p> <p>Digital Strategy “Discovery” work has been completed, and final report will be taken to Exec in June. From this, we will prioritise actions for FY25/26 and future years.</p>	
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