

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25

SG/2025/227: Laid before the Scottish Parliament by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands in pursuance of Section 26 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The Annual Report and Accounts 2024-25 are being laid before the Scottish Parliament by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands in pursuance of Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25

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Performance Report

Foreword

2024/25 has been another important and impactful year for the National Park Authority, as our Corporate Plan 2025-2030 was finalised and approved by our Board and by Scottish Ministers. This Performance Report is structured around that new Corporate Plan, which aims to set the National Park Authority up to work effectively with our partners to deliver our ambitious National Park Partnership Plan for 2024-2029.

The National Park Partnership Plan guides how all of those with a role to play in looking after the National Park will work together to manage the Park and achieve a shared vision for the area.

Scotland's National Parks are not only a key part of the nation's identity and culture but play an important role in delivering benefits for Scotland as a whole. As beautiful and special landscapes they are loved and valued by many people underpinning our sense of place, our heritage, and our local and national identity. They also have the potential, and arguably, a duty, to significantly contribute towards Scotland achieving key policy outcomes, particularly in relation to nature, climate and as exemplars of thriving places.

The Scottish Government declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and has set a target of becoming a Net Zero Nation by 2045. Our National Park Partnership Plan sets out how Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park will help Scotland to achieve that goal and deliver on national outcomes around nature and climate, as well as supporting our people and economy.

Alongside the finalisation and approval of our Corporate Plan, the National Park Authority has continued to play an ongoing role at national strategic level in our contributions to the Scottish Biodiversity Bill consultation and the process for exploring the possibility of designating a new National Park in Scotland.

2024/25 also saw the organisation deliver a significant amount of operational activity:

The implementation of our own Mission Zero route map (to be a net zero organisation by 2030) saw significant investments across our sites – including at our Headquarters, Balmaha Visitor Centre, Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway and Loch Chon campsite.

This year saw the continued development of our Future Nature programme of work which has seen the expansion of our Peatland Action Programme to restore over 690 hectares of peatland throughout the National Park and the creation of a 5-year

Woodland Delivery and Monitoring Plan to increase and record the rate of woodland creation in the National Park.

We've continued to enable and support key landscape-scale projects such as Wild Strathfillan and have developed the Loch Lomond Rainforest Project. We continue to deliver for biodiversity and climate through our capital programme for Nature Restoration, including projects such as Invasive Non-native Species control in The Great Trossachs Forest.

We continue to invest in the National Park as a place, and this year saw significant work undertaken to improve visitor infrastructure and enhance the visitor experience across the National Park. We continued the significant work being undertaken at Tarbet, alongside the commencement of masterplanning work at Rowardennan and work with key partners at Balmaha. We also produced an Improvement Action Plan for Balloch Pierhead.

Work was completed in 2024/25 on the major project to upgrade the hugely popular path on Conic Hill, alongside the implementation of the updated Loch Lomond Byelaws which came fully into force this year.

We have invested in strengthening the youth voice in 2024/25 and following a successful recruitment drive, have bolstered and revamped our Youth Committee to more meaningfully inform our work going forward. Alongside the Youth Committee, our volunteer management programme has gone from strength to strength – passing 10,000 hours of volunteering.

2024/25 has seen significant progress in the development of the West Highland Way management group, aiming to enhance the stability of this iconic route. The establishment of new charitable organisation to enable an expanded programme of fundraising was ongoing thorough the year. We have also successfully established our National Mobility Partnership and 2024/25 saw the successful operation of a three month 'Trossachs Explorer' pilot shuttle bus service.

We have worked closely with communities throughout the National Park, helping to develop Local Place Plans for Croftamie, Ardentinnny, East Loch Lomond, Port of Menteith and Trossachs. We also continue to work closely with communities to support climate action hubs. 2024/25 saw much work undertaken to progress the development of our new Local Development Plan – work which will continue into 2025/26.

Our operational delivery has been undertaken in order to progress our future vision for the National Park as a place – as outlined in our National Park Partnership Plan. But it has also been undertaken in order to progress our future vision for the National Park Authority as an organisation - as outlined in our Corporate Plan. We have continued to take action to drive efficiencies and build resilience as an organisation

including the investing in our digital skills and infrastructure and strategically reviewing our assets, alongside our business process and structures.

2024/25 was another significant year at Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park and 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 2024 to 31 March 2025 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.

The Act sets out that if it appears to the National Park Authority that there is a conflict between these aims, greater weight must be given to the first aim.

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. 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 38.

Our Strategy

The Authority sets its delivery targets on an annual basis by reference to the strategy outlined in our [National Park Partnership Plan](#) and [Our Corporate Plan](#).

The delivery targets for 2024/25 were expressed in our 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. During the year our new Corporate Plan was approved by Board and by the Scottish Ministers. The structure of this report reflects the content of the approved Corporate Plan.

Our Annual Operational Plan for 2024/25 focuses on key priorities and is structured around the three chapters of our National Park Partnership Plan and an additional chapter reflecting the organisation's corporate development work:

- Restoring Nature
- Creating a Low-Carbon Place
- Designing a greener way of Living
- A Developing and Efficient 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 and Forestry directorate's work to tackle the climate emergency, protect and restore Scotland's nature and conserve our natural assets through a thriving, sustainable economy.

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.

Key Risks

We manage our risks through a Corporate Risk Register. This ensures that risks to our ability to deliver our work are monitored throughout the year and reported to our Executive Team and Board on a regular basis. In 2024/25 there were four key risks which were rated as high (above 15 in our Risk Matrix) 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 developed and implemented our Mission Zero Route Map, prioritised financials and staff time investment in Climate Change activities and strengthened relationship with key strategic delivery partners to achieve positive action and change. |

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| Nature crisis | To address the Nature crisis facing us, we have continued to develop our Future Nature Route Map. We have prioritised both financial and staff time investment in this area to ensure that we can achieve our plans. 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. |
| Business Continuity and Cyber Security | A key risk that we have actively managed this year is around business continuity and cyber security. We have identified single points of failure and developed contingency plans, invested in new IT hardware and systems that build IT and organisational resilience and kept our Business Continuity Plan and Cyber Response Plan up to date. |
| 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 2024/25, we were able to begin budget preparation earlier and model against indicative GIA allocations from SG, while engaging proactively with SG around public sector reform proposals. |

There was an increased risk in 2024/25 around Major Planning Applications and a particular risk entered onto the Corporate Risk Register relating to the major planning application at Lomond Banks, the hearing and determination meeting for which took place in September 2024 – with the specific risk being removed from the Corporate Risk Register by Audit and Risk Committee in December 2024.

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

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 against the specific deliverables of our Annual Operational Plan and against our Corporate Plan is provided in the Performance Analysis section of the report.

Chapter 1: Restoring Nature

Nature underpins human existence through the benefits and services it provides, such as food, air, water, materials, health, and economic wealth. Halting the ongoing decline and then reversing the loss of nature is not just beneficial for wildlife, it is in all of our interest.

Restoring nature is about us supporting our natural environment to bounce back from damage and decline to become healthier, resilient, and ultimately more bountiful and productive.

Our 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan progressed the objectives of this first Chapter of the National Park Partnership Plan through the following deliverables:

- **Restoring Nature for Climate:**

The expansion of the delivery of the Peatland Action programme of work; creation of a 5-year woodland delivery and monitoring plan; production of a joint vision and shared ways of working for a landscape approach to our water environment.

- **Restoring Nature for Healthy Ecosystems:**

Continuing to deliver key landscape partnership projects; finalising the National Park Priority Area Herbivore Action Plan; delivering a capital programme of Nature Restoration; and developing a National Park Nature Network

- **Restoring Nature through Sustainable, Regenerative Land Use:**

The development of the regenerative land use programme.

Chapter 2: Creating a Low-Carbon Place

Approximately four million visitors come to the National Park each year to enjoy and benefit from its natural beauty, rich heritage and recreational opportunities.

People feeling connected to nature benefits not only their wellbeing but inspires them to act in ways that are more likely to benefit the environment. That connection can mean different things to different people, from feeling the benefit of taking in a spectacular view, to ensuring they take their litter home after a visit, to taking part in conservation volunteering.

However, we know that the range of people currently visiting the area does not reflect the diversity of our society. The popularity of the National Park also creates pressures and challenges resulting in impacts on our natural environment and behaviours which aren't compatible with the Scottish Government's ambitions to become a Net Zero Nation by 2045.

As we emerge from the pandemic and face the challenges of the climate and nature crises head on, there is real opportunity to transform the National Park into a more sustainable, low carbon destination.

We can only do this by creating opportunities for people to connect to landscape and nature sustainably, with the clear rules and incentives in place to influence positive behaviours, and infrastructure and services which facilitate great experiences whilst also protecting climate and nature.

Our 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan progressed the objectives of this second Chapter of the National Park Partnership Plan through the following deliverables:

- **Connecting Everyone with Nature and Climate:**

The implementation of the updated Loch Lomond Byelaws; early stakeholder engagement on the review of the Camping Management Byelaws; and continued support and development of the West Highland Way Management Group

- **Improving popular Places and Routes:**

The completion of the upgrades to the path on Conic Hill; advancement of Phase 1 of the infrastructure improvement works at Tarbet; continuing our Masterplanning work; and continuing to maintain and improve our Core Paths Network.

- **Low Carbon Travel for Everyone:**

Working with partners to produce sustainable travel and mobility strategies; enabling a National Park Mobility Partnership; and working with partners to establish a multi-year programme of piloting and developing new sustainable transport services.

Chapter 3: Designing a Greener Way of Living

How people live, work and experience the National Park needs to change to respond and adapt to the nature and climate crises, as well as to support thriving communities into the future.

The National Park's rural economy must adapt to support this; becoming greener, more diverse and more equitable than it is now, generating and retaining more wealth locally.

For communities to be more sustainable and resilient to the impacts of climate change, for them to play a part in tackling the nature crisis and to benefit from the transition of our economy, support must be available.

Communities need access to good services, housing and transport that allows people to live and work here for years to come. This Plan aims to tackle these systemic issues.

The way we approach development in the National Park needs to change too, with this having an increasingly important role in helping to address the climate emergency, restore nature and support rural communities.

Our 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan progressed the objectives of this third Chapter of the National Park Partnership Plan through the following deliverables:

- **Transitioning to a Greener Economy**

Exploring new funding models in the areas of natural capital and green investment and developing green tourism action plans with the National Park Destination Group.

- **Supporting Thriving Rural Communities**

Consulting on and designing the latest edition of the National Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan; supporting communities to produce Local Place Plans; and supporting the delivery of existing Local Place Plans.

- **Developing and Investing in the National Park**

Working to develop the Evidence Report for the Local Development Plan and beginning to prepare an innovative and engaging draft LDP.

Chapter 4: A Developing and Efficient Organisation

In addition to actions to deliver outcomes within each of the three chapters of the National Park Partnership, our Annual Operational Plan includes a fourth chapter to reflect the organisational development and efficiency measures required to drive our work.

Our 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan progressed the objectives of the National Park Partnership Plan through the following deliverables:

- **Mission Zero**

Continuing the capital investment works required to meet our Mission Zero commitments; and reviewing the priorities and timeline for the second phase of our 10-year Mission Zero Programme.

- **Net Zero National Park**

Continuing the development of the NPA's Climate Adaption Plan, and; starting the development of a draft Net Zero National Park Route Map.

- **Developing Our Organisation**

Undertaking the migration of services into the cloud.

- **Becoming a More Efficient Organisation**

Undertaking a strategic review of our assets and developing/investing in our digital skills and infrastructure and reviewing our manual processes to achieve at least 5% efficiency saving.

Performance Analysis

Performance against Key Deliverables

As well as our contributions towards the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, we also monitor and report on our performance towards achieving the deliverables of our Annual Operational Plan. These are specific objectives which we aim to complete over the year and link to both our Corporate Plan and the National Park Partnership Plan.

Of the 35 key deliverables set out in our Annual Operational Plan that we planned to achieve over the full year, 14 (40%) have been Achieved, 4 (11%) have been Partially Achieved and 17 (49%) have been continued to 2025/26.

The continuation rate reflects the organisation's shift to a multi-year programme approach in areas such as Future Nature, Mission Zero and the Place Programme. The continuation rate also reflects capacity issues due to turnover and unforeseen long-term absences in key positions for delivery.

2024/25 Key Activity by Annual Operational Plan Activity by Chapter and Deliverable

Key:

| |
|--------------------|
| Achieved |
| Partially Achieved |
| Continued to 25/26 |

Chapter 1: Restoring Nature

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| Continue to expand the delivery of the Peatland Action programme of work, aiming to deliver 690 hectares of restoration at sites across the Park. |
| Work with partners and stakeholders to create a 5-year woodland delivery and monitoring plan to increase and record the 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. |
| 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. |
| 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. |

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| 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. |
| 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. |
| 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. |
| 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. |

Chapter 2: Creating a Low-carbon Place

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| Implement the updated Loch Lomond Byelaws – including fully operational user database and operational readiness for 1 November 2024 |
| Conduct an internal review of the Camping Management Byelaws and begin early stakeholder engagement in preparation for 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. |
| Complete the upgrades to the path on Conic Hill, concluding all works on the ground and fully reopening. |
| Complete Phase 1 of the works at Tarbet and complete the design of Phase 2. |
| Continue the masterplanning work to be undertaken at Rowardennan and explore the works to be undertaken at Balmaha as part of the Place Programme. |
| 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. |
| 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. |
| 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 work complete, other priority sections awaiting external funding decision.] |
| Working with partners such as Transport Scotland, Sustrans, Local Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships produce targeted sustainable travel and mobility strategies and action plans |
| 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 |

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

Chapter 3: Designing a Greener Way of Living

Work with partners to explore new funding models in the areas of natural capital and green investment, including developing understanding of impacts and governance requirements. Including exploring Green Finance mechanism for the NP with partners such as Revere

Develop green tourism action plans in conjunction with local tourism and hospitality industry partners, working in partnership with the National Park Destination Group.

Write, design and undertake consultation on an updated Gaelic Language Plan

Support remaining communities to produce Local Place Plans - including Croftamie, East Loch Lomond, and Balloch & Haldane.

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.

Prepare, and submit to Scottish Government, the Evidence Report for the Local Development Plan.

Begin to prepare an innovative and engaging draft Local Development Plan for consultation which drives forward the Outcomes of the National Park Partnership Plan.

Chapter 4: A Developing and Efficient National Park Authority

Continue to undertake the capital works required to meet our Mission Zero commitments, including the conclusion of work at Carrochan

Review priorities and timeline for the second phase of our 10-year MZ programme to be a net zero organisation by 2030 [Invitation to Tender developed in 24-25 but not concluded]

Continue the development of the National Park Authority's Climate Adaption Plan

Start the development of a draft Net Zero National Park Route Map outlining the approach to achieving a net zero national park

Undertake the migration of services into the cloud, removing need for local disaster recovery for critical services/infrastructure [Idox and resourcing services migrated, other services in testing phase in 2024/25]

Undertake a strategic review of our assets, alongside our business processes and structures, to progress our Estates Strategy [Site Management Plan work not complete in 2024/25 due to prioritisation of resource]

Develop/invest in our digital skills and infrastructure and review our manual processes to achieve at least 5% efficiency saving by:

- Leveraging workflow tools to automate cross organisation processes
- Enhancements to existing systems, such as finance, estates and HR to maximise automation opportunities
- Exploring potential benefits associated with creating central data repository to be used for reporting

Performance Analysis against our Corporate Plan Objectives

This section of our Annual Report and Accounts considers the progress that has been made under the objectives of our Corporate Plan and has been aligned as per the priority themes identified within our Corporate Plan. Our Corporate Plan 2025-2030 began its development in 2023/24 and was approved by both the National Park Authority Board and Scottish Ministers in 2024/25.

Theme 1: Our Approach

By 2030 we will have increased our influence with others and delivered our organisational and statutory responsibilities in an effective and efficient way that helps achieve the NPPP vision.

Objectives

- 1.1 Deliver our organisational and statutory responsibilities as effective, efficient cornerstones focused on delivering the NPPP
- 1.2 Grow diverse income and resources to deliver the ambitions of the NPPP
- 1.3 Hold ourselves and NPPP delivery partners to account in delivering the priorities set out in the NPPP and in our Corporate Plan

Progress in 2024/25

In 2024/25 we completed and had approved by the National Park Authority Board and Scottish Ministers our Corporate Plan 2025-2030 – a key organisational and statutory responsibility. We continued to fulfil our duties on statutory reporting, including the laying of the 2023/24 Annual Report and Accounts before Parliament, the completion of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties reporting, and compliance with the Equalities Act, National Park (Scotland) Act and various Planning legislation. We continued to fulfil our duties in governance through the Board, Audit & Risk Committee and Planning & Access Committee.

Throughout 2024/25 we worked constructively with Scottish Government colleagues to respond to numerous commissions and work collaboratively across our governmental portfolio.

In terms of new funding models we have continued to liaise with a wide range of partners and projects across Scottish Government and partner organisations to understand the challenges and opportunities of Green Finance. This has included

the production of National Park Authority guidance to aid project developers, communities and landowners to deliver green finance projects which align with the aims of our National Park Partnership Plan. This included a public event to share knowledge and increase understanding of green finance.

In terms of more traditional grant funding we have continued to run quarterly meetings across directorates to review new funding opportunities, share progress on developing projects and those in delivery and to ensure coordination both internally and with external partners to secure grant funding. In 2024/25 we successfully bid for considerable grant funding through the competitive Nature Restoration Fund – including £90,000 for the Loch Lomond Rainforest project and £60,000 for rhododendron strategy and pilot projects from the Estee Lauder Foundation. We have also worked closely with the Countryside Trust on their Wild Strathfillan funding applications and delivery and are now working with them and the RSPB on a major new Heritage Lottery fund application.

Scottish Government's Rural Tourism Initiative Funding, administered by Visit Scotland, has been secured for improvements at Tarbet Visitor Site, and this grant of £750,000 was spent across 23/34 and 24/25. Further funding of £27,000 for this project was secured and invested at Tarbet through the National Parks UK partnership with BMW. To help drive forward our work on sustainable transport, funding for the Trossachs Explorer pilot shuttle bus project and Mobility Partnership was secured from BMW (£65,000), Paths for All's Smarter Choices, Smarter Places Open Fund (£100,000) and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (£45,000).

Work continues to put the National Park Plan's Delivery Framework into action, including the development of comprehensive and long-term set of measurements of success tied to not only our 2029/30 ambitions, but our vision for Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park to be a thriving place that is nature positive and carbon negative by 2045.

Theme 2: Our People

By 2030 we will have a strong mix of positive workforce culture, diversity and skills that help achieve the NPPP vision.

Objectives

- 2.1 Review and update our People Strategy and internal engagement to embed the organisational priorities and cultural approach needed to deliver the NPPP.
- 2.2 Develop and support our staff to have the collaborative approach and the specialist skills needed to deliver their roles.
- 2.3 Continue to champion and work towards increased equity, diversity and inclusion in all we do

Progress in 2024/25

We continue to provide essential training for staff who require specialist skills to undertake their role.

This covers a range of topics from first aid to contract management training. In addition to this we have delivered a variety of management training to support consistency in our approach to people management and encourage collaboration across the organisation through a shared skillset. This includes 'Managing with Impact' for newly appointed or promoted people managers, Insights Discovery a practical model that shows managers how understanding themselves better can make a positive difference in the workplace and IOSH Managing Safely training.

Following an internal audit on Learning & Development we are currently reviewing our training matrix which captures all mandatory training required across the organisation for each post to make this more user friendly and ensure it is still relevant to our organisational priorities.

In 2024/25 we delivered our final report on our Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025. This report summarised the progress made towards the 3 Outcomes as well as outlining our ongoing actions to mainstream equality in everything we do. As part of finalising our 2021-2025 Equality Outcomes, we also undertook a period of reflection to agree our new Outcomes for the coming 4 years. In setting these, we carried out a series of engagement sessions, from across the organisation to discussing with representatives of groups whom we hope would be positively impacted by this work. Approved by the Board in March 2025, these Outcomes will be published in April 2025, and will guide our forthcoming work on increasing equality in all we do, both in who we are as an organisation and also in how we make the Park as a place more accessible and inclusive to all.

Theme 3: Our Systems

By 2030 we will have systems and processes that are resilient, adaptable and designed to meet user needs and help achieve the NPPP vision.

Objectives

- 3.1 Refresh our operating model by consciously designing it around delivery of the NPPP and Corporate Plan.
- 3.2 Deliver automation and efficiency opportunities that allow staff to focus on delivering the NPPP vision.
- 3.3 Make the most of digital and data opportunities to be better informed, more resilient, efficient and secure.

Progress in 2024/25

This year we have increased our staffing resource to include capacity to work across all departments to identify opportunities for moving manual processes, such as automating forms, with the potential for creating apps for the whole business to use. This allows data to be stored more efficiently and give the National Park Authority more opportunity to utilise better reporting tools.

The IT team continue to work on identifying which services can be built into our existing platform and allow us to continue reducing our physical infrastructure. There remains potential to reform our email server to increase cyber security.

Financial Budget Performance

The results for the year to 31 March 2025 are set out on pages 67 to 111. 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 2024/25 | Resource DEL £000 | Capital DEL £000 | Non- Cash DEL £000 | Total DEL £000 | AME £000 | Total Budget £000 |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Budget Allocation | 9,940 | 2,520 | 791 | 13,251 | 5,500 | 18,751 |

The DEL budget allocation for 2024/25 was £13.251m (2023/24 - £13.896m). From 2024/25 the budget requirements for accounting for leases under IFRS 16 have been included in the baseline budget. Resource DEL was £9,940m (2023/24 - £9.583m) and capital DEL was £2.520m (2023/24 - £3.438m). £0.50m Resource DEL was unavailable for draw down due to a reduction in Employer Pension contributions (2023/24 - £nil).

Funding included:

- direct funding of £0.910m for work relating to the delivery of peatland restoration, conservation, and management in the National Park (2023/24 - £0.421m). £0.100m of this allocation was not drawn down due to project delays (2023/24 - £0.150m). A further £0.09m (2023/24 - £nil) was drawn down in advance of need due to unexpected project delays and it was agreed that the 2025/26 draw down would be reduced by this amount.
- no ringfenced additional funding for operational costs to fund additional staff resource and other measures to support visitor management was received in 2024/25 (2023/24 - £0.5m)
- direct funding of £nil to fund Capital projects contributing to the delivery of the National Park's Nature Restoration programme to secure positive outcomes for biodiversity and tackling climate change (2023/24 - £0.25m).
- direct funding of £nil to fund capital projects for the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and vehicle replacement to support the uptake of fleet decarbonisation (2023/24 - £0.30m).

The non-cash budget allocated was £6.291m (2023/24 - £3.334m); £0.791m for DEL to cover our depreciation and amortisation (2023/24 - £0.875m); and £5.500m for Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) to cover pension adjustments and impairments during the year (2023/24- £2.459m).

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 67 of £13.550m 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 are also included in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and this expenditure is not capitalised on the Statement of Financial Position as it does not result in the creation of an asset for the National Park Authority. When these adjustments are taken into account, the cash revenue position against budget is an underspend of £83k.

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 £2.220m, which represents a cash underspend of £200k 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* | 13,550 | | 13,550 |
| Less Non-Cash adjustments: | | | |
| Movement in holiday accrual | 28 | | 28 |
| Depreciation and amortisation* | (809) | | (809) |
| Provision for impairment of assets | (2,437) | | (2,437) |
| Deferral of costs | | (49) | (49) |
| Pension adjustments (Note 21) | (553) | | (553) |
| Impact of IFRS 16 | 5 | | 5 |
| Other Adjustments: | | | |
| Cost of Fixed Asset additions (Notes 9 and 10) | | 1,842 | 1,842 |
| Capital grant funding recognised in 24/25 for Fixed Asset additions | 438 | (438) | - |
| Net capital grants and capital expenditure on others' land | (866) | 866 | - |
| Total Cash Expenditure | 9,357 | 2,220 | 11,577 |
| Total Cash Budget | 9,940 | 2,520 | 12,460 |
| Cash unavailable for draw down | (500) | (100) | (600) |
| Total Cash Budget available for draw down | 9,440 | 2,420 | 11,860 |
| Total Cash Underspend | 83 | 200 | 283 |
| Non-Cash Expenditure | Outturn | | |
| | Non-Cash DEL £000 | AME £000 | |
| Depreciation and amortisation* | 809 | | |
| Loss on revaluation of asset* | | | 2,437 |
| Pension Adjustments (Note 21) | | | 553 |
| Total Non-Cash Expenditure | 809 | | 2,990 |
| Total Budget | 791 | | 5,500 |
| (Over)/ Underspend | (18) | | 2,510 |

*Refer to Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 67

As noted in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 67, income for 2024/25 was £1.66m (2023/24 - £3.13m). The main project income funding came from Visit Scotland Rural Tourism Infrastructure Funding for the Tarbet site redevelopment and Paths for All Smarter Choices Smarter Places Open Fund and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport People and Place Community Fund for the sustainable travel and mobility partnership projects. Other Project income included funding from BMW UK as part of its Recharge in Nature partnership with UK National Parks towards our sustainable travel shuttle bus pilot and EV charging at our Tarbet site and Sustrans for improvements to the NCN7 Cycle path. Income also included contributions from planning fees, property rental income, income from partners, other generated income and recharges and Programme income in relation to the West Highland Way.

The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on page 67 details expenditure for the year. Total expenditure for 2024/25 was £15.24m (2023/24- £13.11m), which included depreciation and amortisation of £0.81m (2023/24 - £0.71m), impairment on assets of £2.44m (2023/24 – impairment of assets of £nil) and net pension adjustments of £0.55m deficit (2023/24 – surplus £0.11m).

Capital additions totalled £1.84m during the year (2023/24 - £3.22m) and this included continued design, consultancy and build work as part of our Place Programme; investment in renewable technology at our offices and sites as part of Mission Zero; investment in our marine fleet and navigation infrastructure and water safety equipment; investment in our IT infrastructure and hardware. The additions are shown in Notes 9 and 10 within Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets.

In the current year a cash underspend of £283k is reported, which was significantly impacted by a £110k capital underspend in relation to our Peatland restoration funding which was reported to the Scottish Government. It has been agreed that the 2025/26 cash draw down will be reduced by this amount. The remaining underspend relates to delays in receiving goods ordered well in advance of year end and delays in spend due to longer than expected approval processes and staff capacity challenges.

Non-cash AME is under budget by £2.51m as a result of pension adjustments and lower than expected impairment on capital expenditure. The non-cash DEL was slightly over budget by £0.02m.

The Statement of Financial Position on page 68 details the Authority's assets, liabilities and reserves at 31 March 2025. Trade and other payables have decreased

from £3.39m at 31 March 2024 to £1.40m at 31 March 2025 due to amounts payable in relation to our multi-year programmes of work for Mission Zero, the Tarbet site redevelopment and the Conic Hill footpath improvements at the end of the previous year.

Throughout 2024-25 we have continued to engage with and contribute to the Scottish Government's Public Sector Reform (PSR) work. We have undertaken a number of reform programmes, under the categories of Targeting of Resources, Investment, Income, Divestment, Digital Skills and Infrastructure, Shared Services, and Partnerships. Our programme of PSR work aims to reduce costs and increase financial sustainability through the targeting of resources, increased organisational efficiency, process automation and the development of our shared services model.

We managed to achieve £267k (2023/24 - £230k) of efficiency savings in 2024/25 which equates to 2.8% of core resource DEL (2023/24 – 2.4%) 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 2025, the Authority paid 63% (2023/24 - 63%) of all its invoices within the terms of this payment policy. Against the contracted payment terms of 30 days, the Authority paid 96% of invoices against this target (2023/24 - 96%). The average payment days per valid invoice is 11 days (2023/24 - 11 days).

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 shared services and systems and in sharing and learning from good practice in policy and project development. Both Park Authorities have agreed to review these arrangements with a view to exploring where further shared service benefits could be realised which was discussed in 2024-25 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 Public Service Reform review to explore where both short term and longer-term efficiencies can be achieved across the EELG family. This includes participation in the Futures Group and the Governance Group overseeing this work.

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, through the work of National Parks Partnerships LLP, BMW committed to providing 2 rapid EV 50kV chargers, giving 4 connections in total, at Tarbet free of charge and contributed £27K to the associated electricity network upgrades. In addition to this, BMW also contributed £65K to allow the Trossachs Explorer 2024 pilot to be achieved during 2024 visitor season. £60K from Estee Lauder was used to advance our rhododendron strategy and pilot project work.

Staff Engagement

Following the completion of our Headquarters Mission Zero works and the return to the office we continue to seek feedback on our working environment and improvements that can be considered. We have also sought feedback from staff that have participated in our 2024/25 wellbeing programme to include in our tender requirements for the forthcoming year.

During the year, we carried out a review of our Estates team and an integral part of this was to engage with all the Estates team and other users of the service across the organisation to get their thoughts and ideas on the way forward. This resulted in a revised structure and new ways of working that staff had helped to shape and position the team for success going forward.

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.

Sustainability Reporting

Our strategies to tackle climate change risks and opportunities are governed and shaped primarily by two key documents, our National Park Partnership Plan, and our Mission Zero Route Map. Details of each strategy and how it approaches climate change are detailed below.

Governance and Risk Management

The National Park Partnership Plan 2025-2029 has been scrutinised and approved by both the National Park Authority Board and Scottish Ministers.

Our Mission Zero Route Map is approved by the National Park Authority Board and reported against on an annual basis.

Both the Climate Crisis and Nature Emergency feature in our Corporate Risk Register which is reviewed quarterly by the Executive Team and the Audit and Risk Committee, as well as annually by the full Board, where ultimate responsibility for risk lies. In 2024/25 the Audit and Risk Committee undertook a 'Deep Dive' on the organisational risks associated with the Climate Crisis.

National Park Partnership Plan

Climate and Net Zero Commitments

- Net Zero by 2035: The plan commits the National Park to become a Net Zero place by 2035 and to be carbon negative (a carbon sink) beyond that, helping Scotland meet its national goal of becoming a Net Zero Nation by 2045.
- A detailed Greenhouse Gas (GHG) assessment underpins this target, identifying how peatland restoration, woodland expansion, and regenerative agriculture can shift the park from being an emitter to a carbon sink.

Nature and Climate as Interconnected Crises

- The plan acknowledges the twin crises of climate change and nature loss, and frames its interventions around addressing both in an integrated way.
- It aims to halt nature loss by 2030 and achieve widespread restoration by 2040, with 30% of land managed for nature by 2030, aligning with international and national biodiversity strategies.

Key Actions to Support Climate Goals

- Restoring Nature: Extensive peatland restoration and native woodland expansion are prioritized to enhance carbon sequestration and biodiversity.
- Creating a Low-Carbon Place:
 - Promoting sustainable travel and reducing car dependence.
 - Improving infrastructure for active travel and public transport.
- Designing a Greener Way of Living: Supporting low-carbon rural development, green jobs, and local economies, while adapting to climate impacts such as flooding and extreme weather.

Enabling Systemic Change

- The plan emphasizes transformational change, going beyond conservation to regenerative land use, nature-based solutions, and blended finance models
- It proposes collaborative delivery frameworks with multiple stakeholders, including local communities, landowners, and public agencies.

Measuring Progress

- Sets clear targets and indicators including:
- Trebling annual peatland restoration from 240ha to 840ha.
- Doubling woodland expansion to 400ha/year.
- Tracking ecological condition of habitats and deer population densities.

Mission Zero Route Map

The Mission Zero Route Map is a strategic plan detailing how the organisation will become a net zero organisation by 2030. It addresses net zero and climate change by the following:

Net Zero Commitment

- The Park Authority commits to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2030, aligning with Scotland's national target of becoming a Net Zero Nation by 2045.
- Its baseline emissions from 2018/19 are 222 tCO₂e, covering electricity, transport, and heating.

Key Areas of Emission Reduction

1. Electricity (45%)
 - Actions: Install solar photovoltaics, upgrade to LED lighting, explore renewable energy suppliers.
 - Target: 70% reduction in electricity-related emissions by 2025.
2. Transport (44%)
 - Actions: Transition to electric vehicles, reduce travel mileage, promote active/public transport.
 - Target: 90% reduction in transport emissions by 2031.
3. Heating (11%)
 - Actions: Replacement of gas and LPG systems with air source heat pumps, replacement of biomass boiler, reduction in use of oil generators at campsites, improved building efficiency.

- Target: 85% reduction in heating emissions by 2029.

Offsetting & Nature-Based Solutions

- Anticipates residual emissions (~44 tCO₂e/year), which will be offset through carbon sequestration projects like peatland restoration and woodland creation within the National Park.

Strategic Principles

- Reduce before offsetting.
- Evidence-led and adaptable approach.
- Embed emissions awareness into organisational culture.
- Engage partners and communities in a park-wide climate effort.

Implementation and Monitoring

- A phased trajectory with biennial milestones up to 2030.
- Monitoring includes internal reporting, public body duty reports, and recalibration based on external changes (e.g., decarbonisation of the grid).
- Estimated infrastructure investment: ~£500k over 3 years, plus additional training and maintenance costs.

Broader Impact

- The document envisions the Authority as a catalyst for wider climate action, using its leadership to inspire place-based solutions across the National Park and build a green recovery post-COVID.

In addition to the work set out above in relation to sustainable organisation, 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 2024. The report covers the period 2023/24 and includes the following areas: Governance, Management and Strategy; Emissions, Targets and Project; Adaptation; Procurement and Wider Influence; and Other Notable Activities.

Estate energy consumption is collected from a wide array of data sources, converted to carbon emissions use the national carbon conversion factors from Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and collated into five broad categories, Electricity, Heating, Transport, Homeworking and Water Treatment and Supply emissions. Carbon emissions are also measured and reported by Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions (figure 4), as is standard practice for carbon reporting.

Emissions during 2023/24 (figure 1) have fallen after two successive years of increases. Carbon emissions are now at their lowest for the organisation (201.17 tCO₂e) since the NPA began measuring and recording its carbon emissions. Emissions reduction over time is primarily being driven by a reduction in transport and electricity use emissions. The recent introduction of measuring our homeworking emissions (organisation-wide homeworking began in earnest as a practice during the COVID-19 Pandemic) has led to increases in reported organisational emissions.

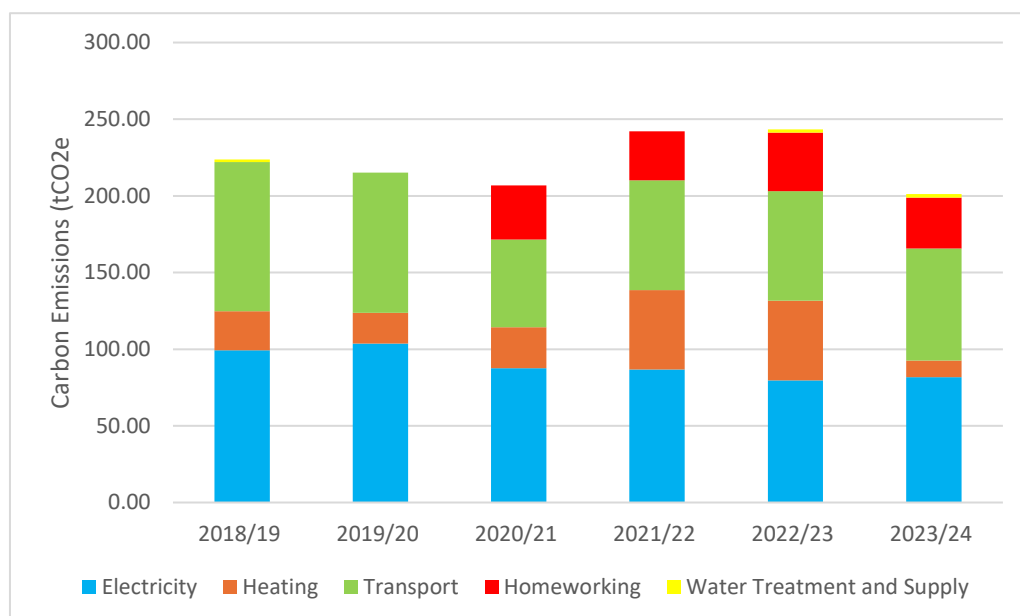


Figure 1. NPA organisational emissions from financial years 2018/2019 to 2023/2024, with emission source shown by type per financial year. N.B. For 2023/2024, heating does not include heat pump-related emissions as heat pumps are not currently fitted with monitoring equipment, and therefore, heat pump specific energy use cannot be isolated out accurately from total electricity use.

At the inception of our Mission Zero Programme, the NPA's estate and fleet decarbonisation programme, our baseline organisational emissions in FY 2018/2019 did not factor in homeworking. Moreover, water treatment and supply emissions also were not included in the FY 2018/2019 baseline emissions as this emissions category had been inconsistently applied over the years until recently. If homeworking and water treatment supply emissions are subsequently stripped out from our total organisational emissions, a more accurate, like-for-like trend can be seen, showing how Electricity, Heating and Transport emissions have cumulatively fallen since the start of the Mission Zero programme (figure 2). This shows that the changes in building use and the interventions that have been made as part of the Mission Zero programme, such as the adoption of EVs, has had an impact on reducing organisational emissions.

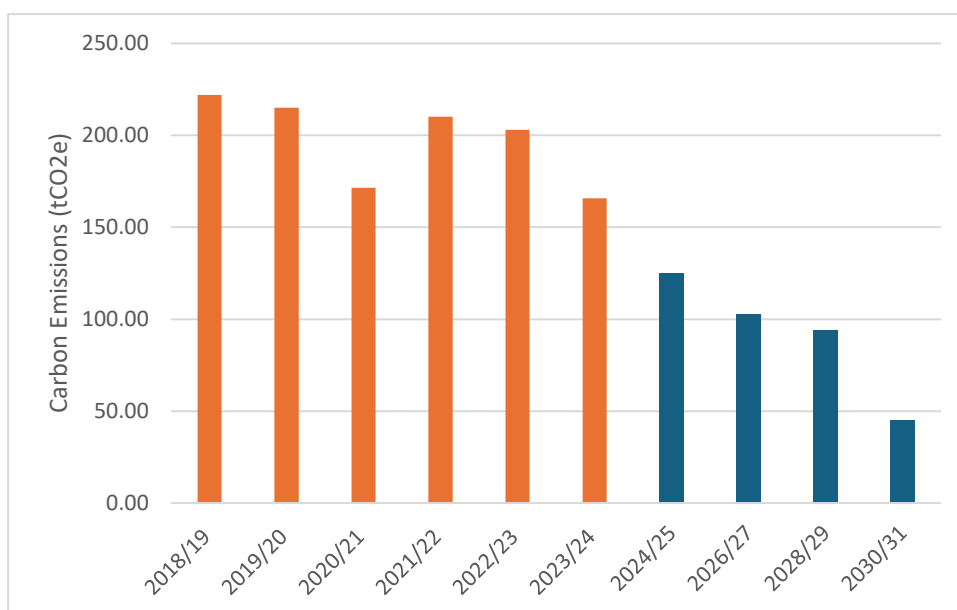


Figure 2. NPA organisational emissions to date (orange) with target emissions (blue) from 2024/25 to 2030/31 as set out in our Mission Zero Route Map. Please note that Figure 2 shows two different sets of data that are represented in two different ways. The orange bars represent actual organisational emissions each year since 2018/19. The blue bars represent the Mission Zero targets for the remainder of the programme which are not annual but instead at two-yearly increments to match the Mission Zero Route Map.

In figure 3, NPA emissions to date are contrasted against target emissions for future years which stems from our Mission Zero Route Map. This figure shows that while progress has been made in reducing organisational emissions, significant reductions still need to be made in the coming years to stay on track to meet our 2030 NPA net zero commitments



Figure 3 NPA organisational emissions from financial years 2018/2019 to 2023/2024, with homeworking, water treatment and supply emissions stripped out to show the progress made in reducing cumulative electricity, transport and heating during the Mission Zero programme against its baseline year, 2018/2019.

Figure 4 below illustrates the split in our organisational emissions by scope, which shows that Scope 1 and 2 emissions have fallen over time, while Scope 3 emissions have risen. While this is an informative figure, it is more of a reflection of what emissions we can measure, rather than accurate reflection of our entire emission spectrum.

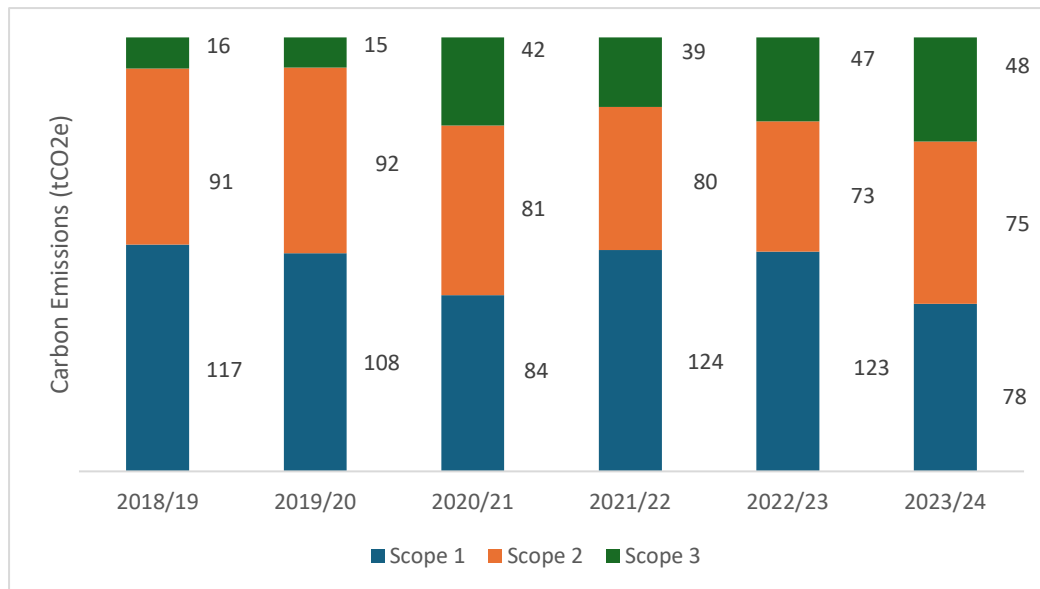


Figure 4. NPA emissions over time split by Scope

Definitions of Scope as used in Figure 4

Scope 1 covers emissions from sources that an organisation owns or controls directly – for example from burning fuel in our fleet of vehicles (if they're not electrically-powered).

Scope 2 are emissions that a company causes indirectly and come from where the energy it purchases and uses is produced. For example, the emissions caused when generating the electricity that we use in our buildings would fall into this category.

Scope 3 encompasses emissions that are not produced by the company itself and are not the result of activities from assets owned or controlled by them, but by those that it's indirectly responsible for up and down its value chain. An example of this is when we buy, use and dispose of products from suppliers. Scope 3 emissions include all sources not within the scope 1 and 2 boundaries.

Complaints & Information Requests Performance

Complaints

The Authority follows the Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Most complaints are resolved at the initial stage of this 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 process to be handled as 'complaint investigations', if they are more complex in nature and cannot reasonably be answered within five working days, and others are escalated where the complainant is dissatisfied with our initial response. A complaint investigation has a twenty working day response time.

The SPSO has five 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 at each stage
- Indicator Five - The outcome of complaints at each stage.

Indicator 1: Learning from complaints

The total number of complaints processed (110) is down from last year (125), and the number of complaints escalated to Stage 2 of the process is also down (from 18 last year to 7 this year). Overall, our rate of compliance with the five and twenty working day time limits was 78% for 2024/25 (down from 90% in 2023/24). The reduction is predominately a result of capacity and resource challenges within visitor operations, where there is a high volume of complaints during the visitor season and peak times, exacerbated during periods of good weather.

In one case, the complainant exercised their right to take their complaint to the SPSO. However, the SPSO decided to take no further action.

Most visitor management complaints are received during the peak visitor season from July to September. 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. Resource to monitor email enquiries over the weekend during the summer has again helped us ensure enquiries and complaints were resolved as quickly as possible.

All complaint investigations are managed by a different team to the area of business to which the complaints relate, which helps to ensure that the complaint is managed impartially, and that 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, and 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

| Complaint Stage | Number received in 2024/25 | Number responded to within time-limit (% of total) | Number received in 2023/24 | Number responded to within time-limit (% of total) |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Frontline complaints | 103 | 78 (76%) | 107 | 96 (90%) |
| Complaint investigations | 7 | 6 (86%) | 18 | 17 (94%) |
| Total | 110 | 84 (76%) | 125 | 113 (90%) |

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 2024/25 | 3 |
| Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2 in 2024/25 | 20 |

Indicator 5: Outcome of complaints

| 2024/25 | Resolved | Upheld | Not upheld | Partially upheld |
|--------------------------|----------|--------|------------|------------------|
| Frontline complaints | 103 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Complaint investigations | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 |
| Total | 103 | 0 | 6 | 1 |

Information Requests

The Authority has procedures in place to ensure that requests for access to information held are processed in line with the relevant data protection and freedom of information legislation. In 2024/25, we achieved 99% compliance in responding to information requests within the statutory deadlines (100% in 2023/24).

| | Number received 2024/25 | Responded to within time limit 2024/25 | Number received 2023/24 | Responded to within time limit 2023/24 |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Data Subject Access Requests (SAR) | 6 | 5* | 4 | 4** |
| Environmental Information Requests & Freedom of Information Requests | 88 | 87 | 53 | 53 |
| Environmental Information Reviews & Freedom of Information Reviews | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Total | 98* | 96 | 61 | 61 |

*One SAR response will be issued within its compliance timeframe, but not within 2024/25.

** In one of these four cases, the case was closed with no personal information having been disclosed, as sufficient evidence of identity was not provided.

Health and Safety Performance

This year, outside of the planned Policy review and development (and standard business engagement and support) our focus was on assessment of operations within the organisation to determine if our health and safety arrangements are embedded and effective.

Our internal compliance check activity, alongside input from other forms of monitoring, provided the means of assessment and through these we identified opportunities for improvements in the provision of 'information, instruction, training' and 'systems of work'.

- Continued business engagement and support delivered:
- Development of an M365-based Application for online H&S incident reporting (ParkSafe)
- Development of Policies (with supporting documentation) outwith planned reviews
- Continuing to raise awareness of health and safety and support staff through a range of engagement and information sharing activities
- Increased scope and availability of employee wellbeing support:
- Online Wellness Portal
- 1-to-1 Coaching
- Monthly In-Person Group Sessions
- Online Fortnightly Sessions

Increased H&S incident reporting continued through 2024/25, with this upward trend directly attributable to improved staff awareness and support for health and safety improvement.

| Incident Type | 2024/25 | 2023/24 | 2022/23 |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Accident | 23 | 11 | 12 |
| Near Miss | 14 | 5 | 5 |
| Incident of Note | 47 | 46 | 26 |
| TOTAL | 84 | 62 | 43 |
| RIDDOR | n/a | - | 1 |
| MAIB | n/a | 1 | - |

All incidents (types) were fully reviewed, looking for improvement opportunities, however none required a detailed follow-on investigation.

There were no RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) or MAIB (Marine Accident Investigation Board) reportable incidents.

Compared to previous years the profile for the top 5 injury categories remains the same, but with increased reporting across all category types.

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



Gordon Watson (Sep 25, 2025 08:47:38 GMT+1)

Gordon Watson
Chief Executive and Accountable Officer
25 SEPTEMBER 2025

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 Management Team of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.

Executive Management Team

The executive management of the Authority was undertaken by the Executive Management 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
- Head of Governance and Performance – Jane Kemp
- Head of People and Assets – Samantha Stubbs
- Head of Visitor Services – Kenny Auld

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 39. The membership of all committees and groups is kept under review and amendments made as required. Dr Heather Reid has been the Convener of the Board throughout the reporting period for 2024/25. Full details of the Members are listed on our [website](#). In 2024/25, Board Membership has remained largely consistent – one Local Authority nominee from Stirling Council left the Board in July 2024, with their replacement in place from October 2024. The Board has been at a full complement of seventeen members since that date. From January 2024 we have participated in the UK Government Boardroom Apprentice programme to increase opportunities for Board membership experience.

| Configuration of Board at 31 March 2025 | | | | | Statutory committee attendance 2024/25 | | | Non-Statutory committee attendance 2024/25 | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Name | Nature of appointment | Date of most recent appointment | End of term | Committee membership | NPA Board (4 meetings) | Planning & Access Committee (3 meetings) | Audit & Risk Committee (4 meetings) | Chairs and Exec (4 meetings) | Futures Group (3 meetings) |
| Martin Earl ⁽¹⁾ | (c) | 01/10/2022 | 30/09/2027 | A, CE, PI, LRB | 75% | 100% | 75% | 100% | 100% (3/3) |
| Claire Chapman ⁽¹⁾ | (b) | 01/11/2022 | 31/10/2026 | CE, PI, LRB | 75% | 100% | * | 100% | * |
| Sarah Drummond ⁽¹⁾ | (b) | 01/11/2022 | 31/10/2026 | CE, F | 75% | * | * | 75% | 100% |
| Ronnie Erskine ⁽¹⁾ | (b) | 01/11/2022 | 31/10/2026 | A, CE, PI, LRB | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | * |
| Heather Reid ⁽¹⁾ | (b) | 01/11/2022 | 31/10/2026 | CE | 100% | * | * | 100% | * |
| Christopher Spray ⁽¹⁾ | (b) | 01/11/2022 | 31/10/2026 | A, CE, PI, LRB | 75% | 100% | 75% | 100% | * |
| Iain Shonny Paterson ⁽¹⁾ | (a) | 08/07/2022 | 09/07/2026 | PI, LRB, F | 50% | 66% | * | * | 100% (1/1) |
| Hazel Sorrell ⁽¹⁾ | (c) | 01/10/2022 | 30/09/2027 | PI, LRB | 75% | 33% | * | * | * |
| William Sinclair ⁽¹⁾ | (c) | 01/10/2022 | 30/09/2027 | A, PI, LRB | 100% | 100% | 75% | * | * |
| Maurice Corry ⁽¹⁾ | (c) | 26/10/2022 | 30/09/2027 | A | 100% | * | 75% | * | * |
| Rhona Brock ⁽¹⁾ | (c) | 01/10/2022 | 30/09/2027 | F | 75% | * | * | * | 100% |
| David Mackie ⁽¹⁾ | (a) | 08/07/2022 | 09/07/2026 | A, PI, LRB | 100% | 66% | 75% | * | * |
| David Fettes ⁽¹⁾ | (a) | 08/07/2022 | 09/07/2026 | PI, LRB | 75% | 33% | 66% (2/3) | * | * |
| Richard Johnson ⁽¹⁾ | (a) | 08/07/2022 | 09/07/2026 | PI, LRB | 100% | 100% | * | * | * |
| Gerry McGarvey ⁽¹⁾ | (c) | 02/12/2024 | 01/12/2029 | F | 100% (1/1) | * | * | * | 0% (0/1) |
| Sid Perrie ⁽¹⁾ | (a) | 08/07/2022 | 09/07/2026 | F | 75% | * | * | * | 100% |
| James Messis ⁽¹⁾ | (d) | 01/01/2025 | 01/01/2026 | * | 100% (1/1) | * | * | * | * |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|------------|------------|---------|--------------|------|-----|---|--------------|
| Colin Lee (1) | (b) | 16/10/2023 | 16/10/2027 | PI, LRB | 75% | 100% | * | * | * |
| Chris Kane (2) | (c) | 21/09/2023 | 30/09/2027 | F | 66% (2/3) | * | * | * | 33% (1/3) |
| Navid Foroutan (2) | (d) | 01/01/2024 | 01/01/2025 | * | 66% (2/3) | * | 75% | * | * |

*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 2025; (2) Board Member during 2024/25 reporting period, not a Board Member at 31 March 2025

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 Management 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 Management 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 2025.

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).

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

In 2024/25 there were 3 higher priority cyber incidents which were recognized and mitigated by existing cyber security services without undue issue to National Park services. These included:

- Denial of Service attack on our Exchange Email server which was mitigated and stopped by existing security services.

- Unusually large amounts of data transferred through network which, after investigation, was identified and mitigated by existing security services.
- Unusual High-Risk log in attempts identified as potential credential stealing attack were made using National Park log in details. Picked up by Security Policies ensuring immediate blocking of logins outside UK.

We continue to work towards Cyber Essentials + certification, which should be achieved early in 2026/27 following the removal of out-of-date software.

Whistleblowing Policy

No whistleblowing complaints were received during 2024/25 (2023/24 – 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 2024/25 is Forvis Mazars LLP.

The Independent Auditor’s Report is on pages 62-66 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.

2024/25 saw all our statutory meetings being held in person, with the flexibility of virtual and hybrid meetings being utilised for our non-statutory meetings. Our statutory meetings were webcast live for public viewing. In person attendance was encouraged and advance notice was provided on our website.

In addition, there are two other Committees as at 31 March 2025:

- The Chairs and Executive Group is a 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 Management 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 2024/25:

- The Board held five formal meetings – four of which were scheduled, and one of which was a special meeting to hear and determine a Major Planning Application. All meetings were physically accessible to members of the public and were webcast live for wider public viewing as well as being physically accessible to the public. The four scheduled Board meetings took place at National Park Headquarters in Balloch, with the special meeting taking place in Lomond Parish Church to allow for increased public participation.
- 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 livestreamed and physically accessible to the public.

- 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 three times to consider certain planning applications, enforcement actions, policy papers, legal agreements and access matters. All meetings were open and accessible to the public. There were meetings in the community at Callander and Balloch.
- The Local Review Body met twice to hear planning reviews. Both meetings were accessible to the public.
- The Futures Group met three times during the year.

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

- Our Gaelic Language Plan 2024-2029
- Updates against delivery of our 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan
- Our Annual Operational Plan and Budget for 2025/26
- Updates to Standing Orders and Schemes of Delegation for Planning and Access
- Revised Code of Conduct for Board Members
- The 2023/24 Annual Report and Accounts
- The hearing and determination of the major planning application at Lomond Banks
- The Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report
- Committee Membership and Leadership
- Our Corporate Plan 2025-2030
- Regular Finance updates
- Strategic Estates Update
- Our Equalities Outcomes for 2025-2029
- Annual updates on Mission Zero, Future Nature, Place Investment Strategy, Sustainable Transport and Health and Safety

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 extension. In March 2024, the Audit & Risk Committee agreed to a final one-year extension to the contract, which will ended on 31 March 2025. A tender process for Internal Audit Services was undertaken in 2024/25 and Azets Technology Solutions Limited were awarded the internal audit services contract for three years from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.

The Internal Auditors presented the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2024/25 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 2025, Internal Audit have reported to the Audit & Risk Committee on their independent reviews on Compliance with Mandatory Qualifications, Unannounced Spot Checks, Board Effectiveness and Management of the Peatland Grant Scheme. All areas audited resulted in a reasonable level of assurance being found.

As part of the internal audit process, each member of the Executive Management 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

Forvis Mazars are in the third 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 Forvis 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 incident of suspected defrauding occurred. In line with the Scottish Public Finance Manual a summary was given to Internal Audit, External Audit, the Scottish Government Sponsor team and an update was provided to the Chair and Members of the Audit and Risk Committee. The incident was referred to Police Scotland.

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 2024/25 in June 2025 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

2024/25 saw one change in Board membership as a Member stepped down following their election to the House of Commons as a Member of Parliament. In order to manage and support continuity during this period, a number of operational activity plans were developed and implemented:

- Board Induction Planning
- Board Equality and Diversity Plan
- Board Training and Development Plan (including Strategy in Action)
- Board Skills Analysis and Succession Planning

The organisation continues to take part in the UK Government's Boardroom Apprentice programme which and has seen an additional non-voting Member join the Board to help develop skills and opportunities on both sides.

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 key risks, mitigations and risk management framework are laid out [above](#). 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 Management 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.

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 2024/25, Audit & Risk Committee chose to focus their deep dives on the corporate risks related to staff retention and resilience and medium-term budget.

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 Management 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. As highlighted under [Key Risks](#), Business Continuity and Cyber Security is actively managed and closely monitored.

The Authority's policy is to maintain the highest level possible of data security in its operations. Over the course of 2024/25 we have continued to implement improvements to increase our data and systems security.

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 accreditation was renewed for 2024/25. This certifies that the Park Authority is assessed as meeting the Cyber Essentials implementation profile and therefore, at the time of testing, our ICT defences were assessed as satisfactory against commodity based cyber-attack. The Authority continues to provide on-going regular Cyber Security Training to all users.

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 Management 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 2024/25 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 2024/25 states that based on the audit work undertaken and the assurances provided by the Executive Management 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 2024/25 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 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 Strategy. 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 2024/25, the Convenor, as authorised by the Board, implemented the £7.00 uplift in daily fees pay award (3.16%) available to Board Members in line with Scottish Government Public Sector Pay Strategy (2023/24: 1.84%). 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 21 of the Annual Accounts. Details of the actuarial assumptions used in pension valuations are included in Notes 1.18 and 21 of the Annual Accounts.

Disclosure of Remuneration – Chief Executive and Executive Management Team

| Year ended 31 March 2025 | Salary band at 31/3/25 £000 | Salary band paid during 2024/25 £000 | Allowances band £000 | Accrued Pension Benefits (1) £000 | Total Remuneration Band £000 |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Chief Executive Gordon Watson | 100-105 | 100-105 | 0 | 51 | 150-155 |
| Executive Management Team | | | | | |
| Simon Jones | 70-75 | 70-75 | 0-5 | 38 | 110-115 |
| Anna MacLean | 65-70 | 65-70 | 0 | 33 | 100-105 |
| Stuart Mearns | 70-75 | 70-75 | 0 | 34 | 105-110 |
| Samantha Stubbs | 50-55 | 50-55 | 0 | 18 | 70-75 |
| Jane Kemp | 50-55 | 45-50 (2) | 0 | 19 | 65-70 |
| Kenny Auld | 55-60 | 55-60 | 0 | 31 | 85-90 |

| Year ended 31 March 2024 | Salary band at 31/3/24 £000 | Salary band paid during 2023/24 £000 | Allowances band £000 | Accrued Pension Benefits (1) £000 | Total Remuneration Band £000 |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Chief Executive Gordon Watson | 95-100 | 95-100 | 0 | 43 | 140-145 |
| Executive Management Team | | | | | |
| Simon Jones | 70-75 | 70-75 | 0-5 | 35 | 105-110 |
| Anna MacLean | 60-65 | 60-65 | 0 | 32 | 95-100 |
| Stuart Mearns | 70-75 | 70-75 | 0 | 38 | 105-110 |
| Pete Wightman (3) | 65-70 | 10-15(2) | 0 | 9 | 20-25 |
| Samantha Stubbs (4) | 45-50 | 45-50 | 0 | 12 | 60-65 |
| Jane Kemp (4) | 50-55 | 45-50 | 0 | 12 | 55-60 |
| Kenny Auld (4) | 50-55 | 50-55 | 0 | 8 | 60-65 |

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. Leaver during the year 2023/24
4. Joined Executive Management Team during 2023/24

There were no other emoluments paid to the Chief Executive and the Executive Management Team in the year ended 31 March 2025 (2023/24 – nil).

| Year ended 31 March 2025 | Real increase/ (decrease) in pension value £000 | Real increase / (decrease) in related lump sum £000 | Total accrued pension at 31 March 2025 £000 | Total related lump sum at 31 March 2025 £000 | Cash equivalent transfer value at 31 March 2025 £000 | Real increase/ (decrease) in cash equivalent transfer value (1) £000 |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| Chief Executive Gordon Watson | 2.5-5 | 0-2.5 | 65-70 | 85-90 | 1,196 | 58 |
| Executive Management Team | | | | | | |
| Simon Jones | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 15-20 | 0-5 | 240 | 30 |
| Anna MacLean | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 15-20 | 0-5 | 211 | 23 |
| Stuart Mearns | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 20-25 | 0-5 | 302 | 25 |
| Jane Kemp | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 0-5 | 0-5 | 28 | 12 |
| Samantha Stubbs | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 0-5 | 0-5 | 39 | 9 |
| Kenny Auld | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 15-20 | 0-5 | 207 | 21 |

| Year ended 31 March 2024 | Real increase/ (decrease) in pension value £000 | Real increase / (decrease) in related lump sum £000 | Total accrued pension at 31 March 2024 £000 | Total related lump sum at 31 March 2024 £000 | Cash equivalent transfer value at 31 March 2024 £000 | Real increase/ (decrease) in cash equivalent transfer value (1) £000 |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| Chief Executive Gordon Watson | 2.5-5 | (2.5-5) | 60-65 | 80-85 | 1,100 | 156 |
| Executive Management Team | | | | | | |
| Simon Jones | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 10-15 | 0-5 | 199 | 48 |
| Anna MacLean | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 10-15 | 0-5 | 178 | 47 |
| Stuart Mearns | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 15-20 | 0-5 | 264 | 66 |
| Pete Wightman (2) | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 0-5 | 0-5 | 44 | 4 |
| Jane Kemp (3) | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 0-5 | 0-5 | 13 | 8 |
| Samantha Stubbs (3) | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 0-5 | 0-5 | 26 | 8 |
| Kenny Auld (3) | 0-2.5 | 0-2.5 | 10-15 | 0-5 | 178 | 37 |

1. Excluding inflation and Executive contributions.
2. Leaver effective 26 May 2023
3. Joined Executive Management Team effective 29 May 2023

Gordon Watson, Simon Jones, Anna MacLean, Stuart Mearns, Pete Wightman, Kenny Auld, Samantha Stubbs and Jane Kemp 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.

Public Service Pensions Remedy

Accrued pension benefits included in these table for any individuals affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment. The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

Compensation on Early Retirement / Loss of Office

There were no exit packages in the year ended 31 March 2025 (2023/24 – 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 2025 (2023/24 – nil).

Fair Pay

The midpoint of the highest paid Director's salary banding has increased by 3.0% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, reflecting the Scottish Government's public sector pay strategy. For the employees of the organisation as a whole, at 31 March 2025, the average percentage salary change from the previous year was an increase of 4.3% reflecting the impact of the annual pay award. Excluding seasonal and agency staff, the average salary has increased by 4.3%, which is again reflective of the 2025 pay award.

The median total remuneration (the difference between the mid-point of pay taking into account all roles within an organisation) of all staff was £33,486 at 31 March 2025 (2023/24 - £32,511). 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 (2023/24 - 2.9). At 31 March 2025, there were 47 seasonal staff employed by the Authority (2023/24 - 42).

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 25 | 31 March 24 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| 25 th Percentile | 3.7 : 1 £27,413 | 3.7 : 1 £26,615 |
| 50 th Percentile | 3.0 : 1 £33,486 | 3.0 : 1 £32,511 |
| 75 th Percentile | 2.3 : 1 £43,355 | 2.4 : 1 £40,552 |

The pay ratios have remained broadly the same across financial years. Seasonal ranger headcount increased from 42 at the end of 2023/24 to 47 at the end of 2024/25. This number fluctuates over the year to meet the demands of the season and includes those on permanent seasonal contracts as well as single season contracts. At its highest within the 2024/25 financial year, we employed 51 seasonal staff, compared to 43 in 2023/24.

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 25 | 31 March 24 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| 25 th Percentile | 3.1 : 1 £32,277 | 3.3 : 1 £30,116 |
| 50 th Percentile | 2.6 : 1 £38,644 | 2.7 : 1 £36,711 |
| 75 th Percentile | 2.3 : 1 £43,355 | 2.3 : 1 £42,092 |

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

| Band | 31 March 25 | 31 March 24 |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| A | 23,020 | 20,811 |
| CEO | 101,097 | 98,152 |

Analysis of Board Members' Fees and Expenses (with prior year comparatives)

| Board member | Nature of Appointment | 2023/24 Fees £000 | 2023/24 Expenses (1) £ | 2024/25 Fees £000 | 2024/25 Expenses (1) £ |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Martin Earl | (c) | 15-20 | - | 15-20 | - |
| Claire Chapman | (b) | 15-20 | 792 | 15-20 | 518 |
| Sarah Drummond | (b) | 10-15 | 1,501 | 10-15 | 1,451 |
| Ronnie Erskine | (b) | 10-15 | 672 | 10-15 | 587 |
| Heather Reid | (b) | 20-25 | 145 | 20-25 | - |
| Christopher Spray | (b) | 5-10 | 623 | 5-10 | 689 |
| Iain Shonny Paterson | (a) | 5-10 | - | 5-10 | 207 |
| Zain Sehgal | (d) | 0-5 | 93 | 0-5 | - |
| William Sinclair | (c) | 5-10 | 748 | 5-10 | 527 |
| Maurice Corry | (c) | 5-10 | - | 5-10 | - |
| Garry McGarvey | (c) | 5-10 | - | 5-10 | - |
| Hazel Sorrell | (c) | 5-10 | - | 5-10 | - |
| Rhona Brock | (c) | 5-10 | 94 | 5-10 | - |
| David Mackie | (a) | 5-10 | - | 5-10 | - |
| David Fettes | (a) | 5-10 | 212 | 5-10 | 240 |
| Richard Johnson | (a) | 5-10 | 416 | 5-10 | 529 |
| Sid Perrie | (a) | 5-10 | - | 5-10 | - |
| Colin Lee | (b) | 0-5 | - | 5-10 | - |
| Chris Kane | (c) | 0-5 | - | 0-5 | - |
| Navid Foroutan | (d) | 0-5 | - | 0-5 | 780 |
| | | | 5,296 | | 5,528 |

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

(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 2024/25 was 55 hours, which as a percentage of working hours was between 1 and 50% (2023/24: 40 hours).

During 2024/25 the key matters on which UNISON representatives were consulted were:

- Pay negotiations,
- Change Management,
- Policies and Procedures.

Equality and Diversity #

We are committed to supporting and promoting diversity on our Board, Executive Management 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 2024.

We continue to look at ways to engage staff in promoting diversity and inclusion. We engaged with staff and updated the layout of our HQ building to make it more flexible to meet more people's needs, reviewed our staff induction programme to include EDI training and sought feedback from staff on our new equality outcomes.

We continue to implement our Board Diversity Plan for Board Appointments and elections to seek ways to have a more diverse Board. Gender balance remained consistent on the Board in 2024/25 – 31% of Board Members were women. Our participation in the Boardroom Apprentice Programme increased the diversity of our board's ethnic composition and the evaluation process has allowed us to develop actions to help further develop our work in diversifying the Board.

Our policies ensure that all staff are treated equally irrespective of sex, marital/civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, age, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief and gender reassignment.

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 an Executive Management Team member, support the organisation to achieve our equality outcomes and work with all staff to mainstream equalities 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 throughout the organisation and avoiding unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for learning and development, pay and benefits.

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 2025 | | | 31 March 2024 | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| | Female# | Male# | Total | Female# | Male# | Total |
| Executive Management Team | 3 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| Managers | 12 | 10 | 22 | 12 | 8 | 20 |
| Other Employees | 91 | 82 | 173 | 88 | 84 | 172 |
| Total | 106 | 96 | 202 | 103 | 96 | 199 |

Other Staff Details

| Staff Numbers | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Average Number of Board Members during the Year (including Shadow Board Members) | 18 | 18 |
| Average Number of Full Time Equivalent Employees during the Year | 174.37 | 174.87 |
| Analysis of Average Number of Full Time Equivalent Employees | | |
| Permanent | 144.80 | 144.40 |
| Fixed Term | 5.88 | 8.17 |
| Seasonal | 23.68 | 22.30 |
| Total | 174.36 | 174.87 |
| Numbers of staff with salaries above £70,000 (including Chief Executive) | 2025 | 2024 |
| £90,001 - £100,000 | 1 | 1 |
| £70,001 - £90,000 | 2 | 2 |

| Board Member and Staff Costs (Note 7) | Note | 2025 | 2024 |
|--|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | £ | £ |
| Board Members' Fees | | 181,747 | 170,393 |
| Social Security Costs | | 5,397 | 4,351 |
| Total Board Members | | 187,144 | 174,744 |
| Permanent Staff Salaries | | 5,291,052 | 4,943,902 |
| Social Security Costs | | 555,812 | 499,233 |
| Pension Costs | | 510,856 | 887,789 |
| Total Permanent Staff | | 6,357,720 | 6,330,924 |
| Other Staff Salaries | | 832,259 | 859,110 |
| Social Security Costs | | 66,786 | 73,090 |
| Pension Costs | | 84,954 | 169,310 |
| Total Other Staff | | 983,999 | 1,101,510 |
| Apprenticeship Levy | | 15,804 | 15,514 |
| (Decrease)/ increase in holiday accrual | | (27,835) | 29,114 |
| Deduct: Included in Programme and Project figures | | (48,627) | (50,255) |
| Total Permanent and Other Staff costs before adjustments for pensions reporting | | 7,281,061 | 7,426,807 |
| <u>Adjustments for Pensions Reporting</u> | | | |
| Add: Current Service Costs | 21 | 1,126,000 | 1,079,000 |
| Less: Employer's Contribution | 21 | (593,000) | (1,051,000) |
| Total Permanent and Other Staff costs after adjustments for pensions reporting | | 7,814,061 | 7,454,807 |
| Total Board Member and Staff Costs | | 8,001,205 | 7,629,551 |

Staff Turnover

Staff turnover, excluding seasonal staff, was 13.9% (2023/24 – 13.8%). This is almost the same as last year, and still below the national average of 21.1%.

Wellbeing

During the year, the Authority recorded an average loss of 3.9 days per employee for sickness absence, which is a decrease on 2023/24 (5.2 days).

The health and wellbeing of our staff continues to be a priority. Having received positive feedback, we continue to engage our wellness coach offering various in-person sessions as well as a wide-ranging online programme and one-to-one coaching sessions.

In addition to this we continue to support our staff by providing flexible HR policies and working environment and the 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 (2023/24 - nil) and paid no off payroll arrangements in the year ended 31 March 2025 (2023/24 – £3,288).

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 26. A net cash underspend of £283k was reported for the year to 31 March 2025, with revenue being £83k underspent and capital £200k underspent. Non-cash expenditure was £2.5m under budget.

Income for 2024/25 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 2024/25 includes Board Member and staff costs, operating costs, project expenditure and programme expenditure in relation to the West Highland Way. Non-cash expenditure includes depreciation and amortisation, movement in the holiday accrual and pension adjustments.

Gifts and Charitable Donations

Gifts totalling £929 were made in the year (2023/24 - £325). Charitable cash donations totalling £100 were made in the year (2023/24 - nil).

Losses, Special Payments and Write-offs

There was a bad debt provision for £2,378 in the year (2023/24 – £nil) and a bad debt write off of £nil (2023/24 - £127,200 which was approved by our Scottish Government sponsor team). There were no special payments or stock write-offs in the year (2023/24 – no special payments and no stock write-offs). There no losses arising from asset write-offs (2023/24 - £nil).

Remote Contingent Liabilities

There were no remote contingent liabilities as at 31 March 2025.

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



Gordon Watson (Sep 25, 2025 08:47:38 GMT+1)

Gordon Watson

Chief Executive and Accountable Officer

25 September 2025

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 financial statements

We have audited the financial statements in the annual report and accounts of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority for the year ended 31 March 2025 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 Taxpayers' Equity and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information. 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 2024/25 Government Financial Reporting Manual (the 2024/25 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 2025 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 2024/25 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 Forvis Mazars LLP

Forvis Mazars LLP

100 Queen Street

Glasgow – G1 3DN

25 September 2025

Annual Accounts

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

| | Note | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|--|---------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Expenditure | | | |
| Programme Expenditure | 4 | (95,537) | (81,633) |
| Project Expenditure | | (1,599,142) | (2,321,483) |
| Board Members and Staff Costs | 7 | (8,001,205) | (7,629,551) |
| Other Operating Costs | 8 | (2,297,569) | (2,362,575) |
| Depreciation and Amortisation | 9/10/18 | (808,822) | (712,849) |
| Impairment Charges | 9/10 | (2,436,529) | - |
| Total Expenditure | | (15,238,804) | (13,108,091) |
| Income | | | |
| Planning Fees | | 203,490 | 201,728 |
| Programme Income | 4 | 95,537 | 82,325 |
| Project Income | | 707,243 | 1,981,163 |
| Other Income | 6 | 637,125 | 865,095 |
| Profit on Disposal of Property, Plant & Equipment | | 18,770 | - |
| Total Income | | 1,662,165 | 3,130,311 |
| Net Expenditure | 5 | (13,576,639) | (9,977,780) |
| Interest Receivable | | 36,183 | 31,891 |
| Interest Payable | | (9,112) | (8,131) |
| Net Expenditure for Year | | (13,549,568) | (9,954,020) |
| Other Comprehensive Net Income/ (Expenditure) | | | |
| Net (Loss)/ Gain on Revaluation of Property | | (612,433) | 224,789 |
| Actuarial Gain/ (Loss) on Pension Scheme | | 555,000 | (3,069,000) |
| Total Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure | | (57,433) | (2,844,211) |
| Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure | | (13,607,001) | (12,798,231) |

No activities were discontinued during the year.

The notes on pages 71 to 111 form part of these Accounts.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2025

| | Note | 2025 £ | Restated 2024 £ |
|--|------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Non-current Assets | | | |
| Property, plant and equipment | 9 | 10,729,392 | 12,765,467 |
| Right-of-use assets | 18 | 399,216 | 411,177 |
| Intangible assets | 10 | 2,080 | 27,335 |
| Investments | 11 | - | - |
| Trade and other receivables | 13 | 58,556 | 63,438 |
| Total Non-current Assets | | 11,189,244 | 13,267,417 |
| Current Assets | | | |
| Assets classified as held for sale | 12 | 55,497 | - |
| Inventories | | 7,134 | 4,610 |
| Trade and other receivables | 13 | 423,200 | 930,531 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 14 | 2,319,583 | 3,550,403 |
| Total Current Assets | | 2,805,414 | 4,485,544 |
| Current Liabilities | | | |
| Trade and other payables | 15 | 1,397,670 | 3,389,638 |
| Total Current Liabilities | | 1,397,670 | 3,389,638 |
| Non-current Assets less Net Current Liabilities | | 12,596,988 | 14,363,323 |
| Non-current Liabilities | | | |
| Trade and other payables | 15 | 451,120 | 464,454 |
| Pension fund liability | 21 | 45,000 | 51,000 |
| Total Non-current Liabilities | | 496,120 | 515,454 |
| Assets less Liabilities | | 12,100,868 | 13,847,869 |
| Taxpayers' Equity | | | |
| General Reserve | | 7,399,283 | 8,268,578 |
| Revaluation Reserve | | 4,626,585 | 5,510,291 |
| Donated Asset Reserve | | 120,000 | 120,000 |
| Pension Reserve | 21 | (45,000) | (51,000) |
| Total Taxpayers' Equity | | 12,100,868 | 13,847,869 |

The Accountable Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 25 September 2025.



Gordon Watson (Sep 25, 2025 08:47:38 GMT+1)

Gordon Watson

Chief Executive and Accountable Officer

The notes on pages 71 to 111 form part of these Accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

| | Note | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|---|---------|------------------|------------------|
| Cash Flows from Operating Activities | | | |
| Net Expenditure before Interest | | (13,576,638) | (9,977,780) |
| Adjustments for items not involving the Movement of Cash | | | |
| Pension adjustments in Other Income | 6 | 16,000 | (138,000) |
| Net pension adjustments in Staff Costs | 7 | 533,000 | 28,000 |
| Depreciation and Amortisation | 9/10/18 | 808,822 | 712,849 |
| Provision for impairment of assets | 9/10 | 2,436,529 | - |
| Net gain on disposal of property, plant & equipment | | (18,770) | - |
| Movements in Working Capital | | | |
| Decrease/ (increase) in trade and other receivables | | 507,331 | (314,170) |
| (Decrease)/ increase in trade and other payables | | (1,993,240) | 1,663,202 |
| (Increase)/ decrease in inventories | | (2,524) | 1,919 |
| Movement in Non-current Assets and Liabilities | | | |
| Decrease in trade and other receivables > 1 year | | 801 | 16,539 |
| Decrease in trade and other payables > 1 year | | (6,315) | (11,107) |
| Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities | | (11,295,004) | (8,018,548) |
| Cash Flows from Investing Activities | | | |
| Bank interest received | | 34,660 | 31,891 |
| Lease payments received from finance leases | | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Purchase of property, plant & equipment and intangible assets | | (1,842,236) | (3,221,308) |
| Proceeds from disposal of property, plant & equipment | | 24,314 | - |
| Net Cash Outflow from Investing Activities | | (1,778,262) | (3,184,417) |
| Cash flows from Financing Activities | | | |
| Payment of lease liabilities | | (17,554) | (44,040) |
| Cash allocation applied to Operating Costs | 3 | 9,440,000 | 9,634,000 |
| Cash allocation applied to Capital Expenditure | 3 | 2,420,000 | 3,021,000 |
| Net (Decrease)/ increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents | | (1,230,820) | 1,407,995 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period | 14 | 3,550,403 | 2,142,408 |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Period | 14 | 2,319,583 | 3,550,403 |

The notes on pages 71 to 111 form part of these Accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

| | General Fund | Revaluation Reserve | Donated Asset Reserve | Pension Reserve | Total |
|---|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Balance at 1 April 2023 | 5,523,893 | 5,469,697 | 120,000 | 2,908,000 | 14,021,590 |
| Cash allocation* | 12,655,000 | - | - | - | 12,655,000 |
| Net expenditure after interest | (9,954,020) | - | - | - | (9,954,020) |
| Gain on indexation of property | - | 224,789 | - | - | 224,789 |
| Loss on revaluation of property | - | (32,340) | - | - | (32,340) |
| Release of revaluation reserve to general reserve to offset increased depreciation on revalued assets | 153,705 | (153,705) | - | - | - |
| Write back of depreciation on revaluation | - | 1,850 | - | - | 1,850 |
| Pension fund actuarial loss | - | - | - | (3,069,000) | (3,069,000) |
| IAS 19 pension adjustment | (110,000) | - | - | 110,000 | - |
| Balance at 31 March 2024 | 8,268,578 | 5,510,291 | 120,000 | (51,000) | 13,847,869 |
| Balance at 1 April 2024 | 8,268,578 | 5,510,291 | 120,000 | (51,000) | 13,847,869 |
| Cash Allocation* | 11,860,000 | - | - | - | 11,860,000 |
| Net Expenditure after interest | (13,549,568) | - | - | - | (13,549,568) |
| Gain on indexation of property | - | 84,622 | - | - | 84,622 |
| Loss on revaluation of property | - | (1,095,790) | - | - | (1,095,790) |
| Release of revaluation reserve to general reserve to offset increased depreciation on revalued assets | 271,273 | (271,273) | - | - | - |
| Write back of depreciation on revaluation | - | 398,735 | - | - | 398,735 |
| Pension fund actuarial loss | - | - | - | 555,000 | 555,000 |
| IAS 19 pension adjustment | 549,000 | - | - | (549,000) | - |
| Balance at 31 March 2025 | 7,399,283 | 4,626,585 | 120,000 | (45,000) | 12,100,868 |

* 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 (FReM), 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. 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.

.2. Accounting Period

The accounting period commenced on 1 April 2024 and ended on 31 March 2025.

.3. Non-Current Assets

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 1.18.

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

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. Where we are the lessee we have applied IFRS16 using the modified retrospective approach. Where we are the lessor the distinction between operating and finance leases remains. More details are provided in note 1.6.

4. Non-current assets classified as held for sale

We classify a non-current asset as held for sale if its carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continuing use. This condition is regarded as met when the asset is actively being marketed by management, it is available for immediate sale in its present condition, the sale is considered to be highly probable and is expected to qualify for recognition as a completed sale within one year from the date of classification.

Assets classified as held for sale are measured at the lower of their carrying amounts immediately prior to their classification as held for sale and their fair value less costs to sell. Depreciation or amortisation for such assets is not charged from the date they are classified as an asset held for sale.

Further information on non-current assets classified as held for sale is given in note 12.

.5. 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.

.6. Leases

As noted above, where we are the lessee we have applied IFRS 16 using the modified retrospective approach.

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 Authority 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 a separate category 'right-of-use assets' and lease liabilities in 'trade and other

payables' in the statement of financial position. Details of the prior period adjustment to restate the presentation are included in note 2.

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.

.7. 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.

.8. 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.

.9. 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.

.10. 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 IAS 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 1.16 and 21). The contribution charges are recognised in the financial years in which they arise.

.11. 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.

.12. 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 2025.

.13. 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 2025.

.14. 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.

.15. 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.

.16. Reserves

The Authority holds the following reserves:

- The General Reserve is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in other reserves;
- Revaluation Reserve records the unrealised gains or losses on revaluation of assets other than those that have been donated;
- Donated Asset Reserve records the unrealised gains or losses on revaluation of assets donated to the Authority including under peppercorn leases;
- Pension Reserve records the unrealised gains or losses on revaluation of the pension scheme assets and liabilities.

.17. 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. Segmental information is based on the three chapters of our National Park Partnership Plan and an additional chapter reflecting the organisation's corporate development work (Note 5).

.18. 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 (The Red Book), with the latest edition having taken effect from 31 January 2025. 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). The last full property portfolio re-valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2023.

31 March 2025 represents year 2 in the current valuation cycle. The value of specialised assets held on a depreciated replacement cost (DRC) basis and valued at 31 March 2023 is supplemented by annual indexation as at 31 March 2025 using published indices. Valuations were carried out on properties where there had been material works completed during the year.

As at 31 March 2025 the Authority holds two properties which are assessed as surplus:

- One property, previously valued on a Depreciated Replacement Cost basis has been considered a surplus property since 31 March 2022. The building is leased by the Authority and is vacant at 31 March 2025. 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 conditions of the head lease and lack of tenant demand, the fair value of the property to the Authority 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 2025, the asset is considered as surplus and options for disposal of the property are being pursued. 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 2025.

The Board and Accountable Officer do not consider there to be any other critical accounting judgements requiring disclosure at 31 March 2025.

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 2025 highlights that although it is being provided in a market that is experiencing some uncertainty, the valuer does not consider the assets which are being appraised to be subject to material valuation uncertainty at the valuation date.

A variance of 1% in the indexation rate applied to land and buildings as at 31 March 2025 would result in a change in valuation of £37k.

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 are included in Note 21.

The actuary conducts a formal triennial valuation of the fund, the most recent valuation being conducted as at 31 March 2023. 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 2024 to 31 March 2027. The statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025 and the projected cost for 2025/26 are based on the roll forward from the valuation at 31 March 2023. 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 2025. The pension liabilities are valued on an actuarial basis, using the actuary's standard assumptions, appropriate for the Authority's liability profile.

Where the fair value of the plan assets are calculated to be greater than the present value of the defined benefit obligation there may be a restriction to the net pension asset that can be recognised. This is referred to as the asset ceiling. The methodology to calculate the asset ceiling applied by the actuary assumes that the economic benefit available to the Authority from this surplus is from a reduction in future contributions as the Authority has no unconditional right to a refund from the Fund.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below. The IAS 19 report, prepared by the actuary, contains sensitivity analysis on the principle assumptions.

| Change in assumptions as at 31 March 2025 | Approximate % increase to Employer Liability | Approximate monetary amount £000 |
|--|---|---|
| 0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate | 2% | 496 |
| 1 year increase in life expectancy | 4% | 980 |
| 0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate | 0% | 30 |
| 0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI) | 2% | 479 |

.19. Changes in Accounting Standards

- a) *Standards, amendments, and interpretations effective in 2024/25*
There are no new standards, amendments or interpretations effective this year.
- b) *Standards, amendments, and interpretation early adopted in 2024/25*
There are no new standards, amendments or interpretations early adopted this year.
- c) *Standards, amendments and interpretation effective in 2025/26*
In December 2023 HM Treasury released an Exposure Draft on potential changes that affect Government Financial Reporting Manual adaptations and interpretations of International Accounting Standard 16 Property Plant and Equipment and adaptations of International Accounting Standard 38 Intangible Assets in respect of the measurement of assets. These changes have been approved and are effective from 1 April 2025.

The main impact for the Authority will be a change in the frequency of the revaluation of property. The Authority will no longer be required to supplement the quinquennial revaluation with an interim professional revaluation in year 3. Annual indexation will be applied in all four intervening years unless there is an indication of impairment.

The transition period is from 1 April 2025 to the date the next revaluation is due for an asset.

2. Prior year comparatives

Right-of-Use Assets

The 2023/24 Statement of Financial Position did not disclose the right-of-use assets as a separate category. The net book value of £411,177 was included within Property, Plant and Equipment of £13,176,644.

Property, Plant and Equipment has been restated to £12,765,467 and right-of-use assets of £411,177 have been disclosed as a separate category.

Comparatives for note 9 Property, Plant and Equipment have been restated with the right-of-use assets information now being presented within note 18 Leases. The impact of this reclassification is show below:

| | Total previously reported for Property, Plant and Equipment £ | Right of use asset £ | Restated total for Property, Plant and Equipment £ |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| Cost or valuation | | | |
| At 1 April 2023 | 14,190,560 | 516,628 | 13,673,932 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 17,181,916 | 516,628 | 16,665,288 |
| Accumulated depreciation | | | |
| At 1 April 2023 | 3,699,644 | 68,101 | 3,631,543 |
| Charge for the year | 711,133 | 43,090 | 668,043 |
| Written back on revaluation | (5,740) | (5,740) | - |
| At 31 March 2024 | 4,005,272 | 105,451 | 3,899,821 |
| Net book value | | | |
| At 31 March 2024 | 13,176,644 | 411,177 | 12,765,467 |
| At 31 March 2023 | 10,490,916 | 448,527 | 10,042,389 |

This does not impact on any other notes or primary statements.

Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities

The 2023/24 Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities note contained a misclassification of balances between Trade Payables and Accruals. It also did not present Accruals and Deferred Income as separate line items. The impact of these reclassifications are shown below:

| | Previously reported | Reclassification | Separate disclosure | Restated analysis |
|------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Trade payables | 1,322,832 | 724,286 | | 2,047,118 |
| Accruals | 2,047,118 | (724,286) | (296,223) | 1,026,609 |
| Deferred income | - | - | 296,223 | 296,223 |

This does not impact any other notes or primary statements.

Trade Receivables and Other Assets

The 2023/24 Trade Receivables and Other Assets note did not present Prepayments and Accrued Income as separate line items. The impact of this reclassification is shown below:

| | Previously reported | Separate disclosure | Restated analysis |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Prepayments and accrued income | 592,057 | (592,057) | - |
| Prepayments | | 330,755 | 330,755 |
| Accrued income | - | 261,302 | 261,302 |

This does not impact any other notes or primary statements.

3. Scottish Government Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Cash DEL allocated to meet operational expenditure | 9,440,000 | 9,634,000 |
| Cash DEL allocated to meet capital expenditure | 2,420,000 | 3,021,000 |
| Total cash DEL received (resource and capital DEL) | 11,860,000 | 12,655,000 |

The cash DEL (Grant in Aid) in 2024/25 included

- direct funding for peatland restoration, conservation and management in the National Park totalling £810,000 (2023/24 - £421,000) and
- £nil (2023/24 - £250,000) 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.
- £nil (2023/24 - £300,000) to fund Capital projects contributing to the delivery of the National Park's Mission Zero programme to become a net zero organisation by 2030

In 2023/24 the cash allocation contained £500,000 explicitly to maintain seasonal ranger provision in line with the recommendations of the Visitor Management Steering Group. In 2024/25 there was no allocation explicitly for seasonal ranger provision but there was an expectation that cash DEL would be used to maintain and prioritise visitor management activities in line with previous years.

4. Programme Income & Expenditure

| | Income | Expenditure | Net |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| West Highland Way | 95,537 | 95,537 | - |
| Callander Landscape Partnership | - | - | - |
| Total 2025 | 95,537 | 95,537 | - |
| West Highland Way | 70,736 | 70,736 | - |
| Callander Landscape Partnership | 11,589 | 10,897 | 692 |
| Total 2024 | 82,325 | 81,633 | 692 |

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 was 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 was the lead partner and managed the programme income and expenditure for this specific purpose. The Programme of work was completed in March 2023.

5. Analysis of Net Expenditure by Segment

IFRS 8 requires operating segments to be identified on the basis of internal reports about components of the organisation that are regularly reviewed by the chief operating decision maker in order to allocate resources to the segment and to assess its performance.

The categories reported in 2024/25 relate to the transitional year between the conclusion of the National Park Partnership Plan and Corporate Plans ending in 2024 and the commencement of the new Plans for 2024-2029. Segmental information is based on the three chapters of our National Park Partnership Plan and an additional chapter reflecting the organisation's corporate development work.

The 2023/24 disclosures have been restated to align with the new segments. These are broadly comparable with the previous disclosure as outlined below with the creation of a new segment to reflect the organisation's corporate development work as captured in the new Corporate Plan.

Activities previously captured within the Conservation segment are now reported in Restoring Nature. Low carbon place contains activities previously reported under Visitor Experience and Greener Way of Living captures the activities previously reported under Rural Development.

The table presents management information, produced on an IFRS basis, on income, expenditure, net operating cost and capital additions relating to the operating segments for the year ended 31 March 2025. Other assets and liabilities are not reported on a segmental basis as they do not form part of the regular review by management to make decisions about resources to be allocated to the segment or to assess its performance.

Net Expenditure by Segment year ended 31 March 2025

| | Restoring Nature | Low Carbon Place | Greener Way of Living | Corporate Plan | Total |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Programme Expenditure | - | 95,537 | - | - | 95,537 |
| Project Expenditure | 687,086 | 730,622 | 47,004 | 134,430 | 1,599,142 |
| Board Members and Other Staff Costs | 1,433,564 | 4,749,017 | 1,585,474 | 233,150 | 8,001,205 |
| Other Operating Costs | 18,889 | 2,062,082 | 187,398 | 29,200 | 2,297,569 |
| Total Attributable Expenditure | 2,139,539 | 7,637,258 | 1,819,876 | 396,780 | 11,993,453 |
| Income | | | | | |
| Planning Fees | - | - | 203,490 | - | 203,490 |
| Programme Income | - | 95,537 | - | - | 95,537 |
| Project Income | 15,264 | 691,979 | - | - | 707,243 |
| Other Income | 24,089 | 575,211 | 53,825 | - | 653,125 |
| Total Attributable Income | 39,353 | 1,362,727 | 257,315 | - | 1,659,395 |
| Net Attributable Expenditure | 2,100,186 | 6,274,531 | 1,562,561 | 396,780 | 10,334,058 |
| Items not attributable to segmental activity | | | | | |
| Deficit of return on pension assets over interest | | | | | 16,000 |
| Depreciation and amortisation | | | | | 808,822 |
| Impairment of asset | | | | | 2,436,529 |
| Net gain on disposal of property, plant, and equipment | | | | | (18,770) |
| Interest receivable | | | | | (36,183) |
| Interest payable | | | | | 9,112 |
| Net Expenditure for the Year | | | | | 13,549,568 |
| Capital Asset Additions | 13,998 | 1,535,486 | 14,598 | 278,154 | 1,842,236 |

Net Expenditure by Segment year ended 31 March 2024

| | Restoring Nature | Low Carbon Place | Greener Way of Living | Corporate Plan | Total |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Programme Expenditure | - | 70,736 | 10,897 | - | 81,633 |
| Project Expenditure | 873,556 | 1,315,724 | 31,588 | 100,615 | 2,321,483 |
| Board Members and Other Staff Costs | 1,282,424 | 4,670,954 | 1,559,727 | 116,446 | 7,629,551 |
| Other Operating Costs | 22,245 | 2,062,916 | 277,414 | - | 2,362,575 |
| Total Attributable Expenditure | 2,178,225 | 8,120,330 | 1,879,626 | 217,061 | 12,395,242 |
| Income | | | | | |
| Planning Fees | - | - | 201,728 | - | 201,728 |
| Programme Income | - | 70,736 | 11,589 | - | 82,325 |
| Project Income | 123,007 | 904,972 | 24,152 | 929,032 | 1,981,163 |
| Other Income | 9,068 | 657,037 | 60,990 | - | 727,095 |
| Total Attributable Income | 132,075 | 1,632,745 | 298,459 | 929,032 | 2,992,311 |
| Net Attributable Expenditure | 2,046,150 | 6,487,585 | 1,581,167 | (711,971) | 9,402,931 |
| Items not attributable to segmental activity | | | | | |
| Deficit of return on pension assets over interest | | | | | (138,000) |
| Depreciation and amortisation | | | | | 712,849 |
| Impairment of asset | | | | | - |
| Net gain on disposal of property, plant, and equipment | | | | | - |
| Interest receivable | | | | | (31,891) |
| Interest payable | | | | | 8,131 |
| Net Expenditure for the Year | | | | | 9,954,020 |
| Capital Asset Additions | 27,962 | 1,508,044 | 23,962 | 1,661,340 | 3,221,308 |

6. Other Income

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Shared services recharge | 54,911 | 99,006 |
| Boat registration and launch fees | 81,691 | 80,638 |
| Sale of goods | 13,838 | 14,394 |
| Property rental and recharges | 166,782 | 171,405 |
| (Deficit)/ surplus of return on pension assets over interest | (16,000) | 138,000 |
| Camping charges | 129,464 | 137,604 |
| Car park charges | 31,395 | 51,552 |
| Recharges | 63,599 | 64,498 |
| Grants and other miscellaneous income | 111,445 | 107,998 |
| | 637,125 | 865,095 |

7. Board Members and Staff Costs

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| <u>Board Members</u> | | |
| Fees* | 181,747 | 170,393 |
| Social Security Costs | 5,397 | 4,351 |
| | 187,144 | 174,744 |
| <u>Permanent Staff</u> | | |
| Salaries | 5,291,052 | 4,943,902 |
| Social Security Costs | 555,812 | 499,233 |
| Pension Costs | 510,856 | 887,789 |
| | 6,357,720 | 6,330,924 |
| <u>Fixed Term and Seasonal Staff</u> | | |
| Salaries | 832,259 | 859,110 |
| Social Security Costs | 66,786 | 73,090 |
| Pension Costs | 84,954 | 169,310 |
| | 983,999 | 1,101,510 |
| Apprenticeship Levy | 15,804 | 15,514 |
| (Decrease)/Increase in holiday accrual | (27,835) | 29,114 |
| Deduct: Included in Programme and Project figures | (48,627) | (50,255) |
| Total Permanent and Other Staff Costs before pension adjustments | 7,281,061 | 7,426,807 |
| <u>Adjustments for Pensions Reporting</u> | | |
| Add: Current Service Costs | 21 1,126,000 | 1,079,000 |
| Less: Employer Contributions | 21 (593,000) | (1,051,000) |
| Total Permanent and Other Staff Costs after pension adjustments | 7,814,061 | 7,454,807 |
| Total Board Member and Staff Costs | 8,001,205 | 7,629,551 |

* Refer to Remuneration Report on page 51.

| 8. Other Operating Costs | 2025 | 2024 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Travel & Subsistence | 25,362 | 28,797 |
| Conferences, Courses & Training | 92,722 | 80,112 |
| Other Staff Costs | 59,300 | 72,362 |
| Property Rent & Rates | 288,806 | 247,327 |
| Energy Costs | 179,238 | 157,868 |
| Property Repairs & Development | 124,643 | 205,701 |
| Other Property Costs | 340,834 | 363,104 |
| Grounds Maintenance | 83,428 | 88,087 |
| Tools & Equipment Consumables | 21,729 | 41,576 |
| Transport Costs | 159,240 | 163,386 |
| Uniforms & Clothing | 15,819 | 22,584 |
| Catering & Hospitality | 18,621 | 21,759 |
| Printing & Stationery | 25,222 | 21,533 |
| Published Materials & Subscriptions | 46,674 | 48,393 |
| Telecommunications & Data | 63,205 | 79,882 |
| Legal & Professional Fees | 197,379 | 219,469 |
| Software & IT Supplies | 401,481 | 352,426 |
| Goods for Resale | 9,081 | 11,767 |
| Advertising - Statutory | 21,178 | 20,327 |
| - Other Advertising | - | 504 |
| Other Administration Costs | 36,506 | 31,361 |
| Contributions | 43,405 | 47,482 |
| Audit Fee - Internal | 19,575 | 16,529 |
| - External Audit remuneration for audit services | 21,743 | 20,239 |
| Bad Debt Provision Expense | 2,378 | - |
| | 2,297,569 | 2,362,575 |

No non-audit fees were paid to External Audit during 2024/25 (2023/24 - £Nil).

9. 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 £ | Restated Total Tangible Assets £ |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| Cost or Valuation | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance at 1 April 2023 | 5,470,500 | 3,164,000 | 200,000 | 1,531,573 | 415,010 | 938,806 | 1,457,916 | 496,127 | 13,673,932 |
| Disposals at Cost | - | - | - | (4,080) | - | - | (393,835) | - | (397,915) |
| Additions at Cost | - | - | - | 200,557 | 2,973 | 13,462 | 43,450 | 2,936,380 | 3,196,822 |
| Transfer Asset into Use | - | - | - | 259,572 | - | 9,174 | - | (268,746) | - |
| Impairment Charge | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Revaluation | - | - | (32,340) | - | - | - | - | - | (32,340) |
| Indexation Increase | 122,855 | 101,934 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 224,789 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 5,593,355 | 3,265,934 | 167,660 | 1,987,622 | 417,983 | 961,442 | 1,107,531 | 3,163,761 | 16,665,288 |
| Accumulated Depreciation | | | | | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2023 | - | - | - | 1,097,902 | 348,072 | 889,559 | 1,296,010 | - | 3,631,543 |
| Disposals | - | - | - | (4,080) | - | - | (393,835) | - | (397,915) |
| Charge for Year | 127,510 | 161,942 | - | 184,407 | 38,044 | 31,437 | 124,703 | - | 668,043 |
| Written back on Revaluation: | | | | | | | | | |
| - Impairment Charge | - | (1,850) | - | - | - | - | - | - | (1,850) |
| - Impairment Reversal | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - Revaluation | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| At 31 March 2024 | 127,510 | 160,092 | - | 1,278,229 | 386,116 | 920,996 | 1,026,878 | - | 3,899,821 |
| Net Book Values | | | | | | | | | |
| 31 March 2024 | 5,465,845 | 3,105,842 | 167,660 | 709,393 | 31,867 | 40,446 | 80,653 | 3,163,761 | 12,765,467 |
| 31 March 2023 | 5,470,500 | 3,164,000 | 200,000 | 433,671 | 66,938 | 49,247 | 161,906 | 496,127 | 10,042,389 |

| | 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 | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance at 1 April 2024, restated | 5,593,355 | 3,265,934 | 167,660 | 1,987,622 | 417,983 | 961,442 | 1,107,531 | 3,163,761 | 16,665,288 |
| Disposals at Cost | - | - | - | (104,325) | (8,627) | (23,270) | (84,516) | - | (220,738) |
| Additions at Cost | - | - | - | - | 66,366 | 1,251 | 40,743 | 1,733,276 | 1,841,636 |
| Transfer Asset into Use | 4,319,059 | 149,036 | - | 161,740 | 94,793 | - | - | (4,724,628) | - |
| Transfer to assets held for sale | - | - | - | (295,860) | - | - | - | - | (295,860) |
| Impairment Charge | (2,001,899) | (330,412) | - | - | - | - | - | (79,732) | (2,412,043) |
| Revaluation | (926,016) | (167,114) | (2,660) | - | - | - | - | - | (1,095,790) |
| Indexation Increase | 25,895 | 58,727 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 84,622 |
| At 31 March 2025 | 7,010,394 | 2,976,171 | 165,000 | 1,749,177 | 570,515 | 939,423 | 1,063,758 | 92,677 | 14,567,115 |
| Accumulated Depreciation | | | | | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2024, restated | 127,510 | 160,092 | - | 1,278,229 | 386,116 | 920,996 | 1,026,878 | - | 3,899,821 |
| Disposals | - | - | - | (99,263) | (8,145) | (23,270) | (84,516) | - | (215,194) |
| Charge for Year | 256,395 | 178,157 | - | 169,890 | 79,753 | 28,250 | 79,749 | - | 792,194 |
| Transfer to assets held for sale | - | - | - | (240,363) | - | - | - | - | (240,363) |
| Written back on Revaluation: | | | | | | | | | |
| - Impairment Charge | (317,446) | (81,289) | - | - | - | - | - | - | (398,735) |
| - Impairment Reversal | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - Revaluation | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| At 31 March 2025 | 66,459 | 256,960 | - | 1,108,493 | 457,724 | 925,976 | 1,022,111 | - | 3,837,723 |
| Net Book Values | | | | | | | | | |
| 31 March 2025 | 6,943,935 | 2,719,211 | 165,000 | 640,684 | 112,791 | 13,447 | 41,647 | 92,677 | 10,729,392 |
| 31 March 2024, restated | 5,465,845 | 3,105,842 | 167,660 | 709,393 | 31,867 | 40,446 | 80,653 | 3,163,761 | 12,765,467 |

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 (2023/24 - £10k) on an existing use value. The donated asset reserve reflects the corresponding entry.

As detailed in Notes 1.3 and 1.16 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 2025, 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 2025, with one being fully impaired.

10. Intangible Assets

| | IT Systems & Software £ | Website £ | Copyright £ | Assets Under Construction £ | Total Intangible Assets £ |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Cost or Valuation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2023 | 163,702 | 71,087 | 64,788 | - | 299,577 |
| Disposals at Cost | (31,872) | - | - | - | (31,872) |
| Additions at Cost | - | - | - | 24,486 | 24,486 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 131,830 | 71,087 | 64,788 | 24,486 | 292,191 |
| Accumulated Amortisation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2023 | 163,142 | 71,087 | 60,783 | - | 295,012 |
| Disposals | (31,872) | - | - | - | (31,872) |
| Charge for Year | 280 | - | 1,436 | - | 1,716 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 131,550 | 71,087 | 62,219 | - | 264,856 |
| Net Book Values | | | | | |
| 31 March 2024 | 280 | - | 2,569 | 24,486 | 27,335 |
| 31 March 2023 | 559 | - | 4,005 | - | 4,564 |
| | | | | | |
| | IT Systems & Software £ | Website £ | Copyright £ | Assets Under Construction £ | Total Intangible Assets £ |
| Cost or Valuation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 131,830 | 71,087 | 64,788 | 24,486 | 292,191 |
| Disposals at Cost | (3,450) | - | - | - | (3,450) |
| Additions at Cost | - | - | 599 | - | 599 |
| Impairment | - | - | - | (24,486) | (24,486) |
| At 31 March 2025 | 128,380 | 71,087 | 65,387 | - | 264,854 |
| Accumulated Amortisation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 131,550 | 71,087 | 62,219 | - | 264,856 |
| Disposals | (3,450) | - | - | - | (3,450) |
| Charge for Year | 280 | - | 1,088 | - | 1,368 |
| At 31 March 2025 | 128,380 | 71,087 | 63,307 | - | 262,774 |
| Net Book Values | | | | | |
| 31 March 2025 | - | - | 2,080 | - | 2,080 |
| 31 March 2024 | 280 | - | 2,569 | 24,486 | 27,335 |

11. Investments in Other 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. 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.

This investment does not meet the criteria of a subsidiary, joint venture or associate and has been recognised as an investment. 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.

12. Assets Held for Sale

| | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Marine Vessels | 55,497 | - |

13. Trade Receivables and Other Assets

| | 2025 £ | Restated 2024 £ |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Amounts falling due within one year: | | |
| Trade receivables | 62,483 | 307,857 |
| Less provision for bad debts | (2,378) | - |
| Trade receivables net | 60,105 | 307,857 |
| Other receivables | 6,633 | 5,330 |
| VAT receivable | - | 20,287 |
| Prepayments | 284,042 | 330,755 |
| Accrued income | 67,420 | 261,302 |
| Finance lease receivable | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| | 423,200 | 930,531 |
| Amounts falling due after one year: | | |
| Prepayments | 4,833 | 5,634 |
| Finance lease receivable | 53,723 | 57,804 |
| | 58,556 | 63,438 |

14. Cash and Cash Equivalents

| | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Bank Accounts | 2,318,858 | 3,549,728 |
| Imprest Accounts | 725 | 675 |
| | 2,319,583 | 3,550,403 |

All balances were held in commercial bank accounts or in hand (2023/2024 - all).

Not included in cash and cash equivalents disclosed above are amounts held by the Authority as a custodian on behalf of others of £1,001,461 (2023/24 - £916,332). 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 17.

15. Trade Payables and Other Liabilities

| | 2025 £ | Restated 2024 £ |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|
| Amounts payable within one year: | | |
| Trade payables | 281,746 | 2,047,118 |
| Accruals | 1,024,671 | 1,026,609 |
| Deferred income | 68,861 | 296,223 |
| VAT payable | 1,305 | - |
| Lease liabilities | 14,362 | 13,090 |
| Funds held for third parties | 6,725 | 6,598 |
| | 1,397,670 | 3,389,638 |
| Amounts falling due after more than one year: | | |
| Deferred Income | 167,639 | 173,955 |
| Lease liabilities | 283,481 | 290,499 |
| | 451,120 | 464,454 |

16. Capital Commitments, Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities

Capital Commitments

There was £160k of committed but unspent capital expenditure at 31 March 2025 (31 March 2024 – £1,689k). This includes expenditure on the Tarbet site and a vehicle that was not received before the year end. There was £94k of committed capital grant expenditure as at 31 March 2025 (31 March 2024 – nil) in relation to Peatland restoration for 2024/25, where applicants were unable to complete works during the financial year. All committed by unspent capital expenditure is due not later than one year.

Contingent Liabilities

Holding assets results in repair and maintenance obligations, which are addressed based on priority of risk and need. As at 31 March 2025 we have identified some changes that need to be made to one of our sites. The scope of works has not yet been determined and as such the amount and timing of any financial outflows are uncertain. Although no other contingent liabilities have been identified with respect to repair and maintenance obligations, 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 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. The parties have been to mediation and are in the course of implementing the terms agreed at said mediation. If the agreed terms cannot be implemented there may be a future liability for legal costs, which may be material.

17. Assets Held on Behalf of Third Parties

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|------|------------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Cash | 1,001,461 | 916,332 |

As at 31st March 2025 the Authority held cash of £1,001,461 in connection with 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 2025.

As at 31st March 2024 the Authority held cash totalling £916,332.

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 planning permission and s75 Agreement, the Authority will repay the respective funds to the Operator.

If the Operator fails to discharge these obligations, the funds are independently 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 planning permission and s75 Agreement. The Authority cannot use the funds for any other purpose other than as set out in the planning permission and 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 utilise the funds to decommission and restore the site but may also provide the funds to the landowners and/ or Crown Estate Scotland (Interim Management) to complete this work.

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 and the Restoration and Aftercare obligations. The Restoration and Aftercare Bond review was completed, and it concluded that the sum should be increased from £537,918 to £623,767. £40,000 of the required increase was received from the operator in June 2023 and the remaining balance received (£45,849) in March 2025. To date the GCGMP bond review has not been completed as the Restoration and Aftercare bond review was prioritised.

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 2025.

18. Leases

The Authority has entered into leases for land and buildings in the normal course of our operating activities.

Right-of-use assets in respect of these leases are:

| | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Cost or valuation | | |
| At 1 April | 516,628 | 516,628 |
| Disposals at cost | - | - |
| Additions at cost | 9,295 | - |
| Remeasurement – existing leases | (5,996) | - |
| At 31 March | 519,927 | 516,628 |
| Accumulated depreciation | | |
| At 1 April | 105,451 | 68,101 |
| Disposals | - | - |
| Charge for the year | 15,260 | 43,090 |
| Written back on revaluation | - | (5,740) |
| At 31 March | 120,711 | 105,451 |
| Net book value at end of year | 399,216 | 411,177 |

Obligations under non-cancellable Leases are:

| | Land & Buildings | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
| Within One Year | 17,554 | 16,378 |
| Two to Five Years | 82,001 | 76,124 |
| After Five Years | 328,834 | 334,266 |
| Total undiscounted lease liabilities | 428,389 | 426,768 |
| Less interest element | (130,546) | (123,179) |
| Present value of obligations | 297,843 | 303,589 |

The leases relate to properties for our operations including stores, offices, campsites, visitor facilities, piers and pontoons and buoys.

Rents receivable under non-cancellable leases are:

| | Land & Buildings | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| | 2025 | 2024 |
| | £ | £ |
| Within One Year | 68,419 | 68,419 |
| Two to Five Years | 24,020 | 24,025 |
| After Five Years | 40,027 | 45,031 |

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.

19. 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

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
- Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
- Department for Work & Pensions
- Disclosure Scotland
- Forestry and Land Scotland
- Glasgow City Council
- HM Revenue and Customs
- Lake District National Park Authority
- Met Office

- National Parks Partnerships
- Northumberland National Park
- Office of Communications
- Perth & Kinross Council
- Scottish Police Authority
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Stirling Council
- Strathclyde Pension Fund
- Sustrans
- The Registers of Scotland
- UK National Parks Foundation
- The Valuation Office Agency
- Visit Scotland
- West Dunbartonshire Council

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.

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 | Argyll & Bute Council | Councillors | Services including design & conservation advice, commercial rates, waste, water supply testing | | £66,643 |
| William Sinclair | COSLA | Member | Recruitment advertising | | £3,000 |
| Gordon Watson | National Parks Partnerships LLP | Board Member | Grants/ Subscription | £91,231 | £12,000 |
| Heather Reid | NatureScot | Board Member | Contribution | | £4,440 |
| Rhona Brock | Perth & Kinross Council | Councillor | Contribution | | £18,500 |
| Martin Earl/ Gerry McGarvey | Stirling Council | Councillors | Services including transport advice, commercial rates, waste, planning fees | | £38,099 |
| Hazel Sorrell | West Dunbartonshire Council | Councillor | Services including rent, commercial rates | | £165,129 |
| Christopher Spray | Loch Lomond & the Trossachs Countryside Trust | Director | Contribution | | £85,637 |

20. 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

11) and the cash held as a planning condition for the development of the gold and silver mine at Cononish Glen (Note 17), 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.

| | 2025 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Amortised Cost |
| | £ |
| Financial Assets | |
| Trade and Other Receivables | 481,755 |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents | 2,319,583 |
| Total Assets | 2,801,338 |

| | 2025 |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Other Liabilities |
| | Amortised Cost |
| | £ |
| Financial Liabilities | |
| Trade and Other Payables | 1,848,791 |
| Total Liabilities | 1,848,791 |

| | 2024 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Amortised Cost |
| | £ |
| Financial Assets | |
| Trade and Other Receivables | 993,969 |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents | 3,550,403 |
| Total Assets | 4,544,372 |

| | 2024 |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Other Liabilities |
| | Amortised Cost |
| | £ |
| Financial Liabilities | |
| Trade and Other Payables | 3,854,092 |
| Total Liabilities | 3,854,092 |

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.

21. 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 2023. The formal valuation calculates the employer's assets and liabilities. The statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025 and the projected cost for 2025/26 are based on the roll forward from the valuation at 31 March 2024. The roll forward allows for changes in financial assumptions, additional benefit accrual and estimated cash flows over the period.

In 2024/25, the Authority paid an employer's contribution of £595,811 (2023/24 - £1,047,100 representing 10.1% (2023/24 - 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 2023. 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 2024 to 31 March 2027. Following this valuation, it was confirmed that the Authority's contribution rate would change to 10.1%. from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027.

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

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| | £000 | £000 |
| Fair value of plan assets | 42,008 | 40,534 |
| Present value of funded liabilities | (24,459) | (27,797) |
| Present value of unfunded liabilities | (45) | (51) |
| Adjustment for effect of asset ceiling | <u>(17,549)</u> | <u>(12,737)</u> |
| Net pension fund asset/(liability) | <u><u>(45)</u></u> | <u><u>(51)</u></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:

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| | £000 | £000 |
| Opening defined benefit obligation | 27,848 | 25,266 |
| Current service cost | 1,126 | 1,079 |
| Interest cost on defined benefit obligation | 1,363 | 1,224 |
| Actuarial (gain)/loss from actuarial remeasurements | (5,277) | 452 |
| Contributions by members | 369 | 339 |
| Benefits paid | <u>(925)</u> | <u>(512)</u> |
| Closing defined benefit obligation | <u><u>24,504</u></u> | <u><u>27,848</u></u> |

Movement in the fair value of plan assets:

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| | £000 | £000 |
| Opening fair value of plan assets | 40,534 | 35,710 |
| Interest income on plan assets | 1,965 | 1,720 |
| Actuarial gain from actuarial remeasurements | (528) | 1,848 |
| Contributions by employer | 589 | 1,047 |
| Contributions by members | 369 | 339 |
| Other Expenses | - | 378 |
| Unfunded benefits paid | (4) | - |
| Contributions by employer for unfunded benefits | 4 | 4 |
| Benefits paid | <u>(921)</u> | <u>(512)</u> |
| Closing fair value of plan assets | <u><u>42,008</u></u> | <u><u>40,534</u></u> |

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

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £000 | £000 |
| Current service cost | 1,126 | 1,079 |
| Interest cost on obligation | 1,981 | 1,582 |
| Interest income on plan assets | <u>(1,965)</u> | <u>(1,720)</u> |
| | <u>1,142</u> | <u>941</u> |

Employer's contributions totaling £593k are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure (2023/24 - £1,051k), resulting in a total expense of £549k (2023/24 – income £110k).

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

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| | £000 | £000 |
| Board Member and Staff Costs | 1,126 | 1,079 |
| Other Income – (surplus)/ deficit of return on pension assets over interest cost | <u>16</u> | <u>(138)</u> |
| | <u>1,142</u> | <u>941</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 2025 | | | | 31 March 2024 | | | |
|---|--|---|---------------|-------------|--|---|---------------|-------------|
| | 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 | 8,702 | 27 | 8,729 | 21% | 8,187 | 10 | 8,197 | 20% |
| Private Equity | | 9,710 | 9,710 | 23% | | 9,677 | 9,677 | 24% |
| Real Estate | | | | | | | | |
| UK Property | | 3,169 | 3,169 | 8% | | 3,187 | 3,187 | 8% |
| Investment Funds and Unit Trusts | | | | | | | | |
| Equities | 153 | 10,100 | 10,253 | 24% | 166 | 13,812 | 13,978 | 34% |
| Bonds | | 8,861 | 8,861 | 21% | | 4,728 | 4,728 | 12% |
| Commodities | | 21 | 21 | 0% | | 16 | 16 | 0% |
| Infrastructure | | 148 | 148 | 0% | | | | |
| Other | | 93 | 93 | 0% | | | | |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents | | 1,022 | 1,022 | 3% | 63 | 688 | 751 | 2% |
| Total | 8,855 | 33,151 | 42,006 | 100% | 8,416 | 32,118 | 40,534 | 100% |

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

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| | £000 | £000 |
| Actuarial gain/(loss) on the fair value of the plan assets | (528) | 2,226 |
| Actuarial (loss)/gain on the defined benefit obligation | 5,277 | (452) |
| Adjustment for effect of asset ceiling | (4,194) | (4,843) |
| Actuarial (loss)/gain recognised in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity | <u>555</u> | <u>(3,069)</u> |

The statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025 and the projected cost for 2025/26 are based on the roll forward from the valuation at 31 March 2024 performed by the independent actuaries to the Strathclyde Pension Fund. The actuarial assumptions were as follows:

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | % pa | % pa |
| Inflation/ Pension Increase Rate | 2.75% | 2.75% |
| Salary Increase Rate | 3.45% | 3.45% |
| Discount Rate | 5.80% | 4.85% |
| | 2025 | 2024 |
| Life Expectancy at age 65: | | |
| Current Pensioners Male | 21.1 | 21.2 |
| Current Pensioners Female | 22.6 | 22.7 |
| Future Pensioners Male | 21.4 | 21.5 |
| Future Pensioners Female | 24.9 | 24.9 |

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

| Change in assumptions as at 31 March 2025 | Approximate % increase to Employer Liability | Approximate monetary amount £000 |
|--|---|---|
| 0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate | 2% | 496 |
| 1 year increase in life expectancy | 4% | 980 |
| 0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate | 0% | 30 |
| 0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI) | 2% | 479 |

Information about the Defined Benefit Obligation

| | Liability split | |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | £000 | Percentage % |
| Active members | 14,191 | 58.0% |
| Deferred members | 5,572 | 22.8% |
| Pensioner members | 4,696 | 19.2% |
| Total | 24,459 | 100.0% |

Projected defined benefit cost for the year to 31 March 2026

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 2026.

| Period ended 31 March 2026 | Assets £000 | Obligations £000 | Effect of asset ceiling on net asset/liability | Net (liability) / asset | |
|---|----------------|---------------------|--|-------------------------|----------|
| | | | £000 | £000 | % of pay |
| Projected current service cost * | | 834 | | (834) | (14.3%) |
| Total Service Cost | | 834 | 0 | (834) | |
| Interest income on plan assets | 2,433 | | | 2,433 | |
| Interest cost on defined benefit obligation | | 1,425 | | (1,425) | |
| Interest of the effect of the asset ceiling | | | 0 | 0 | |
| Total Net Interest Income | 2,433 | 1,425 | 0 | 1,008 | |
| Total included in Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure | 2,433 | 2,259 | 0 | 174 | |

* 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 2023) or at any other time as instructed to do so by the Administering Authority. The contributions payable over the period to 31 March 2025 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 2023 actuarial valuation report dated 31 March 2024. The estimate of Employer's contribution for the year to 31 March 2026 is approximately £589,000.

In June 2023 the High Court ruled in the Virgin Media Limited v NTL Pension Trustees II Limited (and others) case regarding the validity of amendments to post 6 April 1997 benefits in formerly

contracted-out defined benefit pension schemes. In a judgement delivered on 25 July 2024, the Court of Appeal unanimously upheld the decision of the High Court. This ruling may have a potential future impact on the Local Government Pension Scheme benefits as the Local Government Pension scheme has made amendments since 1997 and these amendments did impact member benefits. On 5 June 2025, the Government announced that it will introduce legislation to give affected pension schemes the ability to retrospectively obtain written actuarial confirmation that historic benefit changes met the necessary standards.

No adjustments have been made to the financial statements, as it is not clear if the specific circumstances of the Authority's Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) are relevant and if the Pension Fund obtained the necessary documentation to support amendments at the time. Should this be the case, the impact of the ruling has not yet been determined and would require significant investigation to quantify any potential impact on the Authority's liabilities, and so is not quantifiable at this stage. No other changes to the figures that require to be reflected in the financial statements or notes were found between the closure of the unaudited accounts and the date of submission of the accounts.

APPENDIX 1



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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Donald Henderson'.

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

Dated: 02 August 2023