



Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority  
Carrochan  
Carrochan Road  
Balloch  
G83 8EG

Name: XXX  
Email: XXX  
Ref: EIR-2025-027  
Date 17 October 2025

Dear XXX

## **REQUEST UNDER FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002**

Thank you for your request for access to information held by the National Park Authority, which we received by email on 19 September 2025. The information you have requested is environmental information, as defined in Regulation 2 of the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs). We have therefore applied the exemption in section 39(2) of FOISA and dealt with your request under the EIRs alone.

### **Your Request**

*Gordon Watson in his CEO's report to the Board on Monday stated, "Following extensive project development by multiple teams at the National Park Authority and working closely alongside partners at the Countryside Trust and RSPB we were pleased to submit an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) this August." Speaking to this he referred to it covering Strath Fillan and Glen Falloch. I appreciate that Park officials will refuse to provide me details of the bid on grounds of commercial confidentiality etc. but I believe it would be in the public interest for the LLTNPA to make public a) the area that will be covered by the bid and b) the organisations consulted about the bid. Please provide me with this information.*

### **Our Request**

Please find attached a brochure entitled '*Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections: Restoring Our Woodland Mosaic*'. This document includes detail on the geographical area of focus (see page 4) but also provides general information about the project at the centre of our bid that may be of interest to you.

Please also find attached a document entitled '*Organisations consulted in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections Development Phase bid*'. This document contains information submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in connection with our application – specifically, in relation to people and organisations we have consulted to date.

**LOCH LOMOND & THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

1

National Park Headquarters, Carrochan, Carrochan Road, Balloch, G83 8EG Long: 4°34'24"W Lat: 56°00'12"N

t: 01389 722600 f: 01389 722633 e: [info@lochlomond-trossachs.org](mailto:info@lochlomond-trossachs.org) w: [lochlomond-trossachs.org](http://lochlomond-trossachs.org)

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Please note that this bid is in relation to an initial 18-month development phase and further consultation will be conducted during this development phase.

### **Right to Review**

If you are unhappy with our response, you can ask us to review our handling of your request. Further information about our review and appeals process is provided in the attached sheet.

Yours sincerely

**Information Management**  
**Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority**

## Review Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with this decision, or the way in which the Authority has dealt with your request, you are entitled to require the Authority to review its decision. Please note that in order for a review to take place you are required to:

- Send your request for review in writing, setting out in full the reasons why you are requesting a review.
- Submit your review request within 40 working days of either the date on which you received a response from the Authority or the date by which you should have received a response under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, whichever is the later.
- address your review request to:

Information Manager  
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority  
National Park Headquarters  
Carrochan  
Carrochan Road  
Balloch  
G83 8EG  
E-mail: [info@lochlomond-trossachs.org](mailto:info@lochlomond-trossachs.org)

The review will be handled by staff who were not involved in the original decision. You will receive notice of the result of your review within 20 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the response to your request for review, you can contact the Scottish Information Commissioner, the independent body which oversees the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, at:

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS  
Tel: 01334 464610  
Website: [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)  
E-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

LOCH LOMOND & THE TROSSACHS

# LANDSCAPE CONNECTIONS

RESTORING OUR WOODLAND MOSAIC



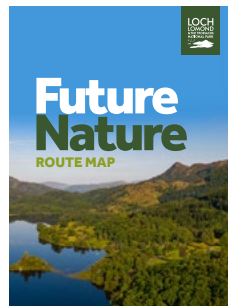


# LOCH LOMOND & THE TROSSACHS LANDSCAPE CONNECTIONS

**Loch Lomond & The Trossachs is Scotland's first and most accessible National Park. Its natural heritage inspires people worldwide – yet even here, nature is under threat.**

Over thirty organisations have established the National Park's Future Nature Route Map, committing to a connected landscape where nature and people thrive together.

The Route Map is built on three landscape areas connecting a woodland network stretching north-south and east-west across the National Park. At the heart of these landscapes lies our globally threatened and culturally unique woodland mosaic.



Restoring this central woodland mosaic is the core of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections. This ecologically diverse habitat has formed over millennia through natural and cultural processes. With a mix of Caledonian pinewoods, temperate rainforest, montane scrub, and more,

it supports many threatened and specialist species whilst providing ecosystem services, supporting communities and livelihoods and delivering health and wellbeing.

Fully embedding a diverse range of people in the development and delivery of this Initiative is essential to our approach. Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections will ensure that land managers, communities and visitors are involved and supported to have the skills and capacity to care for our woodland mosaic.

The Landscape Connections Initiative will deliver systemic, people centred, approaches to restore this woodland mosaic and drive nature restoration across the whole National Park. It represents an exciting opportunity to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss with maximum impact in one of the most inspiring and well visited areas of Scotland.

## WHAT IS OUR WOODLAND MOSAIC ?

Woodlands are not only made up of trees. Open glades and edge-of-woodland habitats (or 'transition zones') are all important components of a healthy, functioning, woodland ecosystem. To truly restore our woodlands, we need to restore both the tree-dominated habitats, and the transitional habitats that come together to create a rich and complex woodland 'mosaic'.



## OUR CONNECTED LANDSCAPE

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections will establish a new woodland restoration zone the size of the Isle of Arran, restore our woodland mosaic and connect a wider woodland network stretching north-south and east-west covering half of the National Park's total area.

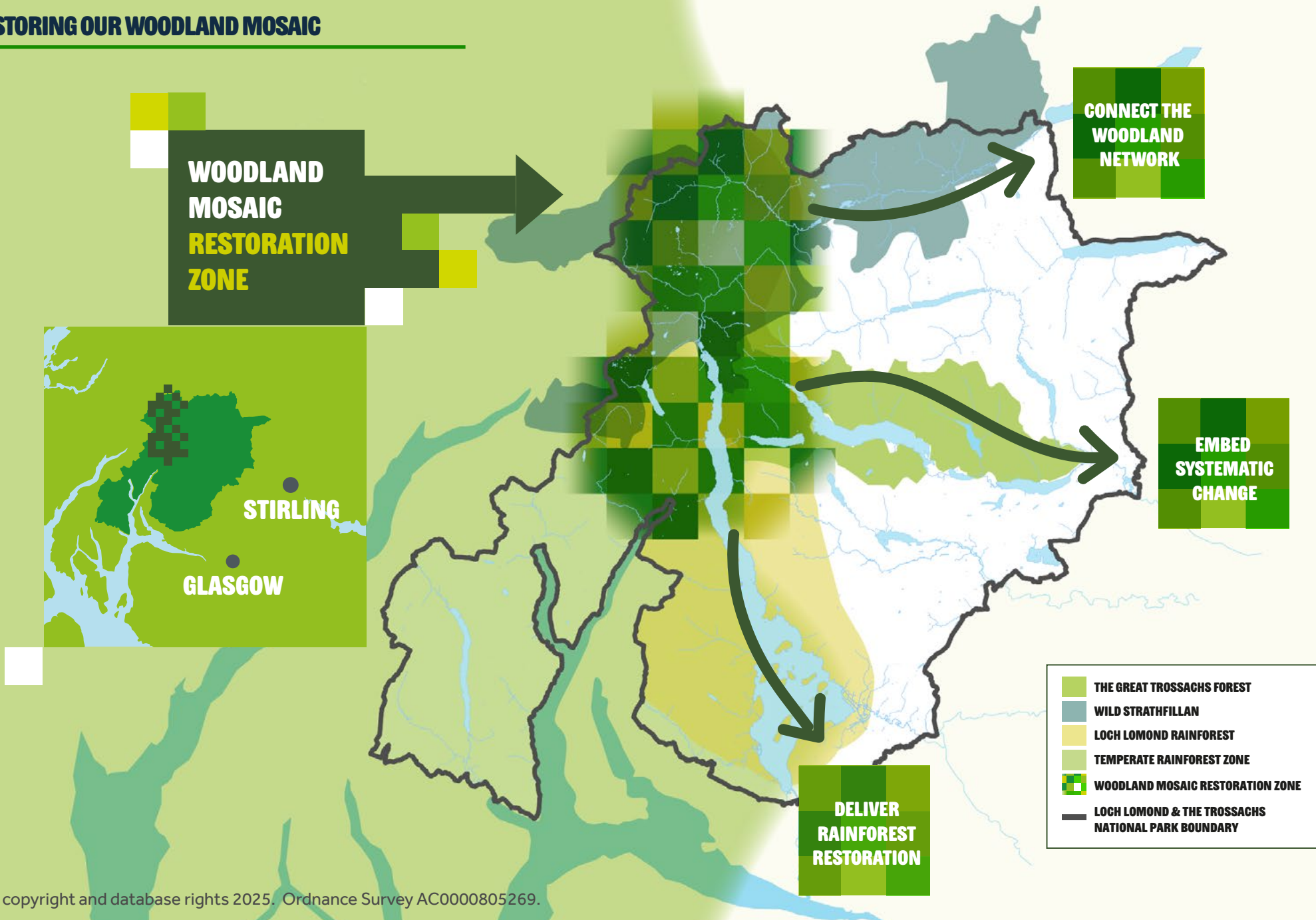
Our woodland mosaic is a unique and irreplaceable natural treasure – where temperate rainforest, montane scrub, ancient Caledonian pinewoods, and cultural woodland habitats converge to form one of the most biodiverse landscapes in the UK. The extraordinary diversity of this mosaic supports rare bryophytes and lichens alongside species ranging from golden eagles and black grouse, to our more inconspicuous but no less spectacular pied flycatchers and wood ants.

The Landscape Connections Initiative will be a powerful catalyst for long-term change. At a critical moment in our journey to restore nature, it will link three distinct landscape areas. Where our pioneering The Great Trossachs Forest meets our developing Wild Strathfillan and our emerging Loch Lomond Rainforest – we have a rare chance to create a truly connected woodland mosaic.

Each area brings its own experiences, character and strengths, yet all face shared threats and hold shared opportunities. Where these meet in the woodland mosaic, this Initiative will deliver systemic solutions to unlock the full potential of nature-led recovery – for wildlife, people, and future generations.



RESTORING OUR WOODLAND MOSAIC



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# SHARED THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Extensive surveys and consultations have identified the key root causes of why our landscape is failing.

We've summarised these into **two shared threats** and **four shared opportunities**. These are interconnected and must be addressed together to meet the ambition of systemic change needed for sustainable long term nature recovery.

The two main threats are: **invasive non-native species (INNS)**, particularly *Rhododendron ponticum* which spreads rapidly blocking out sunlight and preventing young trees and other wild plants from growing; and **herbivore pressure**, primarily from deer and livestock grazing.





There are also four key opportunities to address challenges in our landscape.



The first is to address the fragmentation of our woodlands which leaves them unable to regenerate naturally, leading to the loss of a healthy woodland structure, loss of biodiversity, lack of opportunity for native species to migrate across the landscape, and eventually the total loss of woodlands altogether.



The second is to transform current economic models addressing the lack of capacity, skills and jobs that make it difficult for land managers to act for nature or local communities to deliver the projects that matter to them.



Thirdly, we can embed communities and land managers as an integral part of the nature recovery process, supporting inclusion and agency to ensure that actions are coordinated and from those who are essential for long term success.



Fourthly, we maximise our visitors and communities as a fantastic resource to connect with nature, in order to inspire behavioural change and instil long term sustained action for nature.



## OUR HERITAGE

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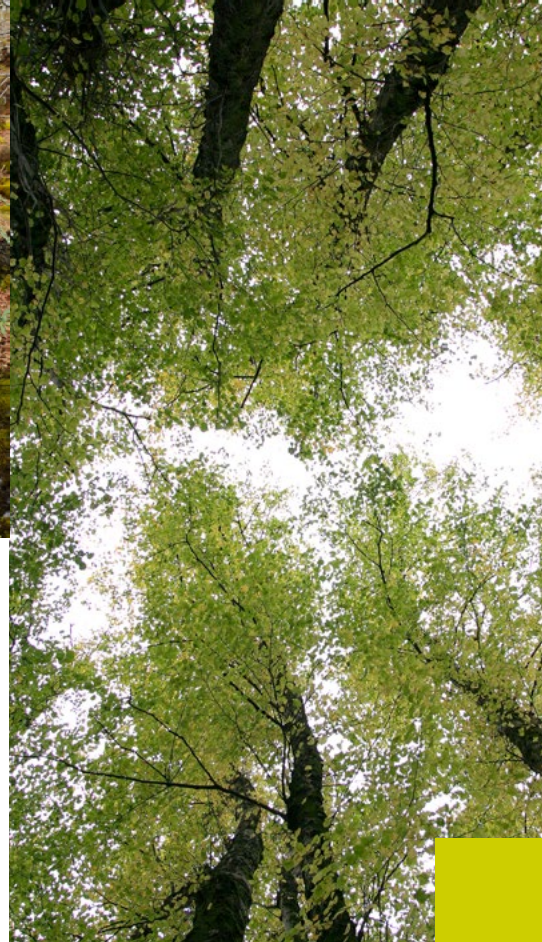
Our unique woodland mosaic comprises the globally rare temperate rainforest habitat around Loch Lomond and where this connects to the Caledonian pinewoods in Strathfillan, the montane habitats at altitude and the established forest landscape of The Great Trossachs Forest. The mosaic also includes riparian woodland, wood pasture, hedgerows and integrated non-wooded habitat, essential for ensuring woodland health and resilience, such as meadow glades and edge-of-woodland wet grasslands, ponds and fens.

This is not natural heritage in isolation. Our woodland mosaic has a vast cultural heritage of connection and interaction between people and woodland. It is the heritage of understanding generations of sustainable management of 'lived-in landscapes', of the past knowledge and skills of conservation grazing systems, and of the emotional meaning of woodlands. It is a heritage that we need to share and support to create the foundations of new systems and processes suitable for the 21st century.



The importance of our heritage cannot be overstated. Our native woodland habitats are some of the rarest in the world. They provide a home for nationally and internationally rare or threatened species of bryophytes, lichens, vascular plants, invertebrates and birds, such as the pied flycatcher as well as potential homes for species that we have lost. The two most southerly remaining remnants of Caledonian pine forest in Scotland are particularly unique as they fall within the rainforest zone and are ecologically distinct from the drier pinewoods elsewhere in Scotland. Other key species in our woodland mosaic include a significant number of true crab apple trees around Loch Lomond and its islands, and black grouse (a priority UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and on the red list of Birds of Conservation Concern).

Our native woodlands are crucially important for delivering ecosystem services and climate resilience. They purify our air, reduce flood risk, contribute to soil health, filter pollutants from water, prevent riverbank erosion, help to regulate the temperature of our rivers and are an important carbon store. They provide health and wellbeing benefits, opportunities for exercise and recreation, attract income through tourism and provide accessible direct engagement with nature.







## PEOPLE AND NATURE

### MAXIMISING IMPACTS AND BENEFITS

Nature restoration is not about people OR nature, it's about people AND nature. People are fully embedded and essential to our approach – ensuring that land managers, communities and visitors are involved, connected and supported to have the skills, capacity and inspiration to care for our natural heritage well into the future.

Many of the Landscape Connections Initiative programmes are designed around years of development and engagement with land managers, local communities and visitors. Understanding their perspectives, ambitions and needs has been key in identifying the need for things like local plant nurseries, improved venison markets, and jobs and skills opportunities not only to deliver immediate nature and community benefits, but to address the long-term systemic solutions we really need.

We will continue to co-design, particularly with land managers and local communities. By engaging our visitor audiences we will also maximise the opportunity of how accessible this Initiative will be to our many visitors, and crucially, the chance to include those with the most to gain. We will connect with those who would benefit most or are currently most easily ignored or not getting the opportunity to experience nature or take part in its restoration – our missing audiences.

**“The National Park is a place for everyone, and we are supporting diversity and inclusion by removing barriers and improving services to meet the needs of all users”.**

National Park Authority's Corporate Plan's EDI objective



## BEYOND ENGAGEMENT

The Landscape Connections Initiative goes beyond engagement and will work to fully embed people within nature recovery, empowering them and providing the skills, knowledge and opportunities for action. Nature recovery, and indeed restoring our woodland mosaic, is a long-term process.

Our objectives are to set up the mechanisms such as training, sustainable business models, networks and funding, to involve people over decades to come, and place local people at the heart of local decision-making that has global benefits.



# OUR VISION

Our Landscape Connections vision is to create an exemplar of nature restoration where habitats and species are connected on a landscape scale and where people and communities are connected to nature and empowered as part of a resilient sustainable network.

Our strategic approach is based on connecting natural heritage and people across our woodland mosaic. People and nature are fully integrated across our aims, objectives and shared threats and opportunities so that the initiative will:

- » Restore our natural heritage, connecting our woodland mosaic beyond the boundaries of this Initiative, creating the habitats and corridors for some of our most endangered species and providing the economic models, governance, capacity and skills to enable people to care for them.
- » Connect people with nature, enabling a more diverse range of people to enjoy the woodland mosaic and experience its wellbeing benefits, and ensuring that people have the knowledge and 'emotional charge' to be its guardians.





# OUR PROGRAMMES

The Landscape Connections Initiative will restore the woodland mosaic at the heart of the National Park, connecting species, places and people across The Trossachs, Strathfillan and Loch Lomond. We have prioritised 11 integrated programmes to target and address the two shared threats and four shared opportunities.

The programmes accelerate nature recovery and embed system change. They are summarised in detail at the end of this brochure, pages 19-25.



# THE BIGGER PICTURE

## FUTURE NATURE ROUTE MAP

The Landscape Connections Initiative has grown out of the [National Park Partnership Plan](#) which 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 the shared vision that 'by 2045, the National Park is a thriving place that is nature positive and carbon negative'. More specifically, it responds directly to the 2023 [Future Nature Route Map](#) which sets out a shared vision with over thirty partners of how to work together to deliver a nature positive future, reversing nature loss and delivering widespread restoration across the National Park.

### Our Vision

A resilient nature-rich National Park, where abundant wildlife and a healthy natural environment provide a wealth of benefits through an extensive, well-connected living network.



## PEATLAND, WATER AND WOODLAND

The Route Map sets out priorities to 2040 for our three key habitat networks:

- » **woodland**
- » **water, and**
- » **peatland**

The Landscape Connections Initiative will deliver a prioritised set of programmes to accelerate delivery at this critical point as part of the wider Future Nature vision.

Peatland recovery work is making good progress and will continue alongside this Initiative as additional funding continues to be levered in through Peatland ACTION. While the Landscape Connections Initiative will link with peatland where it meets our woodland mosaic, there is not currently a need for peatland restoration to be a recipient of National Lottery Landscape Connections investment.

Conversely, water recovery is only in the first phases of its overall strategic delivery plan and requires further scoping before development and delivery can begin. While the Initiative will address riparian woodland and improve water quality, it is too early to invest in water recovery projects that will deliver meaningful impacts in the short term.

The Landscape Connections Initiative therefore focuses on our woodland mosaic, which is well developed and needs financial support to accelerate delivery at scale. It is the key opportunity for immediate nature recovery and the iconic habitat which connects the National Park's overall nature network. It is where investment is most needed and can make the biggest difference to people and nature.





# THE NEED FOR SUPPORT

## WHY HERE

Globally, we are facing twin crises of the climate emergency and nature loss. Both crises are happening here in Scotland and now in the National Park, in fact many of the impacts are being felt even more deeply and obviously here. Our warming and wetter climate and more frequent extreme weather events mean that some habitats and species are struggling to adapt to these quickly escalating changes.

Scotland's lower population density has benefited nature over the last century with many of the UK's endangered species still clinging on here. Scotland's scale means the landscapes are bigger, we have a lot of countryside and a lot of nature to lose. Our nature is being lost at an alarming rate, and the costs of tackling nature loss are larger too.

At Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park we are and should be doing things differently to maximise the benefits for nature, climate and people. The National Park, Scotland's first, is within an hour of 50% of Scotland's population making it both a visible showcase but also providing unparalleled opportunities to engage with more people than any other landscape scale project in Scotland.

The woodland mosaic restoration zone, the focus of this Initiative, can deliver benefits much greater than its size as it physically connects three major recovering landscapes. The nature benefits of restoring this woodland mosaic will ripple out to cover half of the National Park, and beyond, through direct connections. The woodland mosaic restoration zone at the heart of this Initiative provides a significant nature return on investment.



## WHY US

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Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections is led by the National Park Authority, which was established to drive and coordinate action across the National Park. Coordinating partnership-based approaches, such as this Initiative, is what the National Park Authority does, and it has decades of experience to support this approach.

Throughout the conception of the initiative, the National Park Authority has worked closely with two lead members: Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust; and RSPB Scotland. Both partners bring considerable experience of engaging with people and nature recovery and already, along with the National Park Authority, have a strong network of links to communities, landowners and stakeholders.

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust was established in 2012 as a charitable company focussing on improving the natural environment, connecting communities and delivering health and wellbeing activities within the National Park. The Countryside Trust is a small team of experienced staff supported by committed volunteers delivering a wide range of benefits to nature and people.

This includes supporting more sustainable and active communities and delivering regular activities to encourage engagement with nature; active movement; and physical, social and mental health and wellbeing. They have brought extensive experience, knowledge and connections through working with over 30 land managers, community groups, charities, local businesses and statutory bodies on Wild Strathfillan (a 50,000 hectare nature restoration project currently part funded by the Nature Restoration Fund) as well as their skills in project development and funding.

RSPB Scotland manage RSPB Loch Lomond, a key site at the southern end of the National Park, Inversnaid within The Great Trossachs Forest and are developing a long-term lease partnership to manage a further key site at the heart of the woodland mosaic restoration zone. They bring substantial knowledge and delivery skills from these sites alongside their experience across multiple large landscape scale projects. Furthermore, they bring experience and knowledge of the delivery of skills development and engagement programmes which will be key to this initiative.

The three lead members - National Park Authority, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust and RSPB - have worked together closely through the strategic concept phase and are now excited and uniquely placed to develop this initiative, with the help and support of the wider Future Nature partnership. The Landscape Connections Initiative sits at the heart of our strategic approaches and, building on the specialist skills and specific focus of each organisation, gives us the strength, depth and capacity to deliver this exciting initiative.



## WHY NOW

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We have a clear and widely supported strategy in place for nature recovery within the National Park. [The Future Nature Route Map](#) identifies root causes and sets out the long-term partnership approach for action, with partners in place and signed up to the collective effort. While there are over 30 partners for the full Route Map, we have three core partners for this Initiative focused on the woodland mosaic restoration zone. Beyond our partners we have substantial stakeholder, advisory and land manager support, where there is a unified will and cumulative momentum.

Momentum is growing rapidly across the Initiative, and we now have an exciting opportunity to connect major restoration plans. Ten significant and geographically connected landholders, from private estates to environmental charities and public agencies, are committing to significant land use changes which can join up our woodland.

Many landowners around Loch Lomond are already undertaking surveys and scoping out opportunities for rainforest restoration, including on the island of Inchlonaig on Loch Lomond, which is believed to have the largest collection of yew trees west of Turkey.

The time is now, but also time is running out as our native woodlands continue to be impacted by climate change and suffer further nature loss. The newly published Woodland Trust's State of the UK's Woods and Trees 2025 report highlights the desperate need now, more than ever, to restore our woodlands. However, delivering woodland expansion is not enough. The report has identified that UK woodland cover is indeed (slowly) expanding, however the quality, biodiversity, and naturalness of these woods is plummeting. The longer we leave it the harder and more costly restoration becomes, for example, Rhododendron continues to spread with a single bush producing a million seeds a season.





Action is needed now and NLHF Landscape Connections is crucial to make this happen. There is a shared vision and a clear purpose, people and organisations in the core area are keen to be involved and detailed plans are developing, but it will cost a great deal of money over many years to deliver and sustain. Nature conservation at scale takes years of sustained effort, there is no 'quick fix' to habitat restoration, especially when threatened by INNS and overgrazing issues – which do not respect borders and need to be tackled at catchment scale.

NLHF Landscape Connections provides a critical and unique opportunity, as the only significant and long-term relevant fund in the UK. To work with a funding partner for 10 years, who truly understands the challenges is an amazing opportunity. NLHF funding will ensure that action can be delivered on the ground, enthusiasm can be captured, more people can be involved and benefit and that the Initiative will snowball as others join our efforts as we start to demonstrate and share success.



# OUR PROGRAMMES

## 11 INTEGRATED PROGRAMMES

Restoring the woodland mosaic is at the heart of this Initiative but this alone will fail without a wider suite of programmes to help. The Rhodi-Free Future, Loch Lomond Venison and Grazing for Future Nature are all essential to enabling our native woodlands to naturally regenerate, and the Growing our Future plant nurseries are vital to provide sufficient locally grown saplings to plant. And without the skills and experience provided through Nature's Future Workforce, there will be insufficient capacity to deliver the restoration required.

Funding Future Nature, Embedded Communities, and Engaging and Inspiring Action for Nature all provide the means to place people at the heart of the nature restoration, enabling long term community and visitor support. Nature Routes will help manage visitor pressures to the areas restored and enable people to connect and care for our natural heritage and Learn and Share will enable progress to be evaluated, changes made if required and successes shared with others.

There are further cross connections with 'Rhodi squads', plant nurseries, venison and the woodland mosaic all reliant on, and helping create, sustainable land management businesses and new jobs and skills. All of these programmes are essential and must happen simultaneously as part of the same initiative for us to restore our woodland mosaic, ultimately forming a healthy perpetual cycle of people and nature programmes with each reliant on the other to thrive.

**Programme 1: Rhodi-Free Future**

**Programme 2: Loch Lomond Venison**

**Programme 3: Grazing for Future Nature**

**Programme 4: Restoring our Woodland Mosaic**

**Programme 5: Growing our Future**

**Programme 6: Nature's Future Workforce**

**Programme 7: Funding Future Nature**

**Programme 8: Embedded Communities**

**Programme 9: Engaging and Inspiring Action for Nature**

**Programme 10: Nature Routes**

**Programme 11: Learn and Share**



## PROGRAMME 1: RHODI-FREE FUTURE

Rhododendron needs to be controlled across a wide, geographically defensible area, rather than at the level of individual colonies or land holdings, and crucially over the long term. This is often a barrier to effective eradication because many funding sources are too small and only available in the short term. It also requires coordination across multiple land holdings, between many partners and long-term planning with funding committed to keep controlling the plants. Additionally, there is a shortage of local people with the skills, training and equipment to do the practical work of controlling Rhododendron. Contractors with the ability to do this work are often based an impractical distance away and are only likely to invest in upskilling their staff if they have confidence in there being secure long-term work.



The aim of this programme is to develop a strategic, priority-driven, evidence-based approach to Rhododendron removal, drawing on community and small business capacity to deliver ongoing removal, monitoring and maintenance. This will result in a shift away from the current ad-hoc, opportunistic, funding dependant approach, allowing impacts to be seen at landscape scale whilst developing wider capacity to remove other invasive plant species.

## PROGRAMME 2: LOCH LOMOND VENISON

High deer numbers are one of the major threats to the resilience and natural regeneration of our woodlands. Whilst nationally there is pressure to reduce deer numbers, at present, deer management is a net cost for land managers, partly due to the low price they receive for the venison and long supply chains. Additionally, larder space is an issue, with limited options for community larders in the National Park, and only some privately owned larders on larger estates.

The aim of this programme is to shift away from the current deer management situation to the desired systemic solution, where venison sales support new models of sustainable land management. This systemic shift will bring wider community benefits, through new jobs, skills development, and supply of a sustainably sourced protein, and will contribute to achieving biodiversity targets through the reduction of deer browsing pressure.



### PROGRAMME 3: GRAZING FOR FUTURE NATURE

Herbivore pressure has the biggest overall impact on woodland restoration and whilst much of the focus is on deer control, the impact of farmed grazing animals is very significant. Much of the National Park is impacted by heavy grazing pressure, whilst other areas need more grazing or different grazing regimes to achieve nature and conservation outcomes. Achieving the right level of grazing appropriate to different sites is therefore crucial both in restoring our woodland mosaic and maintaining and creating opportunities for sustainable land use. Supporting those grazing regimes requires appropriate funding as well as training, support and networks of land managers working together to develop best practice.



The aim of this programme is to support farmers and other land managers in the Initiative area to adopt and showcase nature-friendly, resilient farming practices that enhance biodiversity, improve land stewardship and strengthen farm viability. The programme will promote collaboration and peer learning through the development of exemplary demonstration sites, tailored advice, and shared knowledge networks. By aligning agricultural productivity with the aim of restoring our woodland mosaic, the programme seeks to contribute to a thriving rural economy, climate resilience and long-term sustainability of farming within the Initiative area and across the landscapes.

### PROGRAMME 4: RESTORING OUR WOODLAND MOSAIC

Our native woodlands are of global ecological importance. We have some of the rarest woodland habitats in the world, including temperate rainforest, remnant Caledonian pinewoods, and rare Scottish montane scrub. In Scotland, there are now only 30,000 hectares of temperate rainforest, 18,000 hectares of pinewoods and a few hundred acres of montane scrub. These rare and unique habitats are found mostly in small, isolated fragments that are not large enough to be self-sustaining. Expanding and restoring the National Park's woodland mosaic is at the heart of the Landscape Connections Initiative.



The aim of this programme is to accelerate the delivery of native woodland recovery in the core Woodland Mosaic Restoration Zone. We will do this by addressing the pressures and threats in this core zone, and by connecting and restoring the unique mosaic of woodland habitats. We will also work to ensure the impacts of restoration within the core zone ripples out across the whole Initiative area by identifying and supporting opportunities to connect core restoration work into the wider woodland network.

Our vision is that this programme will contribute to a future where the condition, diversity and resilience of our woodland habitat is enhanced, and our native woodland is expanding and naturally regenerating.



## PROGRAMME 5: GROWING OUR FUTURE



Whilst much of our woodland mosaic will restore naturally once the threats have been reduced or removed, there will still be a need to plant trees (and other plants) to supplement natural regeneration, particularly where there is presently no established seed

source. However, put simply, there are not enough locally grown plants and trees to support this and neither are there sufficient skills and capacity to grow them. A pipeline of plants will be needed that has local provenance and reflects the diversity of plants suitable for our habitats and restoration work.

We need to develop and deliver a new innovative collaborative approach between existing and new nurseries that is financially viable and delivers long-term security. We need to address the skills and knowledge shortage relating to tree nurseries and native plant propagation and define the most appropriate business model to ensure there is long term financial sustainability.

This programme aims to create a financially viable network of plant nurseries that can provide a sustainable supply of local provenance plants to support planned nature restoration delivery for this Initiative and the decades beyond.

## PROGRAMME 6: NATURE'S FUTURE WORKFORCE

The National Park's population has a lower proportion of young and working-age people compared to the national average and faces considerable challenges related to skills development opportunities.

We need to benchmark the existing Nature's Future Workforce to understand where we are now and identify the needs and gaps before developing detailed solutions. However, we anticipate that we will develop a Future Nature Skills cohort for ages 14–26, building on practical and transferrable skills, a pathway to connect young people with opportunities to volunteer, gain work experience or benefit from mentoring (ages 14–18) and an apprenticeship and employability strand for those aged over 18, as well as family volunteering, particularly targeting families at risk of exclusion.

Unlocking the benefits of nature restoration skills development for people (especially young people) will inspire them to become active partners and long-term guardians. This programme will ensure that accessible inclusive pathways are embedded in this Initiative, creating more opportunities for people's involvement, skills building and career development as we accelerate the restoration of our woodland mosaic.



## PROGRAMME 7: FUNDING FUTURE NATURE

The large-scale woodland mosaic restoration required is constrained by a lack of substantial, long-term funding. To address this, a blend of private investment in natural capital, alongside public finance and a range of grants, sponsorship and other funding will be essential to deliver the scale of impact required.

This programme will be governed to design, pilot, and implement a new and transparent 'Future Nature Fund' which attracts, holds and distributes funds to organisations, individuals, businesses and communities who want to deliver projects that are important to them and which contribute to landscape scale nature restoration. It will also contribute to the wider Future Nature aim of developing and piloting new public and private funding models that support large-scale nature restoration projects within the Initiative area and beyond.



## PROGRAMME 8: EMBEDDED COMMUNITIES

Change is more sustainable if communities support and feel part of it and understand how it will benefit them. We will maximise opportunities for communities to be involved in decisions that could affect or benefit them and the landscapes they are part of. We want to pilot and learn from a new model of governance for nature and land-use decision-making that can be adopted more widely within the National Park and beyond.

Community benefit from nature and nature restoration is still a relatively new concept, representing a shift away from traditional, top-down approaches to nature and land management. Embedding community benefit and governance into nature restoration efforts, and this Initiative, will help address traditional power dynamics and build trust with, and greater agency for, local communities. Working with Community Land Scotland to ensure Initiative outcomes are more sustainable and locally relevant, this new approach recognises that environmental and social justice are interconnected, and that we need progress in both.

We also recognise that not all communities have the same capacity, capability and knowledge, so it is important to meet communities 'where they're at' and offer support that allows all communities to support nature restoration based on their ambitions and abilities. Support packages will be co-designed to ensure communities have the capacity, capability and knowledge to participate as equal partners, who can both benefit from, and bring benefit to, landscape scale nature restoration initiatives.



## PROGRAMME 9: ENGAGING AND INSPIRING ACTION FOR NATURE

People feeling connected to nature not only benefits their wellbeing but inspires them to act in ways that are more likely to benefit the environment. While the National Park Authority and its partners already have a range of resources and infrastructure in place to enable and support people to access, appreciate and enjoy nature, including their woodlands, in the National Park, we need to build on these. We need to identify and fill audience gaps and develop a targeted programme of progressive activity and resources for people to experience, engage, understand and act for restoration of their woodland mosaic.

This will include engaging a general audience, making the most of this Initiative being accessible to so many visitors as a unique opportunity to increase nature connectivity and behaviour change to a wide audience. Audiences will include those with the most current capacity to deliver nature and woodland restoration, particularly land managers and local communities. And, crucially, they will include those with the most to gain through benefitting; or/and are currently most easily ignored or not getting the opportunity to engage.

We will embed the development and delivery of a targeted engagement approach across all delivery programmes, particularly Nature Routes, and also more generally across the Initiative. Engagement will follow behaviour change principles and be led by the activity plan and its primary aim will be to ensure that a diverse range of people and communities benefit from opportunities to experience, engage, understand and act for nature restoration.

## PROGRAMME 10: NATURE ROUTES

The Landscape Connections Initiative will deliver the most accessible exemplar of nature restoration at scale in Scotland, sitting within an hour's journey for 50% of Scotland's population. This provides a unique opportunity to engage with our four million visitors, of which 79% arrive by car and 73% explore the area by car. If there is no intervention, car-based travel is predicted to increase nationally by 40% by 2037. Visitor numbers also have considerable impact and pressures on our woodland habitats and species.



Furthermore, we also recognise that many visitors, whilst loving the tranquillity and landscapes of the National Park, have little understanding, engagement or positive contribution to saving and restoring its nature.

The Nature Routes programme will embed low carbon, high nature value interpretation, engagement and experiences across existing sites and routes, with onsite and digital media, mostly using existing infrastructure and building on existing activity programmes. It will mitigate the threat of visitor impact and maximise the opportunity to engage an existing and growing audience in experiencing, understanding and caring for nature and its landscape scale restoration.

## PROGRAMME 11: LEARN AND SHARE

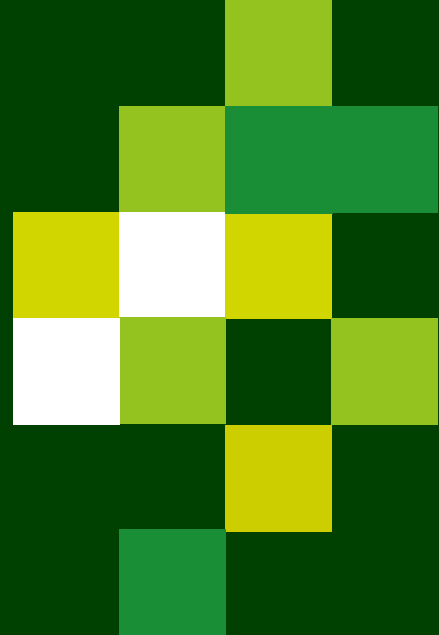
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A robust method to track, monitor and share learning from the project is essential. We have a range of monitoring already in place as well as lessons learnt from multiple landscape scale projects. Nevertheless, much of this data remains short-term, piecemeal and unable to track long-term impact, especially over ecological data and timescales. We need a more integrated approach which brings together long-term benefits for nature and people.

The Landscape Connections Initiative should be an exemplar given its high accessibility, visitation and profile. We have an opportunity and a responsibility to fully monitor and evaluate what happens through the Initiative, what is successful and what doesn't work, to engage and inspire people to see and experience it and to ensure that the learning is rolled out across the National Park and Scotland. We will develop an evidence-based approach to understanding and selecting the best and most robust method to track, monitor and share learning from The Landscape Connections Initiative.







LOCH LOMOND & THE TROSSACHS

## LANDSCAPE CONNECTIONS

Submitted as part of:

National Lottery Heritage Fund  
Landscape Connections

AUGUST 2025

RESTORING OUR WOODLAND MOSAIC

Organisations consulted in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections Development Phase bid

Section below highlights who we have consulted and sought advice from (I've personal removed names). This has been taken directly from the application form submitted to Lottery.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>12</b>  | <p><b>Tell us what advice you have received in planning your project and from whom.</b></p> <p>If you have spoken to anyone from The National Lottery Heritage Fund about your project, tell us about the advice you received and how you have used that advice to develop your project.</p> <p>Tell us if you have received any specialist advice about your project from anyone else. This could be experts in the heritage your project focuses on or other organisations who will support you to deliver your project.</p> <p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any consultation you have done with your local community and those who will be involved in your project</li> <li>• any project proposal advice, such as from an architect or conservator</li> <li>• any pre-application advice on planning and/or listed building consent matters, such as from your local authority or an archaeologist</li> <li>• advice about how to address wellbeing for your project participants, such as from a charity or local group who can provide support which is relevant to their lived experience</li> </ul> <p>[Text field – 5,000 characters]</p> |
| <p>Loch Lomond &amp; The Trossachs Landscape Connections Initiative has received advice and guidance from wide ranging sources:</p> <p>National Lottery Heritage Fund advised on the process and guidance:, Head of Engagement Scotland:, Senior Investment Manager:, Senior Investment Manager.</p> <p>Our Programme Board advised on programme identification, Initiative aims and overall approach:, Director of Environment &amp; Visitor Services, NPA:, Director, RSPB Scotland; LLTCT board member.</p> <p>A Steering Group of key stakeholders and experts oversee the Initiative and ensure strategic direction, decision-making, engagement &amp; resource management:, Area Manager Loch Lomond, The Trossachs &amp; Tayside, , Senior Fundraising Manager, RSPB Scotland:, Director, , board member LLTCT; Dom Hall, Future Nature Development Manager, , Project Management Advisor, , Project Management Advisor, NPA.</p> <p>We have also had a range of working groups from across partners:</p> <p>Loch Lomond &amp; the Trossachs Countryside Trust (LLTCT):, Programme Manager – Nature Restoration:, Programme Manager – People &amp; Communities:, The Great Trossachs Forest Project Coordinator</p> |   |



RSPB Scotland:, Loch Lomond Site Manager:, Inversnaid Site Manager:, Senior Conservation Officer

NPA:, Head of Governance and Performance:, Finance & Procurement Manager:, Legal Services Manager:, Business Improvement Advisor:, Head of Visitor Services:, National Park Mobility Partnership Programme Manager:, Land Use Programme Manager:, Senior Land Use Advisor:, Trees and Woodlands Advisor:, Place Projects Manager, Behaviour Change Manager:, Education and Inclusion Advisor:, Sustainable Development Advisor

Additional advisors for specific areas:

Woodland & Landscape Management

Woodland Trust Scotland:, Director for Scotland:, Outreach Advisor – Scotland’s Rainforest Forestry and Land Scotland:, Planning Manager:, Planning Manager; Simon Turner, Planning Forester

Scottish Forestry:, Conservator, Perth & Argyll Conservancy

Alliance for Scotland’s Rainforest:, Project Manager,

Scotland’s Rural College:, Head of Hill & Mountain Research Centre

NatureScot:, Head of Operations, South:, Operations Manager, South

Glenfalloch:, General Manager; Head Stalker

Association of Deer Management Groups:, Chair

Plantlife:, Rainforest ecology specialist advisor

Future Nature Scientific Advisory Group

Social enterprise and business

Strathfillan Community Development Trust:, Project Development Officer

Social Enterprise Scotland:, CEO

Venison Advisory Service Ltd:, Director

Scottish Venison:, Chair

Arkaig Community Forest: Community Venison Project Manager

Curious in Nature:, Owner

Quality Meat Scot (QMS) Monitor Farm Scotland: Inveruglas

Nature Friendly Farming Network:, Scotland Manager

West Highland Way:, WHW Business Development Manager

Engagement, diversity, education, and capacity building

Project Manager, Our Rainforest Futures, Woodland Trust Scotland

Head of Land Rights & Responsibilities, Scottish Land Commission

Natural Capital Community Partnerships, Community Land Scotland

Tullochan:, Funding & Communications Officer

Career Ready:, Regional Manager West and Growth Areas Scotland

West Dumbartonshire Council Careers team:, Regeneration Officer in the Economic Development Team

Green Routes:, Key Workers

Developing Young Workforce West:, Vale of Leven Schools Coordinator

Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS):, Activities coordinator

NatureScot:, Nature-based Jobs & Skills Manager

Consultants

, Heritage Consultant  
, Communications Consultant  
, Land Use Consultants (LUC)

Building on multiple Future Nature and partnership consultations we also ran two Landscape Connections Initiative specific public consultation events which were attended by over 50 people across an online and in person presentation and discussion through which people and organisations fed in contributions on:

- Restoring and connecting our core nature-rich network
- Delivering nature-led benefits to communities and businesses
- Engaging and inspiring more people to access and understand our woodland mosaic