

2025-26 Annual Operational Plan Progress to End of FY Appendix 1

Agenda Item 12

National Park Authority Board Meeting

08 June 2026

Paper for information

Annual Operational Plan 2025/26: Progress to End of Financial Year 31st March 2026

Rating Key:

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Cancelled	Continued to 2026/27
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Reference and Corporate Plan Theme	AOP Deliverable	Progress Update to End of FY 31 st March 2026	Rating
R/A/01 Approach	Continue implementation of long-term invasive, non-native species (INNS) delivery plan, controlling riparian INNS through National Park Authority staff and partnership with the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts and mink control with Forestry and Land Scotland.	Delivery programme complete for this year.	Achieved
R/A/02 Approach	Develop delivery plans for the designated sites which include targeted projects, including Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve, Inchmoan and Blairbeich Bog and Inchcailloch management plans.	The water delivery plan is complete – working to engage partners and agree next steps. Deliver complete on various designated sites and overall review of sites carried out.	Achieved
R/A/03 Approach	Progress our flagship landscape scale projects, including supporting delivery of Wild Strathfillan programme through match funding and staff support.	The NRF funding for Wild Strathfillan is complete with final planting and fencing projects done and the new nursery established. Now planning for next steps aligned with Landscape Connections	Achieved

R/A/04 Approach	Develop the Landscape Connections National Lottery Heritage Fund opportunity, including development of rhododendron programme through Estee Lauder funding.	Recruitment of new team for landscape connections underway – development phase of Landscape Connections to start in May 2026	Achieved
R/A/05 Approach	Develop the Resilient Farming Network, fulfilling our commitment to whole farm reviews and establishment of networks.	Applications for host farms now complete and selected host farms will be confirmed early on 26/7. Work underway to set up initial baselining for those farms.	Continued to 2026/27 (R/A/03y)
R/A/06 Approach	Continue the delivery of the Peatland Action programme, targeting 11 projects which restore 865 ha. of blanket bog.	In 25/26, eight projects were completed by the NPA totalling 954 ha of restored peatland. Scottish Water restored an additional area of 94 ha on their land at Loch Katrine. The 25/26 total for the National Park is 1048 ha of restoration work, putting peatland on the path to recovery.	Achieved
R/A/07 Approach	Progress actions identified in the Herbivore Delivery Plan with support from the steering group.	All claims processed and paid for incentive and training schemes. Working on review of the scheme to run again in 26/7.	Achieved
R/A/08 Approach	Deliver year 1 of Woodland Delivery Plan including forestry case work, liaison with Forestry and Land Scotland, Scottish Forestry and other partners with the shared aim of approval for 400ha. of new woodland creation.	The final total of woodland creation for 25/6 year was 177.09 ha. Over the two years 24/25 and 25/26, the average is 377.62 ha. This is below the 400Ha average target but with forward planning for large schemes in the coming years we believe we are on track for that average level of creation over the 5-year period of the partnership plan.	Achieved
C/A/01 Approach	Continue work to maintain and improve the Core Paths Network within the National Park, including priority sections at Gartocharn, Loch Earn and the West Highland Way.	Phase 1 surfacing and drainage works on West Highland Way between Marr Bridge and Conic Hill complete. 3 phases of work completed as planned on Lochearnhead Railway Path.	Achieved

		<p>Audit of path infrastructure on West Highland Way north from Inversnaid completed.</p> <p>Aber Bridge, nr. Gartocharn, replaced and functioning well.</p>	
C/A/02 Approach	Develop and deliver the National Park Mobility Partnership arrangements around targeted shared resources and create a funding pipeline and Route Map for a programme of works/pilots which enhance sustainable transport in the National Park and deliver at least one pilot project in 2025/26.	<p>Q4 meetings of the Leadership Group and Stakeholder and Insights Forum were held in February.</p> <p>Funding applications were submitted to Transport Scotland's People & Place programme.</p> <p>Continued development of the Mobility Route Map.</p> <p>The Trossachs Explorer evaluation report was published and ongoing engagement with Stirling Council and funders to secure its return.</p> <p>Continued development of the East Loch Lomond Park & Ride Study (funded by SPT).</p>	Continued to 2026/27 (C/A/02y)
C/A/03 Approach	Grow our engagement programmes so that more and diverse audiences can learn, connect and act for nature and climate.	<p>Notable achievements in the last quarter include the launch of the National Lottery funded partnership project with CEMVO as lead and Changeworks as codelivery alongside us. Aiming to increase ethnic minority communities from the central belt to connect with nature and feel more comfortable in greenspaces, culminating in supported visits to the National Park.</p>	Achieved

		<p>Volunteering annual figures for 25/26: 13,013 total hours, of which, practical conservation 6,710 and Volunteer Ranger 6303 hours. This is an increase of almost 11% compared to last year.</p> <p>In 2025/26 the National Park supported a total of 92 schools and 21 Inclusion groups. This totaled over 2,000 children and young people, as well as over 300 participants engaged through our outreach nature connections programme.</p>	
C/A/04 Approach	Begin a review of the Camping Management Byelaws and undertake stakeholder engagement in preparation for the statutory consultation in 2026/27.	Discussion pack to inform Phase 2 informal engagements completed, 4 engagement workshops held. Findings report finalised. DRAFT byelaw wordings completed. DRAFT Public consultation pack being finalised, DRAFT Board paper completed. Comms plan finalised.	Achieved
C/A/05 Approach	Prepare and implement the operational management and reporting on the Joint Response Visitor Management Plan – Including Visitor Management Groups.	The 2026 Joint Response Visitor Management Plan has been agreed. Resources are in place. Pre-season meetings have been held with the National Park Visitor Management Group, The Loch Lomond Stakeholder Group and a park wide Visitor Management Group. This has ensured that there are clear, consistent communication channels between partners and communities to ensure a joined-up approach to managing visitor pressures and capitalising on opportunities for joint working where appropriate.	Achieved
C/A/06 Approach	Review the effectiveness of the first operational season of the new Loch Lomond byelaws and make adjustments as required.	New Enforcement App in testing phase with view to implementing in summer 2026 aiming	Partially Achieved

		to streamline enforcement processes which incorporates efficient reporting functions.	
C/A/07 Approach	Design, progress and deliver high quality visitor recreation sites and facilities as Part of the Place Programme across publicly managed sites at West Loch Lomond (Tarbet Phase 2), Falls of Falloch, East Loch Lomond (Rowardennan) and Balloch Pierhead.	<p>Progress has been made on moving forward with the EV charging planned within Tarbet Phase1 and a date for work is being agreed.</p> <p>Tarbet Phase 2 Café building final approvals have been secured and the contractor appointment has progressed. The works tender pack for the existing building, including the new Changing Places Toilet, is on track.</p> <p>Falls of Falloch site start date has been agreed with the contractor. A media release in March received strong pick up across a range of local and national publications.</p> <p>Rowardennan Phase 1 is paused whilst we work with Forestry and Land Scotland on a revised delivery timeline.</p> <p>Balloch Pierhead with West Dunbartonshire Council, a successful public engagement event took place.</p>	Continued to 2026/27 (C/A/06x)
C/A/08 Approach	Develop and coordinate a pipeline of transformational projects for future delivery through Place Programme partnership working to facilitate higher quality assets across publicly managed sites in the National Park.	<p>Place Programme Fund, Year One, successfully delivered supporting Community Development Trusts in Callander and Strathfillan to develop the pipeline of transformational projects.</p> <p>Partnership working continues to be progressed focused on East Loch Lomond, Arrochar, Balloch and Callander, with a community led focus in Callander, Arrochar.</p>	Continued to 2026/27 (C/A/07y)

		<p>Positive meetings have taken place with Argyll and Bute Council around addressing site issues at Duck Bay.</p> <p>Detailed Landscape and Pier design work is nearing completion for the final future phases at Tarbet to enable completion of the delivery of the site masterplan, subject to funding, in future years.</p>	
C/A/09 Approach	Support the effective establishment of the West Highland Way Trust in taking on its responsibilities as an operational Trust and continue to enhance the sustainability of the long-distance route.	The Asset Transfer Agreement and data sharing agreement have been signed off by both parties, West Highland Way Trust is fully operational. NPA is assisting with staff recruitment.	Achieved
C/A/10 Approach	Support businesses in the National Park on the transition to a green economy and work with the National Park Destination Group on delivery of its annual plan, including the group's engagement with, and facilitating the best outcome for the National Park of, the introduction of any new Visitor Levy by local authorities in the area.	<p>The NPDG remains a robust industry group, consistently drawing good engagement at regular meetings.</p> <p>The recent successful NPDG business tour served as a high-level engagement initiative to connect local tourism businesses with key political and council representatives.</p> <p>The Stirling Visitor Levy Advisory Forum membership is complete and includes business and community representatives from the National Park as well as the National Park Authority.</p> <p>West Dunbartonshire Visitor Levy Advisory panel is in the process of assembling with the Chair having been appointed.</p>	Achieved

G/A/01 Approach	Prepare and engage on the Evidence Report for our next Local Development Plan, then submit to Scottish Government.	The Evidence Report was prepared via engagement with stakeholders in 2025, approved by National Park Board and submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2025.	Achieved
G/A/02 Approach	Begin the preparation of a draft Local Development Plan that delivers against National Park Partnership Plan outcomes and incorporates spatial land use planning including Nature Networks.	12-week engagement phase for the Call for Land, Sites and Ideas closed 23 April 2026. Engagement was supported by in person and several online briefing and Q&A sessions targeted at key stakeholders including landowners, land managers, developers, agents and communities.	Achieved
G/A/03 Approach	Design an inclusive and engaging campaign to encourage people and organisations to get involved at key stages in preparation of the next Local Development Plan for the National Park.	Public focus for this period was on the Call for Land Sites, and Ideas. Updated webpages, response form and FAQs were used to support engagement as well as sessions described above.	Achieved
G/A/04 Approach	Support communities across the National Park who have not yet produced a Local Place Plan to do so – including Croftamie, East Loch Lomond, Trossachs, Port of Menteith, Ardentinny and Balloch & Haldane.	Trossachs, Port of Menteith, and Ardentinny have completed and now validated Local Place Plans. East Loch Lomond have a final draft of their LPP ready for community approval and plans are for this to be validated by end Q2. Balloch and Haldane LPP is in draft and have similar timeframe for consultation and validation. Croftamie community plans to deliver over 26/27.	Partially Achieved
G/A/05 Approach	Scope out options for delivery support of community-led projects and programme activity - including Community Climate Action Hubs - in collaboration with partners and the Local Place Plan Advisory Group.	Programme of community check ins taking place for all National Park communities to confirm support needs, priorities for action and process for providing funding and other delivery support signposting.	Continued to 2026/27 (G/A/02x)
D/A/01 Approach	Redesign key internal governance processes to streamline and increase organisational transparency	Procurement documentation and guidance launched. Risk Appetite Statement drafted and approved at March Board.	Achieved

	and efficiency including procurement, contract management and contribution legal agreements.		
D/A/02 Approach	Develop the long-term delivery plan for our Estates Strategy, including the finalisation and implementation of site management plans and Fleet Strategy and driving efficiencies using Asset Management Solution.	<p>Full draft Site Management Plan for Balmaha Visitor Centre Site complete and ready for internal consultation to refine template content before wider roll-out.</p> <p>Landlord/Tenant/Tenure element of the Asset Management Solution now live, training complete and actively in use by Estates.</p> <p>Ranger Service and wider use of the Asset Management solution outwith Estates still under development.</p>	Partially Achieved
D/A/03 Approach	Develop an external funding strategy, delivery plan and appropriate governance structure.	Focus for 25/26 has been on lottery bid and other specific funding sources (in particular RTIF, SPT, Tactran). Residual capacity challenges have limited ability to progress organisational strategy and governance structure.	Continued to 2026/27 (D/A/01y)
D/A/04 Approach	Finalise the development of and commence the second phase of our 10-year Mission Zero programme to achieve a net zero organisation by 2030.	Net Zero Forward Look on pause due to staffing capacity challenges. Plan in place to recruit Net Zero technical lead.	Continued to 2026/27 (D/A/05y)
D/A/05 Approach	Complete the National Park Authority's Climate Adaptation Plan.	<p>Following further consideration of the strategic aims some of this will now be incorporated into the Site Management Planning work under the Estates Strategic actions (On Estate)</p> <p>Currently in development as part of an example Site Management Plan, which will test and inform further roll-out.</p>	Continued to 2026/27 (D/A/06y)

D/A/06 Approach	Begin the development of a draft Net Zero National Park Route Map outlining the approach to achieving a net zero national park, in collaboration with the 15 UK National Parks.	Net Zero National Park Route Map on pause due to staffing capacity challenges. Plan in place to address capacity through recruitment.	Continued to 2026/27 (D/A/07y)
D/A/07 Approach	Deliver a cross-organisation programme of activity to encourage the use, learning and promotion of Gaelic in line with the commitments of the 3rd edition of our Gaelic Language Plan.	We've published our third Gaelic Language Plan (2025–2030). We've held focused meetings on training, translation, and the wider promotion of Gaelic across the park. Our social media channels have featured Gaelic content, including place names on the TEX and Loch Venachar, helping raise awareness and encourage engagement.	Achieved
D/A/08 Approach	Design and deliver a series of campaigns to raise awareness, influence decision making and drive action on key outcomes set out in the National Park Partnership Plan and Corporate Plan.	<p>The Loch Lomond Byelaws campaign generated over 10k impressions with a 3.5% engagement rate* across 2 social posts.</p> <p>The Nature Connections campaign delivered 96k impressions across 20 posts with a 3.5% engagement rate.</p> <p>A paid campaign was also delivered in collaboration with YoungScot to reach more young people, with a focus on the Trossachs Explorer. This involved inclusion in Young Scot's monthly e-newsletter, issued to 109,204 members and featured on YS's social channels with have a combine reach of 55k.</p>	Achieved
D/P/01 People	Refresh our people strategy, including the completion of an organisational skills audit.	<p>Work on the strategy has commenced.</p> <p>Mandatory training launched in Feb currently at 99% completion rate.</p>	Continued to 2026/27 (D/P/01x)

		Work has now commenced on a staged approach to organisation wide functional training, with courses being identified for each service area.	
D/P/02 People	Deliver the first-year actions of our Equalities Outcomes for 2025-29.	Main projects complete and a fuller update to come to the Board in June.	Achieved
D/S/01 Systems	Design, test and launch an accessible Beta version of the new website for the National Park Authority based on insights gained through audience research.	<p>Website content coordinator in post until the end of June, leading on the content audit and approach.</p> <p>Internal Project Team across directorates is in place and meet monthly.</p> <p>First draft of the site structure has been developed.</p> <p>Working towards an Oct/early Nov 2026 launch of the Beta site.</p>	Continued to 2026/27 (D/S/04x)
D/S/02 Systems	Design and test an internal system for tracking performance and delivery against NPPP and Corporate Plan priorities to aid decision-making on resource allocation and prioritisation of activity.	Portfolio reporting meetings took place throughout 2026 and template reporting was updated through a test and learn approach. Reporting meeting format and integration with NPPP Measures of Success and Corporate Plan Objectives reporting in place for 26/27.	Achieved
D/S/03 Systems	Automate key financial operational and reporting processes (purchase orders, management accounts, Scottish Government reporting, Statutory Accounts and Fixed Asset reporting) to create efficiencies and increase resilience.	<p>Process improvements are underway for the creation of the Statutory Accounts document which should deliver some efficiencies and increase resilience for the 25/26 cycle.</p> <p>The Finance team has completed recruitment. The other process improvements will be deferred to 26/27 once the team members have completed training for their new roles.</p>	Continued to 2026/27 (D/A/01y)

D/S/04 Systems	Continue essential migration of services to increase resilience and efficiency, including the Scottish Wide Area Network service, IDOX e-planning service and Disaster Recovery (DR) Service.	Idox migration complete. SWAN migration complete. Security Operations Centre/Security Information and Event Management in place. Disaster recovery paused due to incompatibility with new technologies.	Partially Achieved
D/S/05 Systems	Implement actions from Digital strategy, including consideration of the use of technology to support visitor management across the National Park as a place.	Automation projects continuing across the board and areas of focus are being identified for 26/27.	Continued to 2026/27 (D/S/03y)
B/A/01 Approach	Undertake Statutory Access Authority work and take actions to maintain the path network as required– including facilitating the Local Access Forum (LLTAF), upholding Access Rights, and delivering our Core Paths Plan.	John Muir Way/Three Lochs Way at Gouk Hill now open. Access Forum formulating advice for NPA re ongoing case at Glen Buckie. Forum site visit scheduled. Case at East Loch Lubnag ongoing. NPA has installed operable gates on previously blocked core path at Gartmore. Access Forum site visit scheduled at Glen Buckie.	
B/A/02 Approach	Operate an effective Development Management service which, as a key part of delivering our statutory planning function, influences development proposals to deliver our vision for the National Park. We aspire to ongoing service improvements in line with the National Planning Improvement Framework.	Permission was granted at the March meeting of the Planning and Access Committee for the redevelopment of the former Torpedo Testing site near Arrochar. The site is allocated site for Tourism development in the current LDP. The proposal for a hotel and mix of accommodation units - as well as open space associated with the former Pier structure – was confirmed to be granted subject to a Legal agreement - to ensure the common management of the	

		<p>setting of the development – work is progressing to secure the agreement.</p> <p>Monitoring work continues with the ongoing programme for the Cononish Goldmine coming back into production - and initial discussions with the team planning to develop the Loch Long Fish Farm, to ensure a focus on conditions to be addressed prior to any start on site.</p>
B/A/03 Approach	Effectively manage the National Park Authority's role in influencing and advising other statutory public bodies developing relevant infrastructure projects while delivering biodiversity enhancement, landscape and recreation benefits.	<p>Further discussions have been held with TS and their contractors about the R&BT viewpoint and car park design. However, the decision on how to progress with the road works won't be made by Ministers until after the Scottish Parliamentary Election.</p> <p>In total, 4 new TPOs were Made in 25/6. 2 of these were Confirmed, with the other 2 to follow in 26/7. All 4 will be Registered with Registers of Scotland in 26/7.</p> <p>3 new TPOs made and Confirmed in 24/5 were Registered in 25/6.</p>