

LLTAF Update: August 2026

STRATEGIC UPDATES

Budgets

As reported in the last update, the Core Paths capital budget for 2026/7 is fully committed. We will be seeking an additional budget top-up at the next quarter to allow us to complete our scheduled project works for the year. More detail on project work is provided below.

Sustainable Travel

As previously noted, Stirling Council has launched the new Trossachs Explorer service which started on Monday 29th June. You can read more about the launch [here](#) and access information on the route, timetable, and ticket prices on their [website](#). The service will be modelled on the Council's in-house C60, C61 and C62 bus pilots that are improving public transport connections between many of Stirling's rural communities and destinations.

In connection with the Park Authority's successful National Lottery Heritage Fund bid for a major nature restoration project – *Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Landscape Connections* initiative – a 'Nature Routes' officer has been appointed to investigate the potential for public transport-style waterbus services on Loch Lomond.

West Highland Way Trust

The Trust has recently appointed a part-time Fundraising & Membership Manager and a full-time Director who will take up their new roles by September.

Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBinS)

DMBinS launched a public consultation on their draft Strategy for Mountain Biking in Scotland 2026 – 2036 on 23 July. The public consultation is open to everyone with an interest in mountain biking in Scotland and feedback will directly inform the final Scottish Mountain Biking Strategy 2026–2036, which will guide investment, collaboration and development across the sector over the next ten years. The consultation runs until 17th August, and comments can be sent to inf@dmbins.com. The link to the consultation is here: [Public consultation launches on a draft of the Strategy for... – DMBinS](#)

Proposed Scottish Paths Fund

Following strong lobbying over the preceding year from Scottish Ramblers, SORA (Scottish Outdoor Recreation Alliance) and the National Access Forum Resources Sub-Group (of which the NPA is a member), both the SNP and Scottish Greens included a commitment in their election manifestos for a Scottish Paths Fund. We have contributed to an emerging position paper being developed by SORA which is intended to assist the Scottish Government in developing and delivering this proposal. We will keep the Forum informed of any progress.

NPA Website

The website team continues to make progress with the development of the new website with the new layout and design taking shape. From the insights we have been given, the format is clearer, crisper and much more intuitive than the current version. A 'BETA version' is expected to be available for private testing from October to December and the team has proposed that the Forum be asked for feedback at this stage so that they can 'feed into the whole designed page in context'.

AREA REPORTS

West Loch Lomond, Breadalbane and Cowal

Work by other bodies affecting access:

Dunoon – Loch Long overhead power line

The additional work on the lattice tower foundations is ongoing with an end of 2026 completion date. Access rights on the path and core path network are largely unaffected.

Upholding Access Rights:

Drumkinnon Bay

Following a complaint from South Lanarkshire Council (Leisure & Culture) about recreational use of the main beach – an area where access rights apply – the NPA Access and Legal teams have discussed the case and will convene a meeting with Loch Lomond Shores/Scottish Enterprise, who manage and own the site, respectively, to discuss the situation.

Strone High Road core path

The NPA has responded to another enquiry about the dangerous building notice and the temporary closure of the core path road for health and safety reasons. Argyll & Bute Council continues to work with the landowner and local residents to try and resolve issues with the roadside building. The adjacent NPA core path diversion continues to support modest use.

Gouk Hill / Three Lochs Way

The recently constructed path link is being monitored for stability, and the early signs are positive. The surface has stabilised, the drainage works are effective, and the link is being used by walkers and cyclists again.



Gouk Hill / Three Lochs Way

Luss foreshore core path

The NPA has received comments and complaints from residents about the ongoing situation of the collapsed lochshore wall and core path pavement. The land is leased to Argyll & Bute Council by the Luss Estates Company, and the Council initially agreed to repair the site c.18 months ago. Unfortunately, the work is not currently timetabled and the NPA will work with partners to try and resolve the issue.



Luss core path

East Loch Lomond and the Trossachs

Upholding Access Rights:

Ardchullarie, Loch Lubnaig

The Legal Team contacted the landowner's agent on 27 May after a further site visit found the gate still padlocked. Although issues such as the public causing damage, livestock fatality caused by litter and leaving the gate open to allow cows onto the A84 were cited as reasons for the gate being locked, it was agreed that the padlock would be removed. A site visit on 2 June noted that it had been and on subsequent visits, the gate was still open.

Borland Hill path, Gartmore

The core path gates (previously reported as being closed/tied up) were recorded as open on a site visit on 27 July – see photos below. However the landowner has once again tied up all three gates because he claims one of the gates was left open and this has created problems with his livestock management. We are liaising with our Legal Team on the best way to proceed.



Borland Hill core path gates tied back as of 27 July

Trial diversion, Glen Buckie

As previously reported, a working group of Forum members were reviewing the diversion route at Ballimore, Glen Buckie. A planned site visit for May was postponed after the landowner contacted the NPA to indicate that, if we provided two deer fence-height hand gates, he would install them alongside the main locked gates.

We supplied him with two gates on 5th June and obtained in writing from him an agreement that they would be installed within one month, and if they were not, we would come onto his land and install them ourselves. On 7th July we received a call from the landowner to notify us that both gates were in place and a site visit on 14th July confirmed this – see photos below.



Tigh nan Craobh

This is a complaint that a homeowner has blocked part of an established path in woodland behind Aberfoyle Primary School by erecting a fence demarcating the property boundary. The property was previously called the Craigmore Centre and owned by local authorities (Perth and then Stirling Council) and had been used as a bunkhouse, residential and day care centre until it was sold in 2011. It became a private residence in 2015 and renamed Tigh nan Craobh.

We have been in discussions with the property owner for a couple of months now, with support from the NPA's Legal Team. Discussions have focussed on:

- legal interpretations of Section 13 of the LRA for the 'access authority' (i.e. National Park Authority) *'to assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment, any route....by which access rights may reasonably be exercised'*;
- Sections 6 and 7 on exemptions to access rights and privacy/ curtilage issues
- Likelihood of the route also being a right of way
- Lack of alternatives for the path to be re-routed

We are close to agreeing a practical solution for the landowner to move the fence back (distance yet to be agreed) to allow access rights to continue on the defined path.

Access Infrastructure Projects

West Highland Way Improvements: Burn of Mar to Conic Hill East

All works are now completed with Phase 2 comprising the remainder of the re-profiling of the washed-out section and the replacement of timber steps at the Burn of Mar with a longer section of stone-pitching – see photos below.





There are some snagging issues to be resolved and the contractors are due back in August to remedy this. Some of the step risers are too high and require another level of stone to be added to ensure walkers do not walk around the stone to avoid a high step up or down. The aggregate surface has not bedded in as well as we would like with larger diameter stone (40-60mm diameter) sitting on top of a relatively firm surface rather than being bound in as part of it. This loose stone is mobile and spilling onto pitched sections and into cross drains and water bars blocking them up.

Aber Path

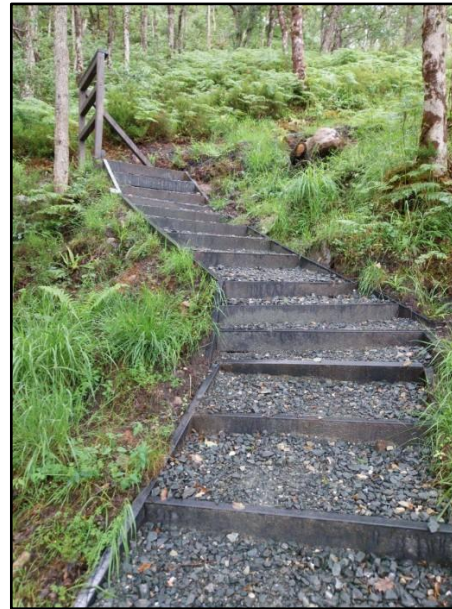
Planning consent has been granted to Friends of Loch Lomond (FoLL) to construct two new aggregate surfaced sections of the Aber Path (right of way) where it runs through two fields, one of which is very wet and the other seasonally wet. We are supportive of the path improvements in principle but raised concerns with Planning colleagues about the adequacy of the proposed drainage and the use of recycled road planings as the choice of surface. Enhanced drainage works have been included in the path design and there is a condition that relevant registration and certification documents should be supplied on the source, storage and transport of the road planings before being used.

There is an ongoing issue that the landowner of one of the fields, who is also FoLL's preferred contractor, set down road planings as a supposed temporary path in January this year without consent. There is a further planning condition that this should be removed to allow for the full path construction to go ahead, but the landowner is refusing to do so. We are working with Planning colleagues to seek a resolution to this.

West Highland Way improvements: Ptarmigan (Low Path)

A partnership project between FLS and the NPA recently came to fruition in East Loch Lomond with much needed upgrades to the 'Low Path'. The loch shore path is the original, challenging line of the WHW through this section, weaving through rocky buttresses, dense temperate forest and picturesque beaches.

With £90k of FLS funding, the NPA project-managed the work and commissioned Arran Footpaths and Forestry Ltd for their first project in the Park. Despite complex access and transport logistics across Loch Lomond and challenging terrain, the work went relatively smoothly and was completed on time and budget. The upgrades featured new rock pitching, reusing existing material, new recycled plastic infrastructure, path resurfacing and drainage repairs - the path is now open again for visitors.



WHW – Ptarmigan low path upgrades

West Highland Way Infrastructure

The preparatory stages to replace 1) Ardeish bridge 2) a large rock-step wooden ladder and 3) repair Pollochro bridge in East Loch Lomond are currently taking place. The ambition is to complete this work with core NPA funding before March 2026.

Lochearnhead Railway Path

The NPA has allocated £200,000 from its' capital project budget for further construction works and discussions are ongoing with the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust for additional funding. The completion of Phase 7 from Lochearnhead has been prioritised with a cost estimate of £400,000. Any further funding above this total will go towards continued surfacing work on Phase 6 in Ardveich Woods.

NCN7 barrier reduction, Bochastle Farm crossing

The improvement works at this location involved removing gates and narrow cycle grids at both sides of the farm crossing. Because of concerns raised about poor sightlines for both cyclists and farm traffic now that cyclists can maintain speed through the site, some additional signage and give way markings were added in July to raise awareness of the crossing.



Recreation & Access Team, August 2026