

Planning Performance Framework



2021 - 2022

Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
OUR PRIORITIES AS A PLANNING SERVICE	4
PART 1 QUALITATIVE NARRATIVE AND CASE STUDIES	5
QUALITY OF OUTCOMES – DEMONSTRATING THE ADDED VALUE DELIVERED BY PLANNING.....	6
CASE STUDY 1 – NPF4 MINI-WORKSHOPS; COLLABORATION IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION.....	12
CASE STUDY 2 – OUR FUTURE SPATIAL STRATEGY: BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE	14
CASE STUDY 3 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND LOCAL PLACE PLAN WORKSHOPS	18
QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT	20
CASE STUDY 4 – DETERMINATION TIMES PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	22
CASE STUDY 5– NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE NATIONAL PARK.....	25
GOVERNANCE – ENSURING THAT OUR STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES WERE PROPORTIONATE, EFFECTIVE AND FIT FOR PURPOSE.....	29
CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.....	32
CASE STUDY 6 – ENFORCEMENT	42
PART 2 SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	44
PART 3 SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS	46
PART 4 NATIONAL HEADLINE INDICATORS.....	49
PART 5 OFFICIAL STATISTICS	54
PART 6 WORKFORCE INFORMATION	56
PART 7 PLANNING COMMITTEE INFORMATION.....	58
PART 8 KEY MARKERS	59

Introduction

This is our eleventh annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF11) for the National Park.

Published annually, this framework demonstrates the continuous improvement of our planning service and is a requirement for all planning authorities in Scotland. It represents a holistic view of our performance, giving substance to our statistics published bi-annually regarding how many applications we handled and the timescales for these.

The year's framework highlights the gradual move from remote working to hybrid working and making increased use of digital platforms for communication with communities, for example a workshop on Community Place Planning, and the collaborative work of our planning teams in contributing to the NPF4 consultation. The document includes the results of this year's Planning Applications Audit and explains how development management determination times have improved following the Covid-19 challenges. Case studies include a focus on new high quality housing developments and an enforcement example demonstrating effective co-ordination of key agencies.

In addition, the framework includes our National Headline Indicators (statistics on Local Development Plan age, effective land supply, project planning, approval rates and enforcement) which can be found at the end of the document at Part Five. Part One tells the story of how we have improved on last year's performance and gives our annual update on headline development issues in the National Park, development plan scheme, legacy cases, and pre-application service.

Our priorities as a Planning Service

[The Government's Programme for Scotland 2021-22](#), published in September 2021, sets out core priorities around leading safely out of the pandemic, urgently confronting climate change, driving a green, fair economic recovery, and boosting opportunities for children and young people. The programme also includes plans to help secure a just transition to net zero – creating opportunities for new, good and green jobs, making homes easier and greener to heat, and encouraging people to walk, wheel or cycle instead of driving. We can demonstrate how our work in the planning service contributes towards this programme.



Net Zero Nation

Scottish Government actions under this section include providing more active travel opportunities and investing £500 million in the natural economy, including the expansion of the Nature Restoration Fund, creating local nature networks and increased forestry and peatland.

We continue to use planning policy to support delivery of active travel opportunities and through our investment in Place Based improvements in our towns and villages this can further encourage a modal shift away from the car to people choosing to take public transport and active travel options for leisure and daily journeys into and around the National Park.

Research work has been undertaken as part of the evidence base for the review of the Local Development Plan to look at best practice across the UK at how the planning system can contribute to the enhancement of nature networks and secure positive effects for biodiversity. The results of this research will inform our approach including the mapping of nature networks supported by ambitious policies that will ensure development in the National Park will protect and restore nature.



See Case Study 2 about our research on Nature Networks



Living Better: supporting thriving, resilient and diverse communities

The Scottish Government actions under this section include the delivery of 110,000 affordable homes across Scotland by 2032 with at least 70% in the social rented sector and 10% in our remote, rural and island communities. There is a vision to support inclusive communities and accelerating the transition to net zero by ensuring people have access to the services they need in their own neighbourhoods through the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods, investment in town centres and a new focus on placemaking.

Our priority is to continue to use planning policy to support affordable homes and encourage delivery of affordable housing in the National Park. The National Park is keen to support the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods and recently undertook a research pilot to look at how this concept could be applied in a rural context which will inform our thinking for our review of the Local Development Plan. In addition to this our continued work with supporting communities in developing their Local Place Plans is also informing the priorities in the next Local Development Plan for placemaking.



See Case Study 2 about our research on 20-minute neighbourhoods and Case Study 3 on community engagement

Part 1 Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

There are four overall measures against which our performance is assessed:

- **Quality of outcomes;**
- **Quality of service and engagement;**
- **Governance; and**
- **Culture of continuous improvement.**

The case studies cover a range of themes which relate to the categories of performance above. As a National Park we are guided by the National Park aims, and collaborative working is a core value of our organisation, readers will find this narrative woven throughout each of the case studies alongside an emphasis on Climate and Nature. Each case study aims to provide the reader with a better understanding of the quality of our planning service and our work to improve. In addition to the key measures case study 1 shows how we explored the use of digital platforms to retain a strong cross-departmental connectivity, which is adapted to hybrid working. In case study 2, as well as under the section of 'Culture of continuous improvement', demonstrates how we strive to keep our policies and guidance up to date and responsive to emerging changes in the planning system.

CASE STUDY 1 NPF4 workshops	CASE STUDY 3 LPP Community Event	CASE STUDY 5 Housing Delivery
CASE STUDY 2 LDP Evidence	CASE STUDY 4 Performance Improvement	CASE STUDY 6 Enforcement

Case Study Topics	Issues covered in PPF11	Case Study Topics	Issues covered in PPF11
Design	5	Interdisciplinary Working	1
Climate Change	2	Collaborative Working	
Conservation		Community Engagement	3
Biodiversity	6	Placemaking	
Regeneration		Design Workshops/Charrettes	
Environment		Place Standard	
Greenspace		Performance Monitoring	4
Town Centres		Process Improvement	
Masterplanning		Project Management	
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	2,3	Skills Sharing	
Housing Supply		Staff Training	
Affordable Housing	5	Online Systems	1
Economic Development		Data and Information	
Enforcement	6	Digital Practice	
Development Management Processes	4	Transport	
Planning Applications		Active Travel	

Quality of Outcomes – demonstrating the added value delivered by planning

Monitoring Outcomes 2021/22

Improving the design of new development and enhancing places – both natural and built - remains a key objective of the service. We continue to use our [Design and Placemaking Guidance](#) to encourage high quality design. The [annual monitoring reports](#) demonstrate how we are delivering the vision set out in the Local Development Plan. We take the opportunity within this report to showcase and celebrate some of the year's successes.

Looking at the number of applications approved and applications implemented to completion over the last five years, provides us with a good overview of the level of activity in recent years. In the calendar year of 2021, the number of approved applications has not only recovered, but increased compared to previous years as can be seen in Figure 1 below.

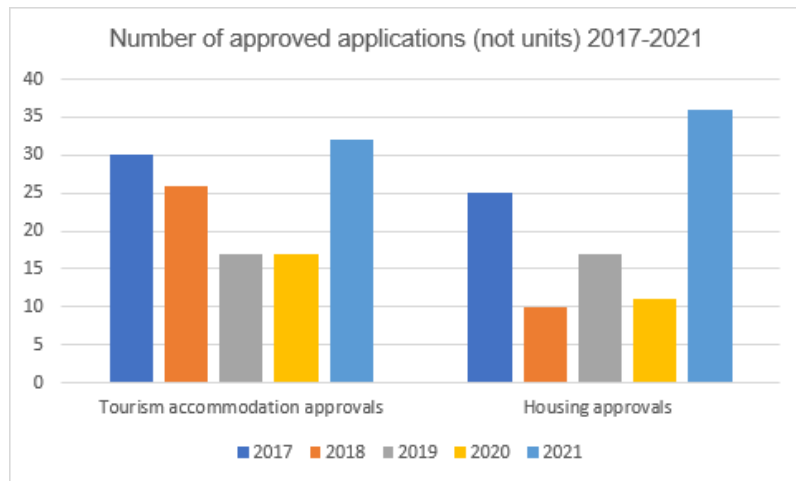


Figure 1 Tourism and Housing approvals

Housing

In 2021/22 there was a rise in the number of approved applications and housing units completed, compared to the previous year. The easing of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions meant that construction could be resumed and gave more certainty to prospective house builders. Most notably two allocated Local Development Plan sites have been completed delivering 24 new homes in Balloch and 50 affordable homes in Callander, both of which achieved a high quality finish, which are further explored in CASE STUDY 5– New housing development within the National Park. It has been a particularly challenging time for the construction sector not only because of the Covid-19 pandemic, but also unprecedented shortages in construction materials and labour have meant increased costs and logistical issues. The role of our monitoring officer creates a leaner process by acting as a single point of contact, post approval, between planning officers and developers and they liaise with developers throughout construction phases overseeing implementation of conditions as well as to negotiate non-material variations.

Whilst we do not record replacement housing towards our annual housing figures, the development at Conic Way in Drymen is worth highlighting. The Hannover Housing Association development will provide 15 semi-detached/ terraced homes built to a Passivhaus standard, providing residents with warmer, energy efficient homes.

Luss Housing update



In September 2021 the Section 75 agreement was signed off and a decision for approval was subsequently issued for 29 units delivered as a package of 8 applications by Luss Estates which are now being marketed for sale. This case was explored in PPF9 and was the result of the West Loch Lomondside Rural Development Framework planning guidance (a case study in PPF6). We piloted an approach to better coordinate and deliver sustainable rural development within a pressured rural area of the National Park, by working with the landowner and other partners which allowed us to trial packaging different sites together to help cross funding. Essentially this involved applying planning policy more flexibly where this helps achieve an agreed overall development strategy to respond to the unique pressures and opportunities in this area of the Park. We will be monitoring this closely and the knowledge acquired from this pilot will help inform our future Local Development Plan.

Tourism

Much like activity in the housing sector, the number of approvals and on ground delivery of tourism applications has gone up from the previous year. These numbers are for the 2021 calendar year: there were approvals for the delivery of high-quality visitor accommodation across the Park increasing the visitor offering with a variety of accommodation ranging from caravans, B&Bs and hotels. Approvals were granted for 48 self-catering units, 6 bed spaces (serviced accommodation like hotels and B&Bs are recorded by number of bed spaces) and 25 stances for glamping pods. We saw planning applications submitted in relation to new and expanding businesses and farm diversifications. Examples include an off-grid bothy style accommodation with its own small wind turbine and solar panels and the use of grazing land for two shepherd huts sensitively located in the landscape for a low impact visitor experience.



In terms of visitor car parking spaces, in the calendar year 2021 there was approval for 213 visitor car parking spaces. A large proportion of these visitor parking spaces are part of a wider group

of projects to address visitor management issues (demands for car parking and littering issues) using a multi-agency approach and some of this new parking provision acts as seasonal overflow only. As part of this additional car parking spaces have been created to accommodate hill walkers heading for Ben A'an and Ben Lomond by Forestry and Land Scotland. More on Visitor management actions can be found in our [seasonal 2021](#) review and has been covered in case study 2 in last year's [PPF](#).

Active and Sustainable Travel



Drymen Cycle Hub

© Paul Saunders

In 2021 approximately 2km of paths were completed and another 3km were approved. Approvals included formation of mountain bike trails in a community bike skills park in Dalrigh, a pedestrian bridge near Balmaha as part of the continued efforts on active travel connections between Drymen and Balmaha and restoration of a significantly degraded section of the Rob Roy Way. The Access and

Recreation team provide valuable specialist advice to planning officers and help the team spot potential issues or opportunities for improvements, which has resulted in a range of measures taken to contribute towards encouraging sustainable travel opportunities such as the inclusion of cycle storage, active travel packs for visitors or shuttle buses for staff.



Gordon Watson @LochLomondCEO · May 14

Walked the excellent new @RSPBLochLomond path today #Bluebell carpets, stunning fenland boardwalk, birdsong, mobility scooter visitors, friendly staff, fishing Osprey. A triumph of a project connecting people to unforgettable #nature experiences Well done to all at @RSPBScotland



Cultural Heritage

In terms of the Park's built heritage, there were 23 approvals linked to Listed Building and 19 additional approvals within Conservation Areas. There were several applications where the Historic Environment Policies proved a critical factor leading to a proposal being refused, withdrawn, or amended to encourage quality design in development which embraces the built heritage of the National Park. We are pleased to see several cases over the last year where buildings of vernacular quality and local historic interest have not only been protected but are to receive a new lease of life through sympathetic conversion.

Cononish Mine Update

Cononish Gold Mine continues to produce gold and the first tailings stack is being progressively formed. Progress has been made with the projects of the Greater Cononish Glen Management Plan including fencing and tree planting within the glen. This major development requires continued monitoring to ensure high quality outcomes in terms of enhancement and protection of the environment.



Cononish Gold Mine

Net Zero

As a National Park it is our aim to lead by example on tackling the twin crises of climate and nature. We published our statement of intent to become a net zero organisation by 2030, we call this our [Mission Zero](#). To deliver on this ambition we are dedicated to prioritising activity that reduces our emissions, and supporting our staff, board, and volunteers to take positive climate action. Alongside the cross organisational programme team who are delivering our emissions reduction implementation plan, 'how we work together to achieve our net zero target' is also a standing agenda item for team meetings across all departments. This not only signals the high priority Mission Zero is given but it also provides a supportive platform to openly discuss suggestions and overcome any barriers.



Incentives are taken to embed a 'Net Zero mindset' which feeds into day-to-day operations and develop organisational habits that establish climate change and nature as a key consideration in everyday decision-making. While behaviour change is a gradual process, we are already seeing improvements, by embracing virtual meetings to reduce unnecessary travel, co-ordinating site visits, and using electric vehicles as a standard.

Alongside our own internal Mission Zero work, we are also in the process of understanding more about the emissions generation and sequestration across the National Park as a place. Using our statutory functions, as well as our role as facilitators and enablers will be critical in reducing emissions across the National Park as a whole.

In terms of planning, the annual monitoring process provides evidence of the continued successful implementation of our climate

design policy. This ensures new build developments include low and zero carbon technology. Experience has shown that allowing applicants to decide on the specific technology closer to construction has facilitated compliance and reduces the potential for the requirement to incur delays in determining the planning application, without compromising on the climate change policy as the use of the technology is secured via a planning condition. Over the years it appears that air source heat pumps are an increasingly popular option and numerous applicants are even seeking to include more than one technology as their main energy supply.



Electric pool cars used by staff for site visits

Empowered communities

Communities across the National Park have been busy and numerous applications have been approved which were either community-led or had significant input by the communities. Through pre-application discussions planning officers were able to assist the community in the process of preparing their planning application. The successful planning permissions are a significant milestone for communities towards the delivery of their aspirations. We chose to highlight these cases as reporting the number of approvals does not provide a true reflection of the significance this can hold for a community, nor does it capture the amount of co-ordination and agency support required to get to this stage.

It is encouraging to see the lead communities are taking and how they have engaged with our planning service. We hope that further community engagement, with respect to Local Place Plans will further empower communities to have ownership of a spatial strategy, providing a clear direction and impetus to turn aspirations into concrete actions. Successful applications ranged from a community bike skills park near Tyndrum, a new community garden at Crianlarich and one of the most ambitious was a new community facility including a shop and café at the old Brig O'Turk Primary School.

A number of these were able to secure funding through the Park Authority's [Green Recovery fund](#) to help local communities and businesses recover from the pandemic in a sustainable way.



CASE STUDY 1 – NPF4 mini-workshops; collaboration in digital transformation

Stimulating department wide open feedback on the NPF4 with the help of interactive software

This case study contributes towards the **Quality of Service and Engagement**

Key markers:

11 - production of up-to-date policy advice, 12 - corporate working across services 9 - stakeholders engagement in all key stages of development plan preparation

Key Areas:

Interdisciplinary Working, Online Systems

Stakeholders:

Authority Planning Staff, Authority other staff

Name of Key Officer:

Derek Manson, Development Planning Planner,
Kirsty Sweeney, Development Planning Planner

Overview

This case study illustrates how we are trialling methods that help make hybrid working more streamlined and how we can achieve this whilst retaining the values of our corporate culture.

During 2021/22 we undertook early work to inform our Local Development Plan evidence base. This included raising awareness internally on the opportunities that the new planning system can deliver in support of many priority areas of work for the National Park, including our role in tackling the climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis. The publication of the draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen our cross-team and departmental collaboration.

Several digital workshops were run to enable planning and other service departments to consider the draft NPF4 themes, supported by an online software package which captured the comments made on the virtual discussion platform.

Goal

The draft NPF4 workshops were held to inform our [response to the draft NPF4](#). The workshops on NPF4 themes enabled Place Planning staff to share thoughts on priorities for the next Local Development Plan, highlight the key headlines from monitoring and liaison with Development Management and identify where further research is needed for our evidence base, all while exploring new digital tools for engagement. Helping us engage and get input from staff across departments early on, on the topics the next Local Development Plan needs to address.

As a planning service we place a high value on partnership working. As such we consult across sectors at the earliest stages of preparing our Local Development Plan. This strengthens a culture of skill and knowledge exchange and helps ensure a joined-up approach and alignment of resources.

Outcome



As a result of Covid-19, significant investments were made in our IT equipment and systems to tackle IT limitations as reported in PPF 10. These adaptations have streamlined our digital capability and reduced technological frustrations.

We embraced the availability of online technology by opting to hold virtual workshops on the draft NPF4 and inviting all teams in the National Park to participate in them. This

proved a very effective means of informing and getting feedback from colleagues. We decided to run the workshops as a series, making it easier to fit around other commitments staff have and avoid virtual fatigue. We trialled Google Jamboard for its “whiteboard” feature to make the sessions more interactive.

The anonymous post-it function also encouraged quieter voices to share opinions and presenters were able to respond to comments in live time which further stimulated the conversation.

The workshops were very well attended with specialist expertise in development management, access and recreation, sustainable travel, visitor management, climate change, legal and conservation and land use participating.

Holding the workshops in this format meant that we were able to reach a wider audience and scrutinise the draft national planning policies and ensure we had the appropriate input from key staff. In addition, the workshops helped raise awareness of the NPF4 and its relevance to other workstreams and develop our thinking on priorities for the evidence base for the next Local Development Plan. It also allowed us to explore the use of digital tools for engagement and facilitation to supplement more traditional methods for participation

CASE STUDY 2 – Our future spatial strategy: building the evidence base

Research to effectively deliver against national outcomes specifically for climate and nature

This case study contributes towards **Governance** and **Culture of continuous improvement**

Key markers:

12 - Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit, 13 - sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities

Key Areas:

Climate Change, Local Development Plan & Supplementary guidance

Stakeholders:

General Public, Authority Planning Staff, Authority Other Staff, Other: Housing partners, Forth Environment Link

Name of Key Officer:

Derek Manson, Development Planning Planner,
Kirsty Sweeney, Development Planning Planner

Overview

As a National Park Authority, we have a responsibility to ensure the collective and co-ordinated achievement of the statutory aims of National Parks. The number of cross-boundary issues and our approach to joint working places us in a good position to trial innovative practices to address the complex challenges of a rural area. This case study details how we invested in research that will help inform the spatial strategy for the next Local Development Plan and how the research can be used to highlight opportunities for piloting new approaches to address the challenges.

The research we commissioned is on the following three policy topic areas:

- 20-minute neighbourhoods in a rural context
- Nature Networks and
- Housing / short let accommodation research

These subject areas reflect National priorities as emerging from the draft NPF4 and are highly relevant to the priorities of internal and external partners. It is this early consideration of, and alignment with partner priorities, which we anticipate will maximise the potential for an effective spatial strategy with clear, deliverable actions. The research scope for some of these topics includes engagement with other authorities, teams, and the community.

Goal

To build a robust evidence base and further our thinking on how to effectively embed the themes on 20-minute neighbourhoods, Nature Networks and Short-term let controls into the core spatial strategy of the new Local Development Plan.

The findings of each are to be communicated with the wider organisations and relevant partners to exchange knowledge and stimulate ideas. The involvement of communities for the 20-minute neighbourhood study and wider stakeholder groups for the housing research also acts to commence early engagement on our Local Development Plan

Outcome

20-minute neighbourhoods:

To undertake this research on 20-minute neighbourhoods, we commissioned Forth Environment Link (FEL), with support from Drymen Community Development Trust and Drymen Community Council, and participation by the people living in the communities across the East of Loch Lomond.

The concept of 20 min neighbourhoods is easy to imagine in a city, but can it be done in a rural setting? In this blog [@ForthEnviroLink](#) and [@DrymenCommunity](#) explain how it can be done. For more about this project, book your ticket for [#activescot22](#) now at [walkcycleconnect.org](#)



The research acted as early engagement with the communities in Drymen and across East Loch Lomond to listen to their experience and views on the opportunities and barriers to living well locally in a rural context. In addition, it involved capacity building with the communities to highlight the role the benefits of living locally can have on reducing CO₂ emissions that contribute to climate change. The project also explored the benefits that could be delivered such as supporting active travel, boosting the local economy, and

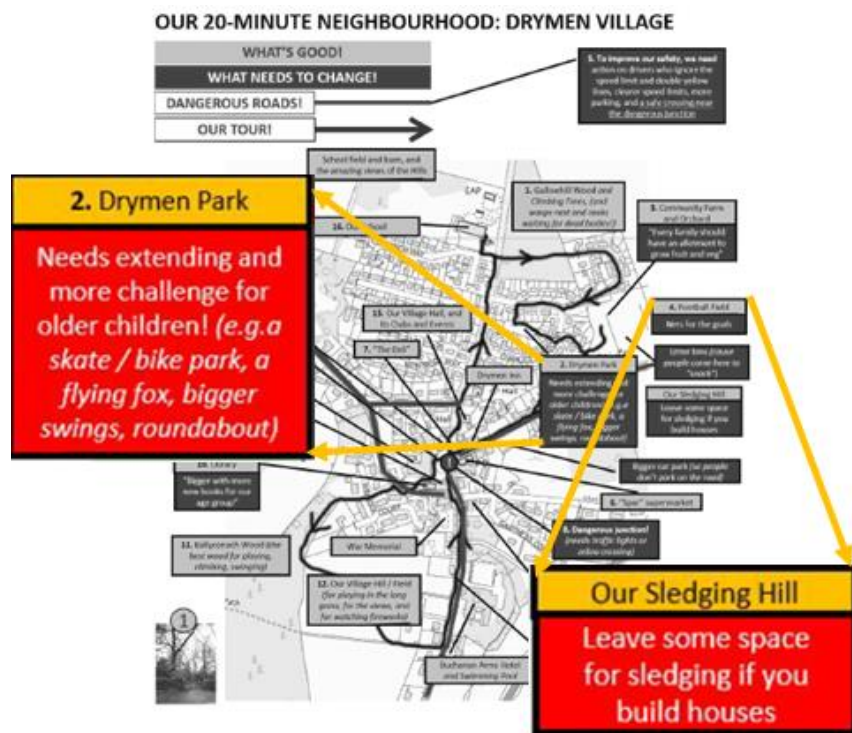
addressing inequality by ensuring people are better connected to services which benefit health and wellbeing.

Some of the key points emerging at an early stage were the willingness of residents to reduce car journeys however there are current infrastructure barriers preventing this. A desire for improved public transport and active travel links between key services and villages across the study area was needed to help support local living.



Led cycle ride as part of engagement

The research included focused session with young people, FEL worked with 'A Place in Childhood' to run the activities with the Drymen Primary School and produced maps of "Drymen Village" which shows the places which are important to children and comments of what is good and what needs improved.



Drymen Village map produced with the Primary School

The engagement with the community generated significant interest, and 20-min neighbourhoods are likely to form a key issue in the next Local Development Plan and this research will be a critical piece of evidence. The approach used and lessons learnt in this research will also be valuable to share with other communities in the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park who are undertaking community led plans such as Place Plans.

Nature Networks:

Taking a steer from draft NPF4, the National Park consider that the next Local Development Plan should have a mapped spatial strategy that will result in the delivery of enhanced connections between nature-rich areas through establishing and growing nature networks to help protect and restore the biodiversity, ecosystems and natural processes. As part of informing a suitable approach a desktop review was commissioned to look at existing examples, and in the context of the National Park highlight how mapping and policy approaches could be developed within the National Park to ensure opportunities for both onsite and offsite biodiversity enhancement is delivered.



The research outputs will ensure we have a robust and ambitious approach to addressing the nature crisis going forward. Furthermore, it allows us to investigate potential alignment between development planning and Regional Land Use Frameworks and identify what methodology will be most effective in ensuring new developments deliver positive effects for biodiversity through planning and consider the integration between the Planning System

and wider land use. The research will score the user-friendliness and practicality of various methods and this critical analysis will help us develop a strategy which is highly functional not only in terms of the underlying data, but also in its applicability. It will also consider partners involvement in identifying the mapped nature network.

The findings of the research will be shared with all teams in the organisation and used as a starting point to discuss how an appropriate approach can be developed in the National Park and incorporated in our Local Development Plan spatial strategy. We anticipate the development of a Nature Network will require external input from agencies, third sector organisations, communities, and land managers to embed the concept and inform the approach.

Housing and short term let accommodation

For this piece of research, we commissioned an assessment of the housing market (both sales and the rental market) within the National Park and the impact of second homes, and short-term holiday lets on the housing market and how things are changing. We want to better understand the housing market to help identify the extent to which affordability continues to be an issue and how much of this can be attributed to second homes and short-term letting. This will inform planning policy and any designation of short-term letting control areas as part of a spatial strategy. The research scope included engagement with stakeholders, in the first instance liaison with housing authority partners, and after data analysis a workshop will be held to gather information from stakeholders as to how the local housing market is operating to add further depth to the desk-based analysis.

Given the ability to introduce short-term control areas, alongside other supply interventions such as limiting new homes to principal residence or local buyers, this research will provide us with robust and credible up to date information on whether there is a connection between the affordability pressures and various factors such as house prices, second homes and short-term letting. Anecdotal evidence has alerted us to areas of concern and park wide issues, the research will give us the data analysis required to verify these concerns and inform action steps. We will gain a better picture of pressures and challenges at community scale, which will be a helpful resource for engagement on Local Place Plans.

CASE STUDY 3 – Community engagement and Local Place Plan workshops

This case study contributes towards **Quality of Service and Engagement**

Key markers:

3 - early collaboration, 9 - Stakeholders appropriately engaged through all stages of Development Plan preparation

Key Areas:

Community Engagement, Local Development Plan & Supplementary Guidance

Stakeholders:

Authority Planning Staff, General Public

Name of Key Officer:

Various officers

This event drew on the experiences from our work with communities on community-planning over several years, a summary and updates of these has been provided in this report under the section on [Culture of continuous improvement - Community Stakeholder](#), this shows the breadth of collaborative experience shared at this workshop.

The event on Local Place Plans was chaired and facilitated by Architecture and Design Scotland with three communities sharing their experience. The purpose was to disseminate the knowledge and experience from various perspectives and offer an open and transparent account of the process. National Park staff also gave presentations, explaining the legislation behind Local Place Plans, and the relevance to the next Local Development Plan and subsequent planning applications. Questions and discussion from the attendees were encouraged.

Overview



This case study illustrates our continued support for community planning at a local level and how local framing drives delivery. On 1 September 2021, a joint Community-National Park Authority Steering Group organised an event about 'Engaging on Community Place Planning in the National Park', with presentations by National Park planning staff and community. The event provided an early opportunity for communities to hear about the purpose, processes, and powers of the Local Place Plan legislation.

Goal

The workshop sought to continue the momentum of engagement with communities and raise awareness of Local Place Plans, sharing best practice, facilitate networking and promoting community empowerment. Having communities co-present at the event sought to help establish trust in the collaborative process. In addition, the event provided an opportunity to show the potential for Local Place Plans to consider what actions can be taken by communities and other stakeholders to tackle the Climate and Nature Emergencies.

We believe that investment of our time at this stage helps support closer working relationships with communities and helps identify stronger place-based outcomes that planning can support, bringing added value to our next Local Development Plan.

Outcome

The event was well attended, including representatives from different ages and genders, National Park staff and community councils. The presentations were received with interest and resulted in an animated discussion and better understanding of community planning, as well as the opportunity for National Park staff to gauge community interest in Local Place Plans and note any concerns about the process. It gave communities a clearer understanding of the resources available, the current guidelines and roles of other stakeholders. As well as showing the value in applying partnership principles and having a well thought out engagement process. Simultaneously it allowed us to emphasise the priorities and potential from the perspective of the National Park, and whether the multiple aims/objectives of Local Place Plans can deliver on the National Park Authority aims

There was a clear benefit to having community representative present their own experience of the process and the outcomes. This

provided a transparent account on how communities can lead on the process and how to get started. The event offered an opportunity for attendees to network, thus opening channels for further knowledge sharing between communities.

There is a co-design approach being taken here with the steering group being used as a sounding board before final decisions are taken on the resources that the National Park can most efficiently and effectively offer communities going forward to develop their own community place plans. The event and subsequent discussions with the steering group are helping inform decisions on the most appropriate support the National Park can offer communities that wish to prepare a Local Place Plan.

Whilst we are taking a leadership approach to secure quality of outcomes, we are promoting community empowerment and seek to facilitate this through engagement and guidance. We are currently preparing website content and guidance to help answer frequently asked questions, provide useful links to other resources, and explain how to go about preparing a Local Place Plan, our role in this and who to contact.

Quality of Service and Engagement

This section provides evidence that our planning service is undertaking positive actions to support sustainable economic growth by providing clarity and certainty and a positive customer experience.

Development Plan Scheme

Our Development Plan Scheme states that we are preparing a new 10-year Local Development Plan under the new Planning Scotland Act 2019 and to align with the new National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Scottish Planning Policy. Based on the progression of the NPF4, which has been delayed due to the impact of the pandemic, our 2021 Development Plan Scheme was reviewed and our timescales have shifted. Given government consultations on the **draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)** in early 2022 we anticipate some delays. We have not been able to make significant changes to our timeline and we still hope to adopt our next Local Development Plan in 2024. When we have firm dates on the publication and enactment of the regulations, gatecheck and the NPF4 then we will amend our timescales and would expect to reflect this in the Development Plan Scheme for next year.

The focus of our work now is inviting communities to prepare Local Place Plans and will be developing more content for our website to help communities and follow on from the Local Place Plan event (Case Study 3). We will be preparing our Evidence Report for the Gatecheck, alongside our annual monitoring reports, action programme reviews, we will be using the results from the research on housing and short-term letting, nature networks and 20-minute neighbourhood (Case Study 2), to help with this work.

As detailed in the section under **Culture of Continuous improvement New and updated Planning guidance**, we are updating and publishing new supplementary guidance to ensure our policy advice remains up-to-date and relevant whilst preparing for our new Local Development Plan.

We may also undertake some further research this year and then we will be undertaking targeted stakeholder engagement, seeing our participation statement below alongside our National Park Partnership Plan/Regional Spatial Strategy engagement.

Action Programme

The action programme includes a summary of progress over last 4 years. At the end of March 2022 the status of our 67 allocated LDP sites was:

- **52%** of LDP sites are being progressed or completed i.e. with planning permission, under construction, subject to pre-application.
- **48%** of the LDP sites have **no planning permission**.

Given over half the sites are showing progress, including those subject to pre-application, then it is considered the plan is on track to support delivery of the majority of the sites over the plan period.

Being clear and proportionate - Developer contributions

As reported last year in PPF10, we have an adopted developer contributions policy within the Local Development Plan and housing supplementary guidance. [The Developer Contributions guidance](#),

adopted in June 2018, is still current and available on our website. At pre-application stage potential applicants are informed of this policy and the likely requirements.



Complaints Recording

In 2021/22 we handled 6 official complaints (the same number as last year) and 7 frontline complaints (a drop from 10 last year). Of the 6 official complaints 5 were not upheld and one was partially upheld and the complainant is still dissatisfied and has appealed to the OSIC (Scottish Information Commissioner). The subject of complaints included the outcome of enforcement investigations and handling of neighbour notifications.

Planning phone line

We provide a planning enquiry line where members of the public and other stakeholders can phone up with general planning-related queries. These can range from questions about how the planning system works, how to get pre-application advice on sites on the market, through to how to submit an application or make a representation. Despite some IT issues with answering calls whilst working from home, we have continued to offer this service, with a voicemail message indicating the timeframe for response when calls cannot be answered immediately.

Pre-application service

Throughout 2021-22 we have continued to provide an excellent free pre-application enquiry service. We have householder and non-householder enquiry forms on our website and guidance notes setting out the minimum requirements of information required to handle an application and targeting a 28 day timescale to respond. In 2021/22, we responded to 304 pre-application enquiries (we deal with around 400 planning applications a year). Whilst only 15% of planning applications had a pre-application enquiry, this figure includes prior notifications, tree applications etc. and also does not take into account proposals which did not proceed as they did not accord with Local Development Plan policy.

CASE STUDY 4 – Determination Times Performance Improvement Project

This case study contributes towards the **Culture of continuous improvement**.

Key markers:

6 – Continuous Improvement, 2 – Processing Agreements, 13 – sharing good practice, skills and knowledge

Key Areas:

Development Management Processes, Performance Monitoring

Stakeholders:

Authority Planning Staff

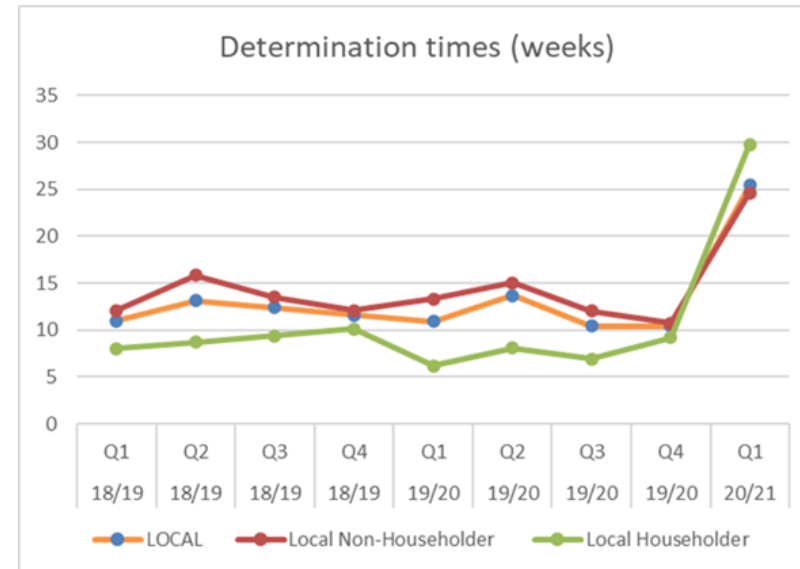
Name of Key Officer:

Catherine Stewart, Development and Support Manager

Overview

As reported in PPF10 the Covid-19 pandemic brought about challenges which resulted in a lengthening of determination times for planning applications. Particular factors which we had to adapt to included how to process a backlog of cases which built up when all National Park Offices were closed and we were unable to print off neighbour notifications or receive post; we were also unable to carry out site visits and had limited access to our IT systems. This resulted in higher caseloads for officers when processing began again.

The chart below, shows how determination times suddenly increased when we went into the first lockdown in March/April 2020. In the first quarter of 2020/21 very few cases were determined, and of those that were some were legacy cases.



Goal

One of the Service Improvements identified for 2021-22 was to improve determination times, whilst recognizing the difficult operating environment. The actions planned included:

- Identifying any particular causes of delays in determining planning applications by looking at the lifecycle of cases,
- Developing an action program to address these issues, including improvements to paperless workflows.
- Improving performance reporting and mechanisms to target and reduce the number of legacy cases running at any one time were also carried forward as improvements.
- Setting up of a working group with the two Development Management managers and the Director of Place with regular meetings to ensure various solutions were implemented.

Overview of actions taken

The causes of delay

A random selection of applications was chosen to work through and pinpoint the causes of delay in their lifecycle from receipt and validation through to decision. Many of these delays were beyond our control, such as when an application could not be progressed to determination until a site visit (delayed by Covid-19 restrictions) was carried out. Other cases were delayed by agents not submitting requested revisions promptly. Some were delayed at the point of reviewing the reports by managers.

Advice from other authorities

We looked at other authorities which were determining applications more quickly and sought advice on how they had managed to do this despite similar pandemic impacts. This included a couple of meetings with Fife Council who were our peer review partners for PPF10 and discussions with other Heads of Planning and use of the Improvement Service Knowledge Hub forums.

Council buildings tended to remain open for essential services, and several authorities used outsourced mailing services so did not have to have staff printing off neighbour notification letters to be sent out. Other planning authorities make a greater use of processing agreements or agreeing an extension of time with applicants. Many authorities use workflow software to set targets and monitor performance.

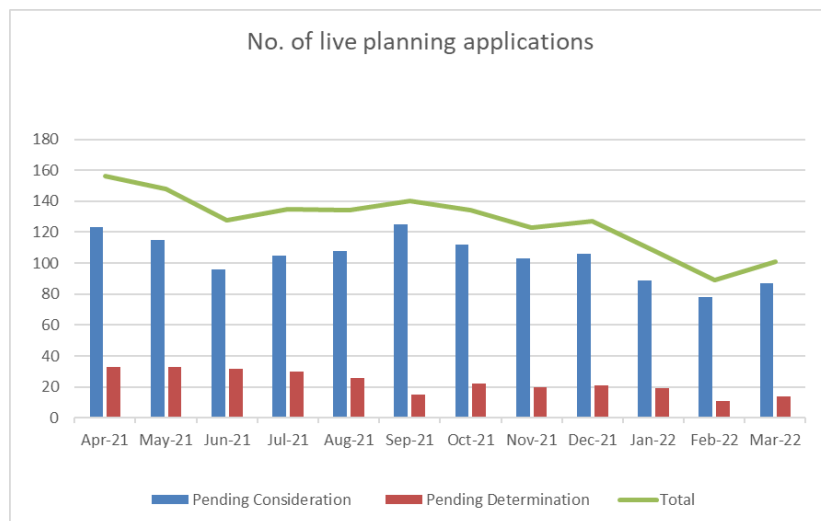
Developing an action programme

Several solutions were implemented to assist officers to improve their determination times:

- Additional staff were employed – a planning assistant post had remained vacant throughout 2020 and was advertised and filled in May 2021. An additional planning officer post for a temporary period of two years was created in September 2021 prior to submission of an anticipated major planning application.
- IT improvements – Microsoft Teams was introduced which increased the ease of organising virtual meetings; laptops were rolled out to all staff and the limitations on access to systems were resolved.
- Culture change: renewed focus on determination times. Staff wellbeing was prioritised during periods of lockdown, but as restrictions eased and initial difficulties, such as limited access to IT systems, were resolved the determination times for 2020-21 were shared with staff at team meetings, and several steps were put forward to improve these:
 - Use of **regulation 24 letters** to request further information, set deadlines for submission, and to move towards refusal if the required information was not submitted.
 - Officers were to **check new casework within 5 days** of a valid case being allocated to them to ensure that all necessary consultation requests had been issued, and to familiarise them with the case
 - Use of **processing agreements** for larger cases and **agreeing extension of time** with agents
- Improvements to paperless workflows: Prior to the pandemic we still used folders for planning application files and moved these around the office to trigger a 'workflow' – for example moving it to a 'Recommendations' tray for a manager to determine under delegated powers. From the first lockdown in March 2020 we became 'paperless' however the Document Management System (DMS) does not provide triggers to indicate that a file has been reallocated. We looked at alternative software, however this requires specialist coding and resourcing which is difficult for a small authority. As an alternative some simple changes were made to procedures such as email notifications to managers to advise that reports were ready to be checked.

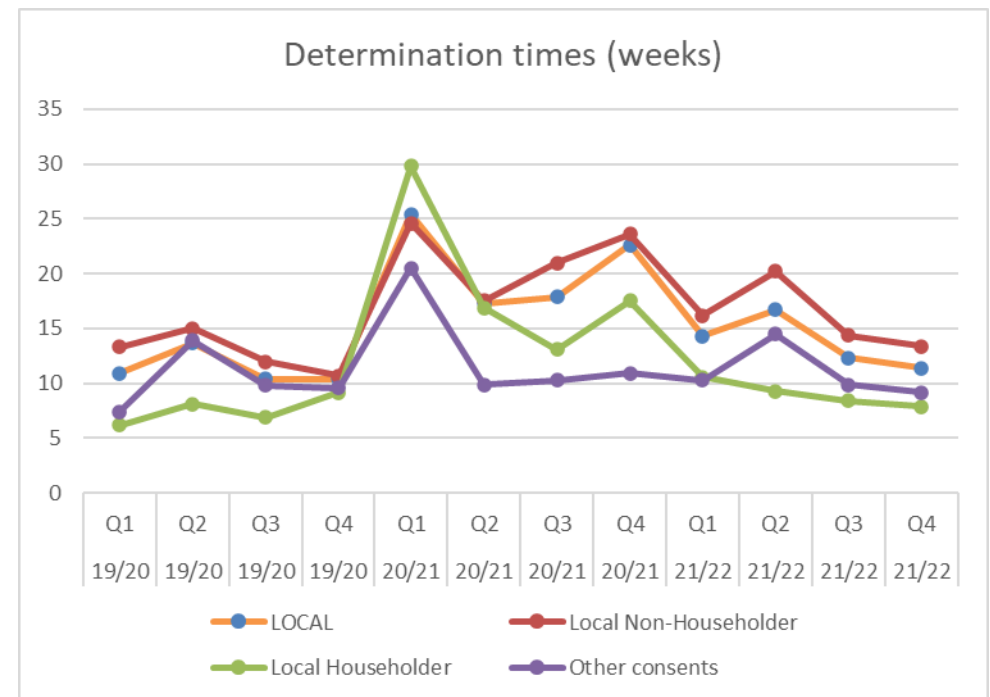
Outcome

The backlog of cases which had built up through the first lockdown has been cleared and the overall number of outstanding planning applications has gone down, as shown in the graph below. From almost 160 cases in April 2021 the number of live planning applications being processed by the Development Management team was reduced to about 100 in March 2022.



The outcome from this work was reflected in the performance statistics published by the Scottish Government. Householder cases were determined in an average of 9.1 weeks in 2021-22 compared with 16.3 weeks in 2020-21, and this improved each quarter through the year.

Local cases were determined in an average of 13.9 weeks (compared to 20.6 weeks in 2020-21) and local non-householder cases in 16.3 weeks (compared to 22.2 weeks in 2020-21).



There is still room for improvement as the figures could be reduced further, so this will continue to be a Service Improvement for 2022-23.

CASE STUDY 5– New housing development within the National Park

Evidencing the added value by planning resulting in high quality design



This case study contributes towards the **Quality of Outcomes**

Key markers:

3 - Early Collaboration

Key Areas:

Design, Affordable Housing

Stakeholders:

Planning Committee, Authority Planning Staff, Local Developers, Rural Stirling Housing Association

Name of Key Officer:

Caroline Strugnell, Planning Officer

Overview

This section demonstrates how our planning service helps deliver high quality development on the ground using the example of two completed housing developments in the National Park. It shows how the use of strategic policy documents have been put into practice to negotiate design improvements. The case study reports on two housing developments: one in Balloch and one in Callander.

Both examples provide evidence of a consistent plan-led approach resulting in a standard of high design across the National Park with a distinctive sense of place and indistinguishable tenure type. Each negotiated design alteration through the life cycle of these proposals taken in isolation may be regarded as minor relative to the size of the overall development, yet cumulatively the positive effect on the outcome is an exemplar of successful implementation of design principles as set out in the [Design and Placemaking guidance](#) made possible through early collaboration with the applicant through pre-application discussions and clear planning guidance available on our website.

Goal

The goal was to ensure we engage early with applicants by promoting our pre-application services, allowing us to advise on key considerations as detailed in the Local Development Plan and planning guidance. Prospective applicants are also made aware of likely supporting information requirements and the importance of a comprehensive application to facilitate the planning assessment process and avoid unnecessary delays.

We seek to embrace collaborative working and maintain good working relationships where an exchange of expertise inspires place specific solutions with each party benefitting from the lessons learned. Planners can demonstrate leadership on design principles which reflect the characteristics of the National Park emphasising the natural heritage as much as the built heritage and achieve well connected housing developments which integrate into the wider landscape setting and set the standard for future development.

Additionally, the role of monitoring officer provides additional assurance that the development is implemented as per the approved plans through good communication with contractors, ensuring the timely submission of information and conditions discharge to allow the development to progress without hinderance

Outcome

Claish Housing development Callander

50 affordable homes delivered by Rural Stirling Housing association consisting of a mix of house sizes. 2,3 and 4 bedroom homes (including two accessible homes for the disabled). It is located close to the High School and represents the first phase of the largest land release for future development in the National Park to date and is subject to a master plan framework (view PPF9).

The development underwent several design changes to bring the appearance of the houses more in line with the character of rural development within the Callander area, guided by the [Design and Placemaking guidance](#) and the [Callander South Masterplan Framework](#). Below are examples of changes that were made to improve the overall quality of the development:

Built Environment

- Brick elevations were replaced with white render and vertical timber cladding
- Concrete roof tiles were upgraded to those with appearance of slate
- Boundary treatment using natural stone and larch fencing as befitting to the rural setting

Movement

Road layout and road hierarchy were amended to provide shared spaces and the use of varied surface treatments further helped create a pedestrian friendly streetscape.

As part of the masterplan framework and long term aspirations for the site, collaboration with local stakeholders continues and this will ensure enhanced pedestrian and cycle access to the local school.



Housing at Claish, Callander

Natural environment

- Landscape proposals were modified given drainage requirements, and a solution was found that caused less interference with the adjacent area of Ground Water Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems.
- Landscape planting – successfully secured early planting of native trees on the development boundaries

Carrochan Road Housing development – Balloch

Delivered by Turnberry Homes as a open market housing development providing 24 new homes (12 no. houses and a block of 12 no. flats) with associated private parking, roads, paths, and public car park (15 no. spaces). The site is nestled within the existing settlement and in a sensitive prominent location next to Balloch Country Park entrance.

The development has a long planning history, with the final MSC application being subject to current Local Development Plan policies and guidance. Liaison with the applicants at pre-application stage resulted in an improved design proposal at application stage and some of these are set out below.



Housing in Balloch

Built Environment

Massing and setting– The original proposal had an urban feel and changes were negotiated to reduce the massing, set it back further from the road and change the layout to be looking outward instead of inward facing. These amendments resulted in a development that grows out of the existing town with respect to the existing development pattern.

Movement

Public access - A public access condition allowed for retention and upgrading of public access between the site and the existing houses. Creating a linked relationship with the wider setting and existing footpaths.



Flats in Balloch

Natural Environment

Landscape features and biodiversity – measures were taken during design and construction to safeguard and incorporate several of the mature trees. Where trees were lost, compensatory planting was secured. The garden boundaries were planted with native hedges to complement the surrounding area and enhance the biodiversity.

In summary

Both developments demonstrate how the consistent application of policy and planning guidance has resulted in housing, which not only integrates with but compliments the distinct sense of place of its surroundings. The case study provides a snapshot of some of the design iterations that a development goes through. These have been broadly grouped into some overarching key themes as can be found in our policy and planning guidance, showing how various elements ranging from building materials to pavement width or trees, all factor into the success of a development.

Whilst these were significant housing developments in the context of the National Park, in our view it supports our decision to provide free pre-application advice which allowed for design improvements and changes prior to submission of the planning application.

We value good working relationships with agents as this is conducive to achieving favourable outcomes for all parties. Further it allows for ideas on best practice to be exchanged and to jointly come up with design solutions befitting to the planning authority's principles and with respect to the developer's capacity. We are aware that during construction unforeseen circumstances can require non-material variations to be agreed on at short notice. The post of Monitoring Officer ensures that these channels of communication remain open and active post-planning approval offering a responsive planning service from inception to completion.



Housing in Balloch



Housing at Claish, Callander

Governance – Ensuring that our structures and processes were proportionate, effective and fit for purpose

Member Training and Development

The Planning and Access Committee transitioned from Live webcast virtual meetings up to August 2021 and then our first in-person meeting on 29 November 2021. Now meetings are held in-person but streamed online. This has been the same for the Local Review Body meetings which began to meet in person from 11 October 2021.

The following training sessions took place through the year:

- **July 2021** Local Review Body Training (with our external legal advisors at Anderson Strathern)
- **September 2021** Board Strategy Day – Planning Focused Session (with Director of Place and Chief Executive)
- **February 2022** Futures Group Place Programme Session (with Director of Place, 7N Architects, Lake District National Park and Raeburn Farquhar Bowen)
- **March 2022** Major Planning Applications Training (with Anderson Strathern)



Board Strategy Day

Continuing to develop the planning team

Although Covid-19 restrictions lessened through the year staff continued to be able to benefit from on-line training courses, conferences and webinars which are easier to attend and require less resource. As well as focussing on the development of planning knowledge and skills, courses were attended which were designed to help with staff wellbeing and the transition from home working to hybrid working, following pandemic impacts.

Internal Training

- **May 2021**
 - All staff - Embracing Change (to prepare for hybrid working)
 - All staff - Building Resilience
- **August 2021** All staff - Promoting Equality of Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion
- **January 2022** Climate emergency training provided by Keep Scotland Beautiful
- **December 2021** Place Directorate staff session on NPF4 – with input from Anderson Strathern

External courses/conferences

- **April 2021**
 - Historic environment discussions with Barbara Cummins through Brodies
 - 'The road to COP26 Glasgow What difference can planners make?' RTPi
- **May 2021**
 - Environmental Impact Assessment conference- various presenters
 - Advancing effective EIA practice
 - EIA's role in Net Zero and Nature based solutions
 - Digital transformation and EIA
 - EIA and the Courts recent case law and practical responses
 - Mindfulness for Public Servants delivered by apolitical
 - DMS upgrade training delivered by Idox
- **June 2021**
 - Minerals conference delivered by the RTPi
 - Managing Virtually Delivered by Wild Thinking
 - Mobility Hubs webinar by CoMoUk
- **July 2021**
 - Planning Skills on Peatland delivered by Planning Skills
- **September 2021**
 - Brodies Planning Live with Tom Arthur
 - 20 years of 20-minute neighbourhoods by communities housing trust
- **October 2021**
 - Scottish Land Commission series of webinars; Bringing Vacant and Derelict Land Back into Use, Community Wealth Building, create a greener fairer nation and what role does land play, Land rights and responsibilities
 - Landor seminar on the future of rural mobility
 - LVIA Training delivered by the RTPi
- E-planning training run by e-development service at the Scottish Government
- Engaging communities for climate neutral cities – by commonplace
- **November 2021**
 - All staff training on sustainability and solar energy technology by Marley
 - Planning Enforcement Training delivered by planning skills
 - DCP online training delivered by DCP
 - 'Real Zero in a hurry: key messages on transport decarbonisation' hosted by the COP26 Universities Network.
- **December 2021**
 - Health and safety executive training delivered by Planning Skills
- **February 2022**
 - Climate Action Hubs Regional Session – Scottish Government
 - Participation request national event – Scottish community development centre
 - Microsoft 365 training delivered by QA Virtual training
 - Planning opportunities around NPF4 and shared transport – by CoMoUk
 - Wireless Innovation in Rural Communities: 5G, Mobile Services & Shared Spec by Scotland 5G centre
- **March 2022**
 - Development planning staff LAUDF event - Designing net zero places

Staff wellbeing

Aside from procedural changes to align with Scottish Government guidance, we undertook the following actions to adapt to the changes brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic in the financial year of 21/22:

- Staff training - regular wellbeing initiatives including Resilience and Embracing Change training was available to all staff.
- Communications - Regular communication was critical, so we encouraged in person meetings when allowed, all staff virtual meetings and the investment in Office 365 and access to Teams made a huge difference on the ability to communicate with colleagues with ease.
- Hybrid working - As time moved on it became clear that we were working towards a new way of working. We started Phase I (interim changes) towards the end of 2021 that allowed a gradual/restricted return to the office.

- Following a staff survey, we moved to Phase 2 (hybrid working model) on the 1st March 2022.
- Recruitment- We continued with virtual recruitment for all vacancies

The roll out of new IT equipment and systems upgrades along with staff being able to return to the office has given staff greater autonomy in adjusting to new ways of working.

Virtual meetings have now become a valued alternative option to in-person meetings where appropriate. Online workshops such as those covered in Case Study 1, show that even with hybrid working we can retain the cross-fertilisation of ideas and knowledge exchange across teams that occurred more organically in the office and maintain the network of strong connections and communication.



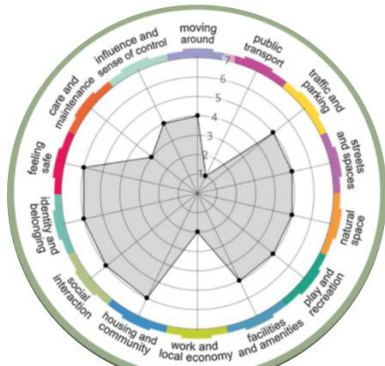
Planning Staff 2022



Culture of Continuous Improvement

Community Stakeholder Engagement - lessons learned and update

In PPF7 we explained how we piloted the use of the **Place Standard** and mapping for the Lochgoilhead Community Action Plan to create a plan that was more spatial in nature and in the process establish a wider vision for the area which included land use management aspirations. Building on this experience and drawing from the successes, we sought to further review the existing process for developing community action plans and identifying a suitable way forward for Local Place Plans. This time working with the community in [Killin](#) we made sure to incorporate steps that led to positive discussion and engagement in Lochgoilhead which included a **village walk** ensuring key community representatives were in attendance to discuss challenges and opportunities onsite and at a **Place Standard Workshop**.



Place Standard outcome Killin

For the Killin engagement, an additional layer of engagement was added by developing a new online **digital consultation mapping tool** and a **separate workshop with secondary school pupils**. The use of digital technology was explored to establish whether this would be a practical and effective measure in engaging with a wider range of the community, particularly to capture the views of younger people.

The success of digital engagement was determined by the fact that the process was informed by early engagement with the community and tailored to the place.

The **spatial representation and digitised output of the community engagement** was well received by the community steering group and acts as an effective way to show where there is consensus and help develop the priorities, with the additional benefit of being a valuable resource that can be drawn on when the Local Development Plan is reviewed.



Killin community assets mapped

The case studies provided in PPF9 and 10 on Strathfillan Community planning and the larger scale Strathard Framework show continued momentum behind community planning. **The [Strathfillan Place Plan](#) has since been finalised.** In the meantime, [Balquhidder, Lochearnhead and Strathyre \(BLS\) Community Council](#) were developing their **Local Place Plan which was finalised in 2022.** The development of both these plans was faced with the additional challenge of the Covid-19 restrictions. Participants adapted to this **by embracing the use of digital platforms for engagement** - the previous use of online tools facilitated the transition. Strathfillan and BLS both used their **Community Development Officer** to provide extra capacity to the steering group that were leading on developing the Community Place Plans. We were able to offer support to the communities throughout by drawing on our experience from previous collaborations, advising on the use of the Place Standard tool to generate positive discussion, acting as facilitators at workshops, providing IT support in the form of mapping outcomes and priorities, offering guidance on planning legislation and suggestions for setting deliverable community priorities and actions.

During our engagement with communities to review previous community-led action plans, the inclusion of a **delivery plan** much like an action plan in a Local Development Plan was identified as a critical instrument in tracking and progressing community priorities. Both [Strathfillan](#) and [BLS Local Place Plans](#) developed a delivery plan to go along with the plans, which grouped actions by short or long-term actions and sets out precise actionable steps as well as who these will be delivered by. It is anticipated that the delivery plan further strengthens the position of the Local Place Plans to be used as a focus of prioritising the actions needed deliver the Local Place Plan priorities and can be a vital tool in evidencing need for funding applications, influencing plans, investments, and services of other public agencies.

Strathfillan Community Place Plan			
			
Extract from Strathfillan CPP delivery plan			
Medium- Term Delivered within 5-10 years			
Strathyre Outcomes	What	Who	First Steps
Provide a safe pedestrian crossing over the main road.	Investigate providing a safe crossing in the village centre.	BLSCC Local residents Transport Scotland BEAR Scotland SC	BLSCC and local residents to lobby and work with SC, Transport Scotland and BEAR Scotland to explore the creation of a pedestrian crossing in the village.

Excerpt from Strathfillan CPP- Delivery Plan 2021-23

In last year's PPF we identified '**Engagement with Community Councils to inform Local Development Planning and Decision Making**' as a **service improvement area**. This was broken down into four actions and has been successfully completed:

- Training community councils and trusts on Local Place Plans – event ran in September 2021 as reported on in CASE STUDY 3 – Community engagement and Local Place Plan workshops. Additional training was delivered in February 2022 with Community Councils and the Community Development Trust on our [Future Nature](#) draft route map to explore how we can work together to better safeguard and restore nature in the National Park. It is an issue that we know communities in the National Park care passionately about and actively support through projects and actions outlined in community-led plans.



River Goil Project, a partnership project delivered by volunteers from the Lochgoil Community

- Continue to seek opportunities to engage young people in the planning process as decisions made now will impact on future generations. As part of the 20-minute neighbourhood research, dedicated sessions were set up with primary school children to discuss ideas, needs and priorities for a 20-minute neighbourhood for the village.



Engaging with Drymen Primary School

- Linking with Community Planning Partnerships and strengthening the links between spatial and community planning - close working between community and planning staff in team to develop and evolve approach to LPP. Both community and planner staff jointly led the 20-minute neighbourhood pilot.
- Building stronger links between Community Action Plans and the Local Development Plan and support communities that aspire to develop Local Place Plans – two Local Place Plans completed in 2021/22 at Strathfillan and Balquihidder, Lochearnhead and Strathyre. These as well as others are made available on our [website](#) alongside other community-led plans.

New and updated Planning guidance

We have commenced preparation of additional planning guidance so we can reliably provide relevant and up-to-date policy advice. These were brought to [committee in November 2021](#) to approve the consultation of the drafts and adoption of the finalised guidance:

- Draft - Safeguarding important local facilities and business,
- Draft - Sustainable and Active Travel,
- Draft – updated Visitor Experience Planning Guidance.
- Final Strathard Framework

Selecting the policy topic areas was a data driven process, largely informed through the monitoring audit and feedback from planning officers. The new and revised guidance offers an opportunity to ensure the Local Development Plan keeps abreast of the changing policy context and respond to new or continuing issues. It will also help with efficiencies and consistency of handling of proposals.



Safeguarding important local facilities and business - The safeguarding guidance is considered an area of importance given the recent increase in the number of applications for change of use due to businesses closing particularly in the retail areas.

These are issues that had been developing before the pandemic but have now been exasperated due to extended periods where businesses were being asked to close. We therefore sought to provide clarity on why we safeguard certain uses – retail, economic uses, open space, community facilities – and where flexibility may be offered given the changing context and what alternative uses might be acceptable to support local living and working across the Park's communities.

It was through liaison with Development Management, Communities, and the monitoring audit that the need for further guidance became clear. The use of safeguarding policies is reported on in our monitoring audit under the theme of 'Sustainable communities', however, in the process of reporting we recognised that the nature of safeguarding policies meant that monitoring of approved and even refused applications did not provide the full picture of the policies' functionality, as this use of these policies frequently proves it is most effective at the pre-application stage discouraging non-policy compliant applications. Whilst we are still investigating how to set up a resource efficient means of monitoring policy use at pre-application stage, we have been able to run basic data analysis giving the Development Planning team a general indication of policy implementation.

Sustainable and Active Travel -As emerged from the monitoring audits and liaison with Development Management, guidance on sustainable transport is an area that needs further clarity. This is to ensure developers understand what is expected to comply with LDP Transport Policy 2 in terms of making a positive contribution towards safe and sustainable travel and improving active travel options. The guidance also covers what is expected in relation to travel plans, which is a requirement for larger developments under LDP Transport Policy 3.



Visitor Experience guidance review - Finally, for the visitor experience guidance, due to the urgent requirement to address visitor pressures in some locations, as well as additional funding and the focus on improving visitor infrastructure due to the pandemic. We decided that further clarity was needed around car parks and how these are viewed in relation to the need to help facilitate a shift away from the private car, but at the same time recognising the urgent immediate term response required to help tackle significant visitor pressures in some areas of the Park.

Strathard Framework guidance - Following the engagement sessions, a draft Framework was consulted on in Spring/Summer 2021 (receiving 30 responses), with the final version being approved by the Planning and Access Committee in November 2021. The Framework was adopted in early 2022 and now sits as [planning guidance](#) alongside our Local Development Plan and includes a [delivery plan](#).

This Framework is a significant project, the first of its kind in the National Park, it trials a co-designed and co-led approach where land use and planning/development matters have been considered together in a holistic manner. Even though it will become planning guidance and used in a similar manner to the other existing frameworks (as a material planning consideration), it will also be able to influence land use change and build on the successful community and business led project delivery in the area.



Monitoring audit – data visualisation

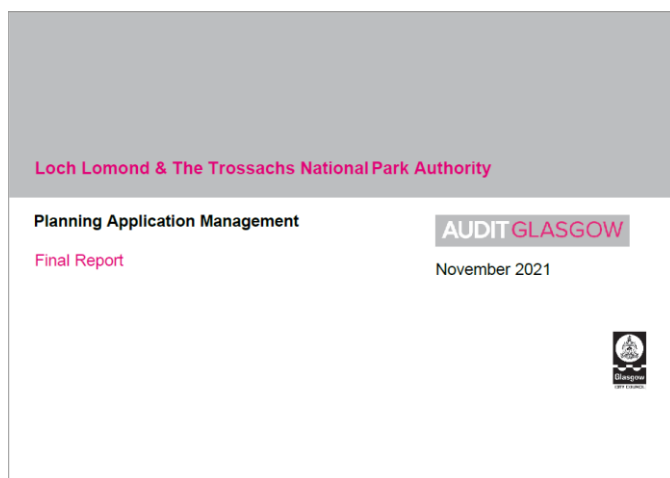
From the moment the Local Development Plan was adopted, significant staff time was dedicated to setting up audit frameworks which would provide meaningful insights into how the Local Development Plan is functioning through the monitoring audits and action programme. This allows for dynamic feedback and helps critical analysis and transparency of the Plan. This has extended to the audit processes themselves creating an iterative process where auditing tracks LDP outcomes and each audit cycle in turn resulting in tweaks to the auditing itself. When we set up the monitoring framework, (detailed in PPF7 – Case Study 3) we significantly improved our ability and process for capturing data which involved

close working with the GIS team. We established an approach to always include the respective grid reference information with each data set to as we aimed to develop a way to represent the monitoring information spatially. For this to be a meaningful visualisation, it did require several years' worth of data and therefore this is the first year we have included this in our monitoring report. This forms part of our early thinking towards developing a stronger spatial strategy grounded in robust data. We will explore further options for the use of such a feature and may further distinguish the data by type such as whether it was for an existing business, farm, or a new business as these are important differentiations when viewing the map.

Performance Improvement

As set out in Case Study 4 we continue to address the issue of average determination times. The case study sets out the specific actions undertaken through the year and demonstrates the significant progress made to date. Further work is required to more closely align with the Scottish average determination times and this shall be carried forward as a service improvement for 2022-23.

Planning Application Management Audit and Improvements to procedures



One of the Service Improvements for the year involved implementing the findings of an Audit Report on the Planning Application process in Development Management.

The Audit findings were very positive. The report stated:

- Key controls are in place and operating effectively
- There is sufficient segregation of duties in place for the processing and approval of applications

- All relevant documents in relation to planning applications are available on the Park Authority's website and there are arrangements in place to ensure that these are suitably redacted prior to being uploaded
- There are arrangements in place to ensure that the Park Authority is complying with planning legislation and staff have been given sufficient training to ensure they can carry out their role adequately
- Statutory consultees are given a sufficient length of time to respond to planning applications
- Any changes to planning application processes required as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic have been promptly implemented, communicated to staff and followed as per Scottish Government advice and guidance. Updates were also provided to the public via the National Park website to inform them of any planning application changes.

One of the recommendations was for the finalisation of draft procedures. These included:

- Receipt and Registration
- Validation
- Assessment and Recommendation
- Decisions – including withdrawing and disposing of applications
- Committee procedures

Work on finalising these was carried out by the team including planning support staff who found the process useful with training new staff members.

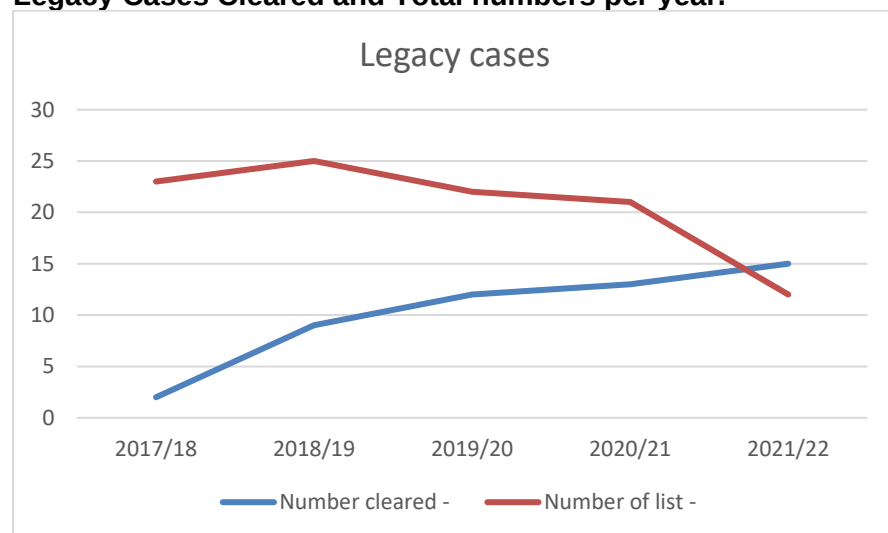
The other audit recommendation concerned an update of the Staff Register of Interest (SROI) policy, which has since been carried out.

Dealing with 'legacy cases'

Legacy Cases

A total of 15 applications were cleared from the list of legacy cases in 2021-22; 7 remained on the list and 5 further cases were added to the list. The reduction in number was due to the determination of 8 linked housing cases in Luss – see the Update on Luss Housing Applications in the Quality of Outcomes section. The graph below shows the improvements made to reduce the number of legacy cases since 2017/18 with an increasing number cleared each year, and the overall numbers reducing to 12 in March 2022 which is a significant improvement.

Legacy Cases Cleared and Total numbers per year.



Sharing Best Practice and Skills with others – examples from 2020/21

Local Place Plan Event

The event held in September on Local Place Plans (as covered in Case Study 3), is a good example of sharing skills and knowledge with others as it was chaired and facilitated by Architecture and Design Scotland with three communities sharing their experience of community led place planning, as well as presentations by National Park staff. The event and subsequent discussions with the steering group are helping inform decisions on the most appropriate support the National Park can offer communities that wish to prepare a Local Place Plan and continue communication.

Second Home Research – Community Land Scotland –

Kirsty Sweeney and Susan Brooks supported this national research.

20-minute neighbourhoods – sharing good practice

Forth Environment Link – sharing knowledge with Nick Wright's 20-minute neighbourhood project for Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Local Place Plan

Meetings with Stirling Council and Aberdeenshire to share good practice plus involvement in Local Place Plan HOPS group.

University of Manchester Visit

Planning, Urban Regeneration and Real Estate Development students from the University of Manchester came to the National Park Headquarters in March 2022. They were visiting Balloch to appreciate the proximity of Glasgow to outstanding natural landscapes and to better understand associated visitor pressures. They were given a presentation including an overview of current development pressures and some of the potential changes from the draft National Planning Framework (NPF)4.



University of Manchester visit

Scottish Government Housing Workshop – Remote, Rural Islands Housing Action Plan

Kirsty Sweeney (Planning officer) attended this workshop to share our experience on the different challenges to delivering high quality affordable and market housing in a rural area.

Regional Land Use Partnerships

The National Park Authority is one of five pilot Regional Land Use Pilot's in Scotland established by the Scottish Government in 2021/22 to identify opportunities for land use change at landscape scale level to help tackle climate change and loss of nature crises. The intention is that a Regional Land Use Framework will be established in 2022/23 that will be developed using a natural capital approach to guiding land use change. Our Communities and Development Planning team Manager has been involved in this pilot work, joining national coordination meetings and sessions to ensure strong alignment between the eventual Regional Land Use Frameworks and the new Local Development Plan.

CASE STUDY 6 – Enforcement

Effective co-ordination of key agencies through well-established working practices delivering quick response

This case study contributes towards **Governance**

Key markers:

12 - corporate working across services

Key Areas:

Enforcement, Biodiversity

Stakeholders:

Key Agencies, Authority Planning Staff, Authority Other Staff, General Public, SEPA, NatureScot, Police Scotland

Name of Key Officer:

Amy Unitt, Planning Officer

The Planning Authority sought to make potential purchasers aware of the constraints on these parcels of land by issuing a press release and posting on social media. Several newspapers picked up the story. It was emphasised that anyone interested in purchasing the plots should seek advice from suitably qualified persons or seek the National Park Authority's planning advice in the first instance.

Overview

At the end of 2021 the Park Authority were made aware that a landowner had divided up a parcel of land and had started marketing these plots for sale at auction. The individual plots are in an area at risk of flooding and in this regard development would be unlikely to receive planning permission. The adjacent river forms part of the River Teith Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is particularly sensitive to any disturbance/pollution.

This is not the first time that this practice has occurred within the National Park, where parcels of land in desirable locations are advertised for sale at an attractive price, without any reference to the requirement for planning permission or the planning constraints that are very likely to make the land unsuitable for development.



Several of the plots were sold and community members raised concerns with various bodies including the National Park Authority, due to activities undertaken by the new landowners on site, some of which were possible breaches of planning control.

Goal

In addition to pre-empting problems arising prior to the sale of the land, acting in accordance with the Enforcement Charter the National Park as planning authority investigated the complaints made and was proactive in identifying and contacting new owners at an early stage to ensure that they did not inadvertently breach planning or environmental legislation.

The National Park brought together relevant partner agencies (SEPA, Stirling Council, NatureScot, fisheries boards, the police) and the community through various multi-agency meetings to discuss the site, understand the range of powers available to protect the land and how best to positively engage with the new landowners.

Outcome

One issue arising was the delivery of materials to the site anticipated to be intended for the construction of a road or track as there is no existing formal access. An access road was illustrated on the marketing material for the plots, but no planning permission had been obtained. A Stop Notice was served. Feedback through engagement with the new landowners, National Park Rangers and the local community was invaluable and without a doubt has helped minimised complaints on the matter.

National Park Planning Officers continue to monitor the site closely and engage with those who have purchased plots.

Multi-agency meetings will continue to be set up as necessary to ensure that on-going matters at the site are monitored as effectively as possible - and that any further action is co-ordinated by those with the appropriate expertise and statutory powers, whilst keeping the local community and their elected representatives informed.

Part 2 Supporting Evidence

To compile Part 1 above we have drawn on the following documents:

[Website – Planning pages](#)

[Live Park Facebook](#)

[LIVE Park Twitter](#)

[Adopted Local Development Plan,
Supplementary and Planning Guidance](#)

[Action Programme](#)

[Developer Contributions Supplementary
Guidance](#)

[Development Plan Scheme](#)

[Enforcement Charter March 2022](#)

[Trees and Woodlands Strategy](#)

[Monitoring and audits](#)

[Mission Zero](#)

[Future Nature](#)

[Green Recovery Fund](#)

[Visitor management Season Review](#)

Case Study 1

[Draft NPF4 consultation response](#)

[Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy](#)

Case Study 2

[Discover Drymen – 20-minute pilot](#)

Case Study 3

[Local Place Plan Session Notes](#)

Presentations from the event:

- [National Park](#)
- [Callander](#)
- [Strathfillan](#)
- [Strathard](#)

Case Study 4

[Planning Committee Session on the PPF
10 feedback and looking at service
improvements areas](#)

Case Study 5

[Pre-application advice page](#)

[Design and placemaking guidance](#)

[Callander South Masterplan Framework](#)

[Scottish Housing News – Callander](#)

[Claish Farm Housing Committee report](#)

[Planning portal link to Balloch housing
development](#)

Case Study 6

[National Park post on land for sale](#)

Culture of Continuous improvement
[Committee paper on draft planning
guidance](#)

[List of community-led plans](#)

[Strathfillan Delivery Plan](#)

[BLS delivery plan](#)

The following are examples of positive feedback from our customers directly via email:

Applications

*I've just had a look on the portal and that's perfect! Thank you so much for helping me present my case properly, I really do appreciate it. **Applicant***

*Thanks for that, and many thanks for all your support through the process. A couple of people have asked what it was like to get our planning application through the National Park planning process, assuming that I'd say it was a bit of a nightmare. However, I've made the point of telling them that it wasn't complicated, just follow the process. Two things made all the difference the first is making proper use of the pre-application assessment and the other was the helpfulness and approachableness of our planner so many thanks for that – **Applicant***

Pre Application

*Good afternoon and many thanks for your quick and very helpful Pre-Application Enquiry Response. – **Agent***

*Thank you so much for your comprehensive response. I think you hit all the indicators I expected to see and some. I am very grateful. Thank you again. – **Applicant***

Monitoring/discharge of conditions,

*Thank you for all your effort with the planning application and wider discussions around the site -**Applicant***

*This is great news. Thank you so much for Contacting me.- **Applicant***

*This email is to provide Notification of Completion. Thanks for help with the project. -**Applicant***

Local Place Plan Session

*Thanks for organising what seemed to be a productive meeting last night: I am only sorry that I missed the central chunk. Congratulations on finishing it on-schedule: impressive when you do not know what wider concerns some people might want to interject - **Event attendee, community representative***

Community Led Planning

*Many thanks for all your assistance and work on this, it has been very much appreciated. - **Community contact***

*Yes, they do look great! Thank you for your work, it's much appreciated. Really looking forward to seeing the first draft. - **Community contact in response to GIS mapping support***

Part 3 Service Improvements

In the coming year we will:

No.	Area for Improvement	Planned Action
1.	Planning Application Determination Times	Continue positive momentum to reduce determination times. Developing enhanced caseload management and reporting tools to enable monitoring of determination times on a monthly basis.
2.	Improved monitoring of Section 75 agreements	Establish a new monitoring system of the pipeline of Section 75s to enhance tracking between external legal advisors and Park Authority staff. This will also extend to keeping a note of compliance with the requirements set out in the Section 75s.
3.	Prepare updated infrastructure requirements with public body partners for key strategic sites	To work with Stirling Council and consultants to undertake a piece of work that will result in updated Callander South Planning Guidance. This work will provide further clarity on developer contributions where it is anticipated that the updated planning guidance will set out expectations from each development parcel for infrastructure in their plot and set out the common infrastructure that developers will be expected to contribute to across the masterplan area. Further review will also be undertaken for other key strategic development sites in Arrochar and Balloch.
4.	Integrated approach to new strategic plan preparation	With the review of the National Park's Partnership Plan underway, this will establish the overall approach for the next Local Development Plan. There is also a new requirement for the Park Authority to prepare a Regional Spatial Strategy and (working in partnership with others) – a Regional Land Use Framework. There are opportunities for streamlining our approach to preparing these plans by taking an integrated approach through developing shared vision and central narrative. Efficiencies can also be achieved by integrating key tasks such as research, evidence base, stakeholder engagement and developing monitoring frameworks.

Our delivery of service improvement actions from previous year

1. Engagement with Community Councils to inform Local Development Planning and Decision Making – complete

Engagement with all Community Councils and Community Development Trusts was undertaken over the course of the year via several methods including direct support to three communities undertaking Local Place Plans, engagement with one community (working in connection with two neighbouring communities) to undertake a pilot study on how the 20-minute neighbourhood concept could work in a rural area and hosting two Park-wide online forum sessions to explore joint working, Local Place Plans and Future Nature. This was followed up by an open meeting for any interested community representative to attend to discuss engagement, representation and decision making.

2. Implement findings of Audit report on Planning Application Process - complete

As stated in the Culture of Continuous Improvement section an Audit of Planning Application Management was carried out in the first half of 2021-22. The service improvement was to implement any recommendations in the Audit report. The two recommendations were:

- To update the Staff Register of Interest (SROI) Policy
- To finalise draft procedures.

Both actions have been carried out (see **Culture of Continuous improvement** for further details)

3. Added Value – Monitoring Report Recording – complete

The process of producing the monitoring report has highlighted opportunities for adjustments that have led enhancements in the use and recording of policies. It acts as a layer of quality control and furthers close liaison between the Development Management and Development Planning teams. Whilst working within the constraints of existing resource and systems, improvements have been made which allow for more comprehensive data capture and streamlining of reporting. Each report is informed by the previous one and is continuously evolving. This allows it to be adapted by, for example, further investigating areas where monitoring has highlighted potential development trends and “pressure testing” of policy areas. Each iteration critically reviews whether the collected data and analysis delivers on the report’s aim to give a transparent overview of policy use and function, capturing the added value delivered by the planning service and “direction of travel” towards LDP vision and strategy. The process of producing the monitoring report is continuously being reviewed, with collaboration of the GIS team. This has resulted in innovative developments to our existing system and streamlining of previous reporting. This work has further raised awareness of the value in monitoring of policy use and planning outcomes; developing an efficient monitoring system and indicators to capture planning gains is a constantly evolving process. In this report we have highlighted how monitoring has informed several workstreams, including the development of a ‘safeguarding planning guidance’ and the spatial representation of monitoring data.

4. Determination times, which have increased due to pandemic impacts –complete

As shown in Case Study 4 significant work has been undertaken to improve the average determination times for the processing of planning applications. The causes of delay were examined through interrogation of a random selection of applications. Advice from other better performing authorities was sought and an action programme was developed to address these issues. This included:

- Employment of additional staff
- IT improvements
- Culture change – increased use of Regulation 24 letters, early checking of new casework and increased use of processing agreements
- Improvements to paperless workflows

The outcome was a reduction in the overall number of cases being handled by planning staff, and a reduction in the average determination times for applications. This service improvement is noted as complete as significant progress has been made but it is acknowledged that there is still progress to be made to align more closely with average determination times across Scotland as a whole.

5. Enforcement Charter – complete

An updated Enforcement Charter was presented to and approved by Members at the Planning and Access Meeting on 28 March 2022. The updated version is publicly available on the National Park website and helps explain how the enforcement process works, the role of the National Park as Planning Authority and the service standards we set.

Part 4 National Headline Indicators

A: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Headline indicators - Local Development Plan	2021-22	2020-21
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (years and months) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i>	5 years 3 months	4 years 3 months
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	No	No
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	No	No
Were development plan scheme engagement/ consultation commitments met during the year?	N/A	N/A

Headline indicators - Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs	2021-22	2020-21
Established housing land supply	534 units	592 units
5-year effective housing land supply programming	466 units	520 units
5-year effective land supply total capacity	476 units	578 units
5-year housing supply target	375 units	375 units
5-year effective housing land supply (<i>to one decimal place</i>)	6.2 years	6.9 years
Housing approvals by financial year	57 units	46 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	203 units	154 units
Marketable employment land supply	14.95 ha	14.95 ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	0 ha	0 ha

B: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Headline Indicators – Project Planning and Decision-making	2021-22	2020-21
Project Planning - Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice - Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan - Percentage planned timescales met	64 apps 15.27% 10 processing agreements 40%	52 app, 27.6% 0 processing agreements n/a
Decision-making - Application approval rate - Delegation rate - Validation - % validated on first receipt	95.1 % 96.4% 40%	95.6% 97.5% 30%

Headline Indicators - Decision-making timescales - Average Number of Weeks to Decision	2021-22	2020-21
Major developments	n/a – no applications	66.4 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	16.3 weeks	22.4 weeks
Householder developments	9.1 weeks	16.3 weeks

Headline Indicators - Legacy Cases – over 1 year old	2021-22	2020-21
Number cleared during reporting period	15	5
Number remaining	12	26

C: ENFORCEMENT

Headline Indicators – Enforcement	2021-22	2020-21
Time since enforcement charter reviewed (months) <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i>	0 months ¹	29 months
Complaints lodged and investigated	27	67
Number of breaches identified – no further actions taken	5	15
Cases closed	7	2
Notices Served	2	2
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

¹ The Enforcement Charter was approved on 28 March 2022

National Headline Indicators - Contextual Statement

This statement provides some headline commentary surrounding the notable trends in the National Headline Indicators. Our detailed statistics are in Part 5 (following on from this section) and this statement also provides comment on the stand out figures from that area.

Development Planning

We have not replaced our current Local Development Plan (2017-2021) within the five-year target. As explained in previous Planning Performance Reports, this was an informed decision, approved by Members of our Planning and Access Committee and based on an assessment of the risks associated with proceeding under the old timescales. In June 2021, we updated our Development Plan Scheme and as explained under Quality of Service and Engagement, when we have firm dates on the publication and enactment of the regulations, Gatecheck and the NPF4 then we will amend our timescales and would expect to reflect this in the Development Plan Scheme for next year. The main focus of work this year will be on further community engagement with regards to Local Place Plans and starting preparation of the Evidence Report for the Gatecheck. As this report demonstrates, we have already begun research on selected policy themes for a robust baseline and have been preparing additional Planning Guidance to ensure planning advice remains relevant and up to date especially with regards to themes around sustainability, placemaking, health and wellbeing.

The [Housing Land Audit](#) shows that the Housing Land Supply is at 6.2 years, we therefore are not at risk of having insufficient Housing Land. Despite the challenges of recent years, the approval and completions rates have recovered and even shown increase compared to previous years with two large housing developments now complete with another allocated housing site in Balloch expected to be complete by the next year and construction anticipated on other sites including at the Luss sites which have been approved this year following completion of the section 75 agreement.

Development Management

As one of the service improvements identified for the year 2021-22 there has been a renewed focus on determination times (see Case Study 4 'Determination Times Performance Improvement Project'). As a result of measures put in place the average length of time to determine local applications has fallen from 20.6 weeks to 13.9 weeks. Householder applications take on average 9.1 weeks to determine which is a significant improvement on 16.3 weeks last year and has been reducing each quarter during the year (see chart on page 27).

Two applications subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) took an average of 40.1 weeks to determine compared with one EIA application the previous year at 30.3 weeks. One of these applications was for a cross-boundary proposal at a quarry and was delayed waiting for the outcome at the local Council Planning and Regulation Panel for determination prior to going to the Planning and Access Committee as the applications were interlinked. There was also a reduction in the length of time for processing applications subject to legal agreements – from an average of 38.6 weeks, down from 49.1 weeks the previous year, despite this including several legacy cases. The number of 'legacy cases' over one year old has been greatly reduced from 26 to 12 following determination of eight housing cases which were linked.

There were 10 **processing agreements** drawn up this year as part of our approach to improving determination times. Overall, 40% of applications were met within agreed timescales. There were no major applications determined this year.

Our commitment to our **pre-application service** remains high and remains a free service. We responded to 304 pre-application enquiries and processed 391 planning applications. Although 15 % of applications being subject to formal pre-application enquiries, as reported previously this figure conceals that most of our detailed local applications (as opposed to householder, advertisement, tree works or prior notification) are subject to pre-applications and also that there are a number of pre-applications that do not result in an application as they involve proposals that would not be supported by planning policy.

Enforcement

Updating our Enforcement Charter during this PPF 11 reporting period was a notable achievement. The new draft was agreed at our Planning and Access Committee on 28 March 2022 and addressed the statutory obligation to include reference to how the National Park undertakes monitoring of approved development.

Throughout the reporting period the Chief Planner's temporary guidance on the relaxation of planning control was in place. The adoption of a pragmatic approach to not take formal enforcement action was therefore applied by all the Planning Officers and the Monitoring Officer whilst acting in the enforcement capacity of their work. For the National Park this primarily related to the hospitality industry providing outdoor seating and take-away options, as well as adjusted seasons for some caravan / camp sites. Also notable was the provision of some temporary car parks – particularly on east Loch Lomond which was subject to significant visitor pressure. There remained some ongoing cases for which an enforcement action may have resulted in individuals having to move out of accommodation, and these were put on hold in the exceptional circumstances. The reduced figures on complaints investigated and breaches where no further action was taken reflects this time period.

As always, our approach to resolve a potential breach of planning control is by negotiation and agreement in the first instance rather than formal action and hence the low number of Notices served. Nevertheless, our enforcement Case Study 6 reflects an example of situation which has presented a significant risk to a sensitive riparian location subject to important statutory natural heritage designations. This became a focus of formal action, and which remains ongoing.

Part 5 Official Statistics

A: Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

Timescales	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
Overall				
Major developments	n/a – no applications	66.4 weeks	21.1 weeks	n/a -no applications
Local developments (non-householder) - Local: less than 2 months - Local: more than 2 months	16.3 weeks	22.2 weeks	11.2 weeks	12.0 weeks
Householder developments - Local: less than 2 months - Local: more than 2 months	9.1 weeks	16.3 weeks	7.4 weeks	9.1 weeks
Housing Developments				
Major	n/a – no applications	66.4 weeks	21.1 weeks	n/a – no applications
Local housing developments - Local: less than 2 months - Local: more than 2 months	18.6 weeks 6.6 weeks 21.9 weeks	25.9 weeks 7.1 weeks 27.6 weeks	15.2 weeks	15.9 weeks
Business and Industry				
Major	n/a – no applications	n/a – no applications	n/a – no applications	n/a – no applications
Local business and industry developments - Local: less than 2 months - Local: more than 2 months	16 weeks 7 weeks 18.8 weeks	23.6 weeks n/a 23.6 weeks	14.9 weeks	8.7 weeks
EIA Developments	40.1 weeks	30.3 weeks	n/a – no applications	n/a – no applications
Other Consents	10.7 weeks	11.7 weeks	9.9 weeks	8.3 weeks
Planning legal agreements - Major: average time - Local: average time	n/a – no applications 38.6 weeks	66.4 weeks 49.1 weeks	n/a 18.7 weeks	n/a – no applications 24.0 weeks

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

		Original decision upheld					
	Total number of decisions	2021-22		2020-21		2019-2020	
Type	No.	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	5	5	100%	1	25%	8	100%
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	0	0	n/a	2	100%	0	n/a

Contextual Statement on Official Statistics

The commentary relating to determination times, processing agreements and enforcement is provided in the contextual statement above under National Headline Indicators.

For planning applications with legal agreements, 10 cases were determined in an average of 38.6 weeks (which is lower than last year's figure of 54.9 weeks). This includes 8 housing applications in Luss which were linked together and were minded to be approved at the Planning and Access Committee in October 2019. The legal agreements were signed in Q2 2021-22.

Five Local Review cases were determined in 2021-22 and members upheld the appointed officer's decision in every case. There were no Appeals to Scottish Ministers determined within this period.

Part 6 Workforce Information

This is a snapshot of staffing at 31 March 2021.

	Tier 1 Chief Executive	Tier 2 Director	Tier 3 Head of Service	Tier 4 Manager
Head of Planning Service		1		3

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	0
30-39	9
40-49	8
50 and Over	6

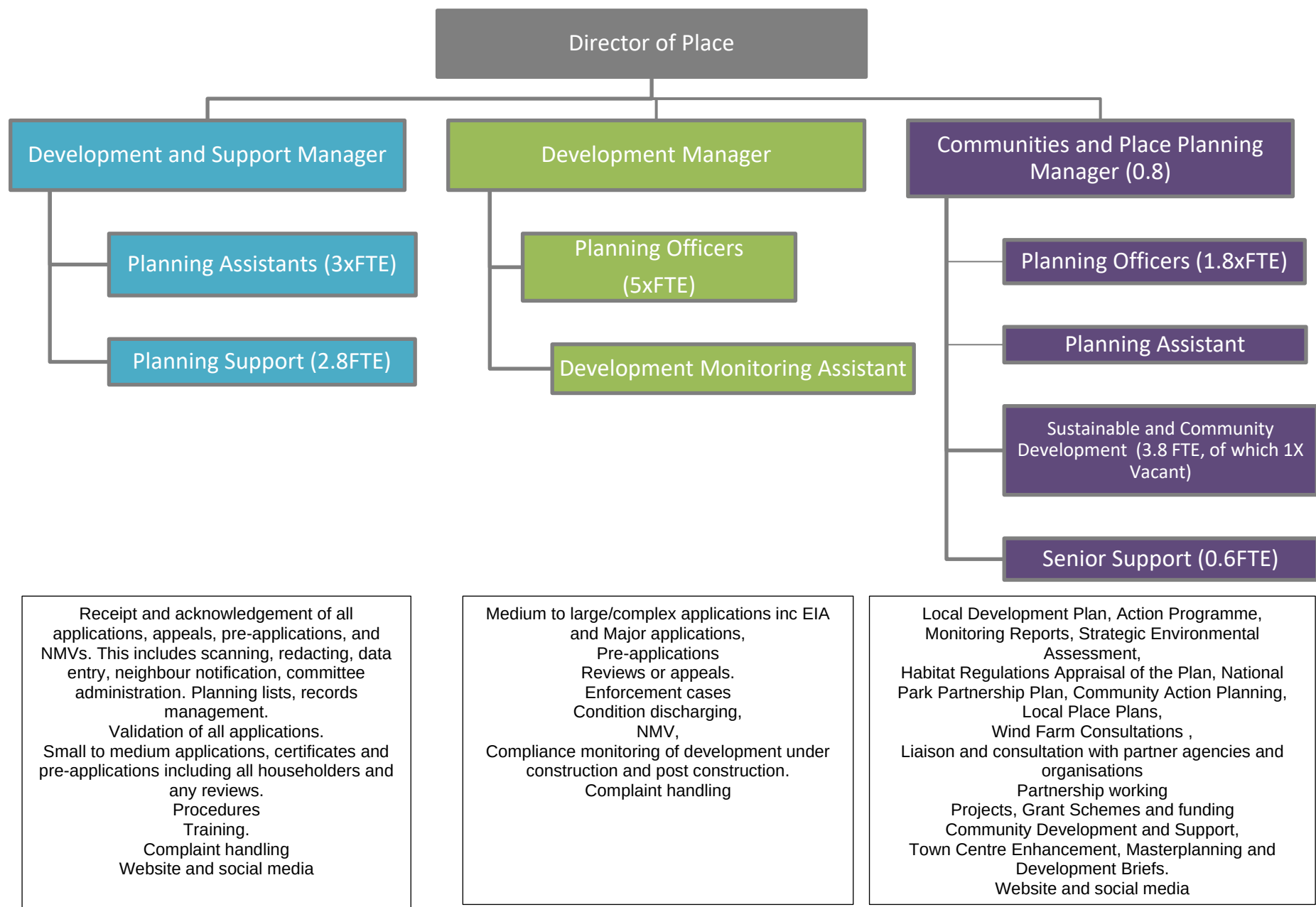
This does not include the Chief Executive but includes the Director of Planning and Rural Development. Total staff is 20 excluding maternity leave.

RTPI Chartered Staff	Headcount
Chartered Staff	14

* The Chief Executive, Director and 3 managers and have been counted within this table as they are all qualified RTPI planners. At 31st March 2021 we had 2 vacant posts, full complement would be 12 FTE.

Vacancies - As of the 31st March 2021 there were 0 vacancies in the Development planning team and 1 vacancy in the Development Management team.

Tree Works Applications and TPOs – The Trees and Woodlands Advisor who sits in conservation team under a different Director handles Tree Works applications and Tree Preservation Orders. We are currently reviewing our Tree Preservation Orders and also the tree officer has prepared new Trees and Woodland Strategy which will form planning guidance to the Local Development Plan.



Part 7 Planning Committee Information

Committees & site visits	No. per year
Full Council committees ¹	4
Planning Committees	6
Area Committees (where relevant)	n/a
Committee site visits ²	1
LRB ³	5
LRB site visits	1

Notes

1. References to committees also include National Park Boards.
2. Number of site visits are those cases where visits were carried out by committees/boards.
3. This related to the number of meetings of the LRB, application numbers going to LRB are reported elsewhere.

Part 8 Key Markers

No.	Performance Marker	Evidence
1	Decision-making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	Statistics presented in 'Part 4 National Headline Indicators' and the sub-section of this: 'National Headline Indicators - Contextual Statement'; our notes on Performance Improvement under 'Culture of Continuous improvement', with more specific detail on this provided in 'CASE STUDY 4 – Determination Times Performance Improvement Project'
2	Project management: - offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications; and - availability publicised on website	See 'CASE STUDY 4 – Determination Times Performance Improvement Project', where the use of processing agreements for larger cases and agreeing extension of time with agents was put forward as a step to improve determination times; again mentioned under 'Part 3 Service Improvements'. The statistics presented in 'National Headline Indicators B: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT Management', show how we have used 10 processing agreements this year, compared to none the previous year. Further explanation on this is given in the 'National Headline Indicators - Contextual Statement': Development Management. The availability of processing agreements is mentioned on our website: https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/planning-applications/make-an-application/helpful-resources/planning-processing-agreements/
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications - availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and - clear and proportionate requests for supporting information	We offer free pre-application advice as part of our planning service and this contributes significantly to the quality of our service. We promote it on our website: https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/planning-applications/make-an-application/ under the section on 'Make an application' and to promote this service we also make sure to include a link to the pre-application service on our Local Development Plan page https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/planning-guidance/local-development-plan/, as we understand that for some applicants navigating planning policy may be daunting. Enquiries to our pre-application service can vary from being specific to very general enquiries, in both instances the service helps prospective applicants navigate the policy documents and what supporting information is likely to be required and where other key agencies are likely to be consulted. Throughout this document several references are made to our pre-application service, which shows the value of this service to several aspects of planning service. We mention it under 'Error! Not a valid result for table.' under 'Developer contributions' and separately under 'Pre-application service' listing the number of pre-applications dealt with over the year. Under 'Quality of Outcomes' 'Monitoring Outcomes 2021/22' – 'Empowered communities', shows another example of how promoting this service at no cost can act as a stepping stone to transform concept into actuality. Under 'Culture of Continuous

No.	Performance Marker	Evidence
		Improvement' under 'New and updated Planning guidance' we also explain how Development Planning has benefitted from awareness of pre-application enquiries to gauge potential emerging development trends and make improvements to existing policy guidance. 'CASE STUDY 5– New housing development within the National Park' gives further account of the early collaboration with applicants on planning applications and how well this process works in ensuring a smooth application process.
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of resolution to grant (from last reporting period)	View 'Part 4 National Headline Indicators' and 'Contextual statement'; 10 cases were determined and a reduction in the length of time for processing applications subject to legal agreements was achieved– from an average of 38.6 weeks, down from 49.1 weeks the previous year, despite this including several legacy cases. More information on the legal agreements determined is provided in a mini case study 'Luss Housing Update' under 'Housing' in 'Monitoring Outcomes 2021/22' We have a robust internal procedure in place involving our own legal team and our external solicitors to try to resolve under 6 months. This also forms a Service Improvement for 2022-23 "Improved monitoring of Section 75 agreements".
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	See 'National Headline Indicators - Contextual Statement': Development management – Enforcement Charter: We have updated our Enforcement Charter and the new draft was agreed at our Planning and Access Committee of 28 March 2022. This was also listed as a service improvement priority in the previous PPF and has been successfully completed. The current version is on the website: https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Enforcement-Charter-March-2022.pdf
6	Continuous improvement: - show progress/ improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and - progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments	We have reported on how we have delivered our 'Part 3 Service Improvements in Part 3, having completed 4 out of 5 of the service improvements set out in last year's PPF with the remaining one being partially complete, but significant progress being delivered on this. Additional detail on these service improvements has been provided in this report. 'CASE STUDY 6 – Enforcement', whilst not discussing the enforcement charter, does give insight on our processes for handling potential breaches in planning. In 'CASE STUDY 3 – Community engagement and Local Place Plan workshops' and under 'Culture of Continuous Improvement': 'Community Stakeholder', provides more detail on our engagement with Community Councils to inform Local Development Planning and decision making

No.	Performance Marker	Evidence
	identified through PPF report	As for the added value delivered by monitoring audits, under section on 'Culture of Continuous Improvement': 'New and updated Planning guidance' and 'CASE STUDY 2 – Our future spatial strategy: building the evidence base', we show how we have used the data we have analysed and gathered through monitoring to guide actions that will deliver improvements in our service, such as updated and new guidance and commissioning of research to further build our evidence base 'Monitoring audit – data visualisation' Finally, 'CASE STUDY 4 – Determination Times Performance Improvement Project' gives a detailed account on how we have been making significant progress on improving our determination times We have developed new ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments for the forthcoming year, reflecting on current performance and priorities for the coming year.
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Our Local Development Plan 2017-2021 was now 5 years and 3 months old at March 2022. Under the section on 'Quality of Service and Engagement' 'Development Plan Scheme', we provide additional explanation as to the status of our Local Development Plan and next steps on preparing our New Local Development Plan.
8	Development plan scheme – next LDP: - on course for adoption within 5 year cycle; and - project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale	In the section on our Development Plan Scheme, we explain why we are not on course for adoption of the next LDP within 5 years of the current plan given we undertook a review of the plan's strategy (which remains robust) and we are awaiting the new regulations to enable us to produce a 10 year plan under the new Planning Act. In addition, due to Covid-19 pandemic the next plan was delayed further. A revised Development Plan Scheme will be published in 2022 to align with final timescales for the approval of National Planning Framework 4.
9	Stakeholders including Elected Members, industry, agencies, the public and Scottish Government are engaged appropriately through all key stages of development plan preparation	We have a rolling programme of updating our Action Programme and yearly Monitoring Report which are presented to Committee then we keep elected members engaged in the development plan delivery. In 2021/22 early work on the evidence base was undertaken in 2021/22 and as part of this we engaged and gather information with communities and stakeholders through our work on Community Place Plans and the Local Place Plan event provided an early opportunity for communities to hear about the purpose, processes, and powers of the Local Place Plan legislation as is explained in 'CASE STUDY 3 – Community engagement and Local Place Plan workshops' under 'Culture of Continuous Improvement' 'New and updated Planning guidance', the draft guidance was published for consultation for an 8-week period offering all stakeholders and the general public to comment on the planning guidance which will be used to ensure continued delivery of our Local Development Plan strategy in the interim period beyond year 5 of the current plan and preparation of the new plan.

No.	Performance Marker	Evidence
10	No longer applicable – gap kept for data continuity	
11	Production of relevant and up to date policy advice	‘CASE STUDY 5– New housing development within the National Park’ gives two examples of two housing developments that show how relevant policy advice has resulted in a consistent high-quality design which incorporates current principles of planning such as sustainability and placemaking criteria. Under ‘Culture of Continuous Improvement’: ‘New and updated Planning guidance’, we explain how we have identified and acted on the need for additional policy guidance to reflect current pressures and offer clearer guidelines. In addition, ‘CASE STUDY 2 – Our future spatial strategy: building the evidence base’ details how the commissioned research will build our evidence base and give us a better understanding on how the requirements set out in the draft NPF4 can be interpreted locally and therefore this work is a critical first step in producing up-to date and relevant policy advice in our next Local Development Plan.
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice)	We continue to work closely with all four local authorities, in particular Argyll and Bute Council and Stirling Council. We continue to regularly attend their Housing Forum meetings, and protocols in relation to affordable housing contributions remain in place. Furthermore ‘CASE STUDY 1 – NPF4 mini-workshops; collaboration in digital transformation’ gives an example of how we collaborate with team across departments, providing us with specialist advice and the knowledge that each of these departments have from working with external partners. This type of collaborative underpins all our work and ‘CASE STUDY 2 – Our future spatial strategy: building the evidence base’ is another example of how we worked together with teams on identifying priority areas and sharing the knowledge we gained from research including with our external partners. ‘CASE STUDY 6 – Enforcement’, gives yet another example on how we have pulled together resources resulting prompt action and strong partnership working with external agencies. in ‘CASE STUDY 5– New housing development within the National Park’, as in previous PPF reports we draw attention to the role of our planning monitoring officer, and how this has helped streamline our processes post planning determination and provides a single point of contact with oversight of planning implementation and is able to co-ordinate discharging of conditions and non-material variations. Meetings are held regularly with the Conservation team (ecology, landscape and tree advisors) to prioritise the areas requiring internal advice input and to ensure close joint working on new policy issues on land use, climate and nature. We continuously work closely with the Geographical Information Systems team, which has resulted in improved outputs – see ‘Culture of Continuous Improvement: ‘Monitoring audit – data visualisation’ and ‘Community Stakeholder

No.	Performance Marker	Evidence
		Our development planning team continues to have non planners within the team with community development support expertise which supports strong integration between spatial and development planning and strong outputs in relation to maintaining good working relationships with communities evidenced through the co-production of workshops and materials on Local Place Plans and pilot 20-Minute Neighbourhood research. This also enables us to consider wider policy agendas alongside planning, in particular Community Empowerment and Land Reform and consider how planning can support a more inclusive, fairer and wellbeing society.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	This is set out in the Governance section under ‘Sharing Best Practice and Skills with others – examples from 2020/21’ giving lots of examples of sharing good practice, skills and knowledge. The team are also actively involved on Knowledge Hub.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal planning applications more than one-year-old (from the same time last year).	This is covered under the section of ‘Culture of continuous improvement’ – ‘Dealing with ‘legacy cases’” A total of 15 applications were cleared from the list of legacy cases in 2021-22; 7 remained on the list and 5 further cases were added to the list. The reduction in number was due to the determination of 8 linked housing cases in Luss – see the ‘Update on Luss Housing Applications’ in the ‘Quality of Outcomes’ section under ‘Housing’.
15	Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and • in pre-application discussions	This is covered under ‘Quality of Service and Engagement’: ‘Being clear and proportionate - Developer contributions’. We have an up-to-date Developer contributions guidance and Housing guidance with clear expectations for both monetary and non-monetary contributions. Clear and proportionate expectations of Developer Contributions are set out in pre-application discussions.