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To:

Date: 29 October 2019 at 09:33

Subject: Progress update on a new recreation delivery plan for the National Park

Dear Community Representatives,

I wanted to re-engage with you on the development of the new National Park recreation plan in order to provide an update on how this has progressed ahead of moving towards public consultation towards the end of the year. Towards the end of last year many of you responded to our early call for comments and through 2019 we have been working with national partners to develop the strategic level and thematic priorities.

The process has taken longer than anticipated as we have had several large scale projects this year and we have been aware of the need to tie into emerging National Strategies.

That said many of the initial big picture points and local priorities made last year by community representatives remain front and centre of what we are proposing below.

There is a general consensus across all interested stakeholder groups that there is no appetite for a prescriptive Action Plan and that a higher level Delivery Plan would provide the right level of direction and focus to allow quality projects to progress but also provide flexibility to work with emerging opportunities.

The big shared areas of focus across groups have been around Inclusion, Health and Transport Integration. Consequently we are currently drafting a Delivery Plan which maps out all of the relevant national strategies then goes on to focus around six Themes, each with a Vision, 4 or 5 Priority Initiatives and 4 or 5 Delivery Principles as set out in the examples below:

A Park for All

Vision: The National Park is a place where everyone feels welcome, confident and well informed about outdoor recreation.

Example Priority Initiative:

- 'Step into the Park' Initiative to recognise, promote and celebrate entrance level outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Promote and protect the public's right to responsible access and remove barriers where they exist.

Example Delivery Principle:

- Every development or land management operation offers an opportunity to remove barriers to the enjoyment of the outdoors.
- Signage and path promotion will follow and promote national shared use standards and use time at core networks linked to transport exchanges

Active and Vibrant Places

Vision: The National Park's towns and villages are designed to allow people who live, work and visit here to enjoy and promote active lifestyles.

Example Priority Initiative:

- Develop Aberfoyle and the Trossachs as an internationally recognised active tourism destination.
- Deliver projects that prioritise people and place over traffic movement through speed reduction measures and public realm village enhancements

Example Delivery Principle:

- The introduction of 20mph zones within villages where it is requested by local communities will be supported.
- Initiatives which re-allocate road space in favour of walking and cycling through a well-considered and evidence backed process will be supported.

Happy and Healthy People

Vision: The National Park offers physical and, mental health and well-being benefits to all who come into contact with the place and its people here.

Example Priority Initiative:

- Vale of Leven Outdoor Health Partnership.
- National Park wide Daily Mile Programme.

Example Delivery Principle:

- Partnership initiatives will be focused on under-represented groups and the socially isolated.
- Innovative measuring and monitoring programmes will be supported which help us better understand behaviour and barriers to physically active lifestyles.

Connecting Places

Vision: The National Park has a connected network of strategic paths and waterways to be explored and enjoyed by all.

Example Priority Initiative:

- Development of the National Walking and Cycling Network within and around the National Park.
- Enhanced public transport services that connect with active travel and tourism networks around the National Park.

Example Delivery Principle:

- All strategic path projects will be designed to be enjoyed by walkers, leisure cyclists and horse riders whilst being appropriate for each particular location. It is important that designs acknowledge the potential increased numbers of people enjoying the path in the future as the individual paths and network are promoted, celebrated and maintained.
- Within any new road corridor developments designs should prioritise safe walking and cycling up to multi-day leisure cycling. These roadside paths should not be designed for sport cycling who will be catered for within the primary vehicle design.

Exploring Further

Vision: The National Park provides an exciting range of outdoor activities opportunities for everyone to learn about, experience and value our wild landscapes.

Example Priority Initiative:

- Develop and improve Scotland's Great Trails within the National Park
- Deliver a suite of projects which reconnects people with historic glen routes, coffin roads, drovers routes and hill lochs.

Example Delivery Principle:

- Promotion of wider opportunities beyond hubs should be focused around itineraries which link into public transport integration.
- All promotion and communication should carry clear messages around self-responsibility, SOAC and other nationally accepted codes of conduct.

Coasts and Water

Vision: The National Park is renowned for exceptional coasts, lochs and rivers which are loved, celebrated and respected.

Example Priority Initiative:

- Deliver a National Park wide water access and egress infrastructure programme.
- Development and promotion of high quality paddlesport and boating itineraries

Example Delivery Principle:

- National campaigns such as Push the Boat Out will be supported.
- Opportunities around all active watersports should be considered when considering new waterside infrastructure.

We hope that this structure and policy level reflects your views and makes sense with respect to the various national priorities and policies. Full details and narrative will of course be shared through the public consultation and we look forward to further engagement with you at that stage. However we also wanted to give community representatives a further opportunity to raise any questions, concerns or add specific comments/opportunities which might improve the draft at this stage. It should be noted that indicators of success are already highlighted within the National Park Partnership Plan which is the high level strategy above this piece of work.

If you wish to provide further comments or input at this stage we would be grateful if you could respond by the 18th of November. We are also happy to discuss any points over the phone or by emails.

Kind regards

Kenny Auld

Recreation, Access & Health Manager

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