

PE1678/U

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority submission of 2 March 2018

The proposals set out in the petition and the current situation regarding Ranger Services in Scotland are by their very nature complex and challenging issues. On behalf of the Park Authority I would be very keen to be involved in any further consideration or debate regarding the petition, including any forum or working group created to develop or implement a National Strategic Framework for Countryside Ranger Services in Scotland.

As founder members of the International Ranger Federation Scottish Rangers are respected and well known across the world for their positive contribution to conservation, community support and celebration of Scotland's cultural heritage. Unfortunately following changes to public funding in 2008 there appears to have been a slow and steady decline in the number of Rangers in Scotland, co-ordination of their efforts and sharing of good practice between Ranger Services.

I therefore strongly support the petition by Scottish Countryside Rangers Association and believe there is a clear need for a National Strategic Framework for Ranger Services which is able to focus the efforts of Rangers across Scotland to deliver key national priorities. I would however suggest that a review of the 2008 SNH framework is necessary to ensure that it can deliver for Scotland into the future.

There is real and growing concern among Rangers that there is a lack of understanding about the profession. Ranger Services provide high quality project & front line support for a range of public, private sector and charitable organisations as well as a tangible link between the community and the countryside. Their highly motivated & dedicated staff positively contribute to a broad range of national & regional outputs in areas such as:

- Conservation, sustainability and climate change
- Community engagement and inclusion
- Environmental education, wider learning and skills development
- Access, recreation, health and wellbeing
- Public safety
- Visitor experience, tourism and support for the rural economy

Here at Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park (LLTNP) we have possibly the largest single Ranger Service in the UK with a permanent team of 21 (20.4 FTE) supplemented by 49 Seasonal Rangers (12.4 FTE) and 2 Modern Apprentices (2017/18 figures). Our professional Rangers are a flexible and adaptable resource which supports a diverse range of front line services and projects across the organisation. The service has benefited from sustained investment and a strategic

focus that has unlocked the full potential of the team to successfully deliver against our core priorities.

The work of the National Park Rangers is guided by our [*National Park Partnership Plan](#) and the role of the Rangers specifically defined by the *Ranger Service Statement (*see attached documents).

Without a clear understanding and appreciation across the public sector of the value of Ranger Services the profession faces a challenging and uncertain future. Decades of incredibly valuable knowledge and experience could be lost to the detriment of our ability to protect, enhance and interpret our precious natural capital & cultural heritage.

There are many Ranger Services across Scotland that are under intense financial pressure and facing a difficult future. In my opinion the development of a National Strategic Framework for Rangers would be a positive first step to safeguarding the valuable resource they represent and support a sustainable future for the profession.

I hope that the above response provides the level of information required by the committee. I would particularly like to draw committee's attention to the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Partnership Plan & Ranger Service Statement. They are both positive examples of how a strong strategic framework can deliver great value and benefit from a suitably resourced professional Ranger Service and I would be more than happy to provide a more detailed response if it would prove useful.

Making the **Difference**

RANGER SERVICE STATEMENT

**LOCH
LOMOND
& THE TROSSACHS
NATIONAL PARK**



RANGER

**LOCH
LOMOND
& THE TROSSACHS
NATIONAL PARK**

RANGER

Our Vision

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Ranger Service welcomes everyone to the National Park and delivers an enjoyable, responsible and safe experience of nature and the outdoors.



Who we are and what we do

Rangers are associated with National Parks around the world, providing a welcome to the countryside and helping people to connect with nature. We are members of a global network of rangers who are passionate about connecting people with place.

As National Park Rangers we are:

- Welcoming
- The face of the National Park
- Professional, knowledgeable and skilled
- Trusted and valued
- Empowered and motivated
- Flexible and adaptable

In our role we are:

- Appropriately trained
- Accountable and demonstrate best practice
- Supported by volunteers

As National Park employees, we:

- Represent the National Park Authority's values
- Work across the whole area of the National Park
- Deliver National Park Partnership Plan and Corporate Plan objectives
- Work together to maintain the special qualities of the National Park



Our Role

Our work is guided by the National Park Partnership Plan.

This principal document sets out the scope and context of what we deliver and determines how we directly enhance our global National Park brand.

A number of other key documents related to the National Park Partnership Plan provide direction for the work of the ranger service. These include:

Corporate Plan

Business Plan

Biodiversity Action Plan (NPBAP)

Outdoor Recreation Plan

Visitor Management Plans





Delivering the Plan

The actions below have been taken from the National Park Partnership Plan and show how our day to day work fits into the delivery of the Plan.

National Park Partnership Plan - Priority for Action	Ranger Service Role
C2 – Species management C4 – Invasive species	Help to deliver the NPBAP and increase the understanding and knowledge of Park habitats and ecology among the general public who visit the Park. Support relationships with other conservation bodies.
C10 – Loch Lomond	Effective management and enforcement of the Loch Lomond byelaws. Knowledgeable staff provide a high quality service at visitor launch facilities and out on the loch and its islands.
VE 1 – A safe place to visit and live in VE2 – Review camping management	Work with the police forces in the Park to reduce anti-social behaviour and look for innovative solutions to visitor management issues.

National Park Partnership Plan - Priority for Action	Ranger Service Role
VE1 – A safe place to visit and live in	Contribute to tackling visitor management issues and undertake patrols across sites in the National Park to ensure that visitors have a high quality experience and residents have a high quality of life. Effective management and enforcement of the East Loch Lomond Camping byelaws.
VE2 – Review camping management	
VE3 – Capacity management – high pressure visitor management zones	
VE4 – Capacity management – lower pressure visitor management zones	
VE6 – Quality standards for sites and infrastructure	
VE10 – Quality and consistency of experience for the visitor	
VE6 – Quality standards for sites and infrastructure	Maintain sites and infrastructure to a high standard.
VE13 – Maintenance and enhancement of recreation provision	
VE7 – Better information and signage for visitors	Promote the National Park as a destination, the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and access and recreation opportunities to visitors.
VE14 – Promotion of path and water networks	

National Park Partnership Plan - Priority for Action	Ranger Service Role
VE8 – Better meeting of visitor expectations	Visitor expectations are met through contact with a recognisable and professional ranger service.
VE10 – Quality and consistency of experience for the visitor	
VE10 – Quality and consistency of experience for the visitor	Rangers are motivated and engaged to provide a consistently high standard of service throughout the Park.
VE15 & VE16 – Increased opportunities to deliver Curriculum for Excellence through outdoor learning and support for those experiencing disadvantage.	Work with schools and groups, specifically focussing on disadvantaged groups in west-central Scotland, to deliver outdoor learning in the National Park.
VE18 – Volunteer rangers	Co-ordinate and support volunteer rangers and provide volunteer opportunities to contribute to delivery of Ranger Service objectives.
VE19 – National Park volunteers	
RD11 – Community Capacity Building	Provide a point of contact for businesses, land managers and communities in the Park and be able to represent the work of the whole Park Authority to those groups.



Working together

We as rangers are intrinsic to delivering the work of the National Park Authority and we will continue to promote ourselves as a valuable asset to the organisation.

We demonstrate high standards of behaviour and foster effective relationships throughout the organisation and with external partners and stakeholders.

Achieving together

Together we strive to achieve the following outcomes:

A motivated, skilled and empowered ranger service capable of meeting changing demands

A service which contributes to the development and delivery of corporate aims and objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan

Increased understanding of our ranger service role and how it links with National Park Partnership Plan objectives

Rangers respect, understand and support the work of national park staff, senior management team, executive and board

Board members and executive are service advocates with community and stakeholder networks

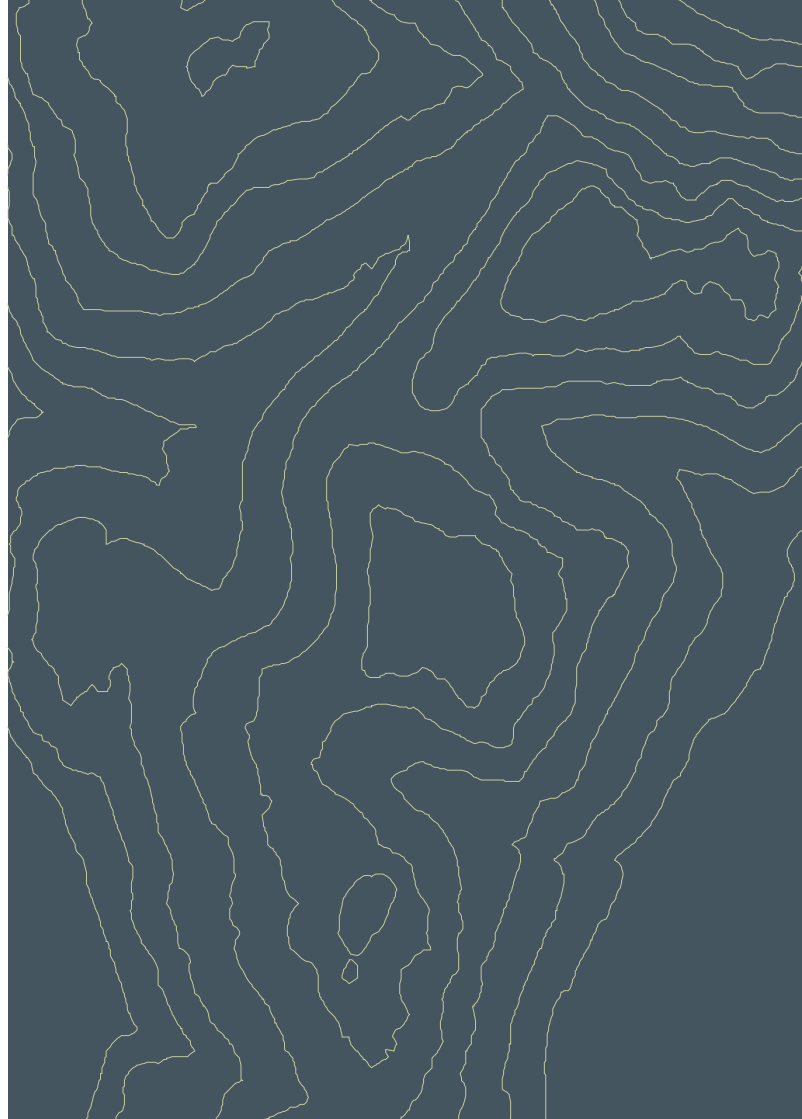
Effective and accurate recording of ranger time. Reports demonstrate the diversity of work undertaken and the resources required to maintain a high level of service

Trust between service and management, open communication and effective working relationships

Through regular contact with the ranger service, board members and executive understand issues faced on the ground

Build stronger relationships with visitors, communities, stakeholders, land managers, businesses and partner organisations

Continue to engage with rangers in Scotland



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RANGER

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