

Visitor Management Plan Progress report

Visitor Management Plan Activity	Progress	RAG Status	Budget
Road management and improvements			£280,000
General	New roads Technician (Visitor Infrastructure) started 31/05/2021, and will help deliver a programme of improvements, informed by Member input through Ward Business Meetings.		
Passing places and lay-bys - replacement of damaged or missing Passing place signs and some road strengthening	Glen Nevis – liaising with partners to rationalise road signage. Renewal of passing place signs & road surfacing in Glen Etive. B8008 Traigh/Tougal/Curtaig area – liaising with partners & small scale works under way. Planning for some W Ross roads under way.		
Road signs - additional advance warning signs where required	New VMS sign at entrance to Glen Etive planned with NTS.		
Road verge protection - strengthening and marker posts	B8008 Traigh/Tougal/Curtaig area – removing boulders from verge and replacing with verge markers).		
Traffic orders - additional restrictions such as clearways and waiting prohibitions to address safety concerns	B8008 Seasonal Parking Restriction Order created.		
Liaising with stakeholders about additional parking	Ongoing process, and is being informed by Visitor Management resilience arrangements.		
Parking management			£250,000
Install charging at tourist dominated car parks. Improved signs & regulation.	Ongoing refresh work at tourist car parks - Kyleakin & Drumnadrochit complete.		
Parking charge schemes - 21 sites to be considered by E&I committee for early intervention with further sites in longer term rollout	Ongoing local Ward discussions on 21 “Invitation to Pay” car parks. Car parks in Nairn and Inverness have been approved by the relevant Area Committees and work will continue in other areas.		£4,000

Parking Enforcement Officers - employment of 4 additional temporary Parking Enforcement Officers for 12 months	Recruitment of new Parking staff under way.		£133,000
Parking enforcement - review of regulations & improved enforcement / liaison with enforcement agencies	Ongoing through weekly Visitor Management Multi Agency Meetings		
Signs - upgrade of Car Park signage and information for users	Ongoing rollout of refreshed signing and working with community groups when requested.		
Seasonal access rangers			£300,000
Employment of 10 seasonal rangers to promote responsible behaviour (litter, parking, fires, dogs) with possible enforcement. To include weekend and evening work to address informal camping issues.	154 applicants, 40 interviewed, 17 being recruited as NatureScot confirmed Better Places 2 funding for 7 additional posts in collaboration with community groups. Team now at full strength. 13 Rangers started Induction week on 10th May. 4 rangers started on 31 st May. Introductory site visits with Access & LDR Officers. Supplied with temporary vehicles and toolkit. Feedback has been positive.		
Ranger team to work in co-operation & co-ordinate with communities, land managers and other organisations, such as Highlife Highland, NatureScot, Forestry & Land Scotland, National Trust for Scotland, Nevis Landscape Partnership, Police & Fire services.	Ranger team manager takes part in Public sector resilience plan group meetings. Rangers are making many community and land manager contacts, and building local networks.		
Monitoring the use of countryside car parks, roadside parking and informal camping. Minor improvements to, and maintenance of, countryside sites & paths.	First patrols on weekend of 15th/16 th May Noted small numbers of campers, many fires sites, some smouldering and doused by Rangers litter (removed). Large numbers of motorhomes in north & west with. Weekend of 29-31 st May- notable increase in campers and motorhomes particular hotspots of Glen Etive, Arisaig, Durness. Parking issues in other places e.g Dores		

Work with local communities to establish and train a local volunteer warden scheme to assist with monitoring and liaison with visitors.	Started to make the contacts, and discussions are underway but not yet in operation.		
Installing and maintaining temporary signage and other communications on safe and considerate visits to the countryside.	Signs received covering subjects such as fires & camping. To be installed by Rangers as required, informed by intelligence gathered through resilience arrangements.		
Public Toilets			£60,000
Provide additional comfort scheme provision at key locations, including seasonal scheme if required.	<p>Members at the C&P Committee noted the planned operational deployment of the £60k additional resource for public convenience provision.</p> <p>Increasing the number of seasonal or one-year comfort schemes from 37 already in place. This now includes composting toilets as part of the scheme.</p> <p>As at 2.6.21, eight further comfort schemes have been agreed for Rhum, John O’Groats, Drumnadrochit, Dornoch (x2), Acharacle, Traigh Beach and Ardnamurchan. Offers are made to three further schemes in Helmsdale, Glendale and Kinlochleven and several others are being explored.</p>		
Improvements to interior facilities and installation of motion sensor lighting at Council operated facilities.	Investing around £46k in some of the Council’s 76 buildings for additional charging for showers and loos, people counter infrastructure and undertaking some vandalism repairs. This affects our facilities in Ullapool, Aviemore, Kingussie, Grantown,		

	<p>Muir of Ord and Dornie. Improvements in other facilities are also being considered with e.g. condition surveys underway.</p> <p>As at 2.6.21, £55.9k is committed but an overspend of around £5k is anticipated as new comfort schemes are added and from additional repairs expected. Three applications for Better Places Funding have been submitted for: increased provision (comfort schemes, counters and charging barriers @ £75k); a new modular unit in Aviemore and composting toilet in Cromarty (£92.5k). A decision is expected in early June 2021.</p> <p>In addition, a review of public conveniences previously identified as surplus to requirements or unaffordable to improve/repair is being undertaken with property surveys requested. This will support any engagement with community groups on further community asset transfers. Bringing any back into use would likely require significant capital resources and consideration of sustainability, value for money as well as any community interest issues.</p>		
Promotion of the current network of public toilets and comfort scheme locations through tourism groups, visitor websites etc.	Council website updated with new locations. Wider activity to follow.		
Installation of additional footfall counters.	New counter at Dornie comfort scheme		
Increase provision of charging at some locations.	See above.		
Waste Management			£180,000
Increased bin capacity through a combination of larger 1100 litre bins with lid design to reduce the risk of fly-tipping and a larger number of 240/360 litre bins. Bins will be	Procuring and siting of additional waste bins, including larger 1100 litre bins with lid design to reduce the risk of fly-tipping and a larger number of smaller 240/360 litre litter bins has been rolled out. The bins are for		

a combination of both general waste and where possible recycling bins.	general waste and recycling. The bins are clearly marked with information on responsible waste disposal;		
Increase collection frequency of litter bins by a combination of swapping bins over using additional seasonal staff and pick-up vehicles and existing refuse collection vehicles and staff.	<p>Increasing the frequency of collections in locations with expected high visitor numbers. This is being done by the recruitment of 8 seasonal staff and additional fleet operating from May to September. The staff are using pick-up vehicles to exchange full litter bins and through an increased frequency of service, keep the hotspot areas clear of litter and refuse. The staff are mobile and cover areas where they are most needed. They are based in the following locations and augment local teams also supporting the visitor management plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North West Coast – base in Lochinver; • West - base in Ullapool; • Lochcarron; • Portree; • Brora/Golspie; • Fort William; • Aviemore; and • Inverness – Loch Ness areas. 		
Additional seasonal staff and pick-up vehicles used in the North West, North Coast, East and Central Sutherland, West Coast, Dornoch/Tain areas, Skye, Lochaber, B&S and Loch Ness areas; to swap over full bins, increasing litter picking and fast response to reported incidents of fly-tipping.	See above.		
Supporting community litter picks.	The waste team is supporting groups wishing to carry out a clean-up of accessible public areas and open spaces. Groups can request litter-picking sticks, bags and arrange for the waste to be collected by the Council after the event. Area Waste Management Officers are the point of contact for Community Groups.		

Roadside litter clearing	The first coordinated road verge litter pick took place over the weekend of the 24th and 25th of April in all areas of Highland. This cost £2.5k and was not budgeted. Further litter picks are planned and an application for £20k Better Places Funding has been made with a decision expected in early June.		
Motorhomes			£200,000
Investigate options for installation of a new facility in Ullapool alongside planned car park improvement work	A project is being developed to install a new facility at Latheron Car Park. Support is in place from the Community Council and this will progress at pace.		
Creation of template design for future motorhome waste disposal points based on current Portree project.	Ongoing.		
Bid in grant scheme for commercial caravan & campsites	Scheme launched early May. 15 sites participating to date		£7,500
Promotion - production and distribution of a guide to motorhome waste disposal sites. To be circulated through business groups etc.	Partnership with CAMPA – participating sites have been added to CAMPA website. Destination Organisations and business groups contacted to assist with promotion of sites.		£0 to date
Supporting commercial provision through production of a guide to planning and licencing requirements for small scale overnight facilities.	Guide now complete. Available on Council website at https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/23616/guidance f or temporary motorhome stopover sites and has been circulated to all those who had previously showed an interest.		£0 (covered by existing budgets)
Public Transport			£60,000
Enhanced bus service in North Skye for three peak months. To include a park & ride provision to reduce car traffic to congested locations.	Currently out to tender with deadline of 28 May		
Promotion of bus services through development of tourist-oriented transport publicity and a multi-journey or multi-operator ticketing scheme.	Ongoing work.		

Bus Partnership Fund bids to Transport Scotland for infrastructure provision which will enable improved bus services,	Bids have been submitted and an announcement on the outcome is expected soon.		
Cairngorms Initiative			£125,000
Joint initiative with Cairngorms National Park Authority to improve visitor management in Glenmore corridor.	Project under way – contracts returned and site meeting on 19 May. Involves improved parallel parking at Loch Morlich (Glenmore end) and changes to speed limits.		
Partner Engagement			£0
National Visitor Management Strategy - continued engagement with national visitor management strategy group.	ECO, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy attends to represent Local Authorities. Head of Roads & Transport attends sub-group on infrastructure issues.		No additional budget committed
Establishment of a Visitor Management Partners group for the wider Highlands & Islands area - evolving from the existing Highlands and Islands Local Resilience Partnership	Council attends and contributes to meetings; chaired by Police Scotland.		- all costs covered through existing service budgets
Local Delivery Groups - formation of sub-regional groups in Highland to act as a delivery arm of the Local Resilience Partnership Visitor Management Group – anticipated to be one for each Police Scotland Area Command.	2 Visitor Management operations groups involving Council & emergency services in place:- South – Lochaber, Skye, SW Ross North – Caithness, Sutherland, rest of Ross-shire Council staff involved in each, chaired by senior ward manager. Highland Ranger managers group established with other employing Rangers.		