




Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad



**MAKING
CONNECTIONS:
YEAR 1**

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SNH Business Plan 2018/19

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Introduction

We are an organisation that is committed to our role in delivering A Nation with Ambition: The Government's Programme for Scotland. We are embracing change. We have a new Chair, new Board, new Senior Leadership Team and myself, the new CEO. We also have Connecting People and Nature, our new corporate plan for 2018-22. Change of this scale provides us with a fresh opportunity to look at and to do things differently.

That is why I am delighted to present Making Connections: Year 1, the first of our annual Business Plans in support of our ambition for Connecting People and Nature as our contribution to Scotland's Programme for Government. The plan is built our 4 outcomes and sets out for each why it is important, SNH's leadership role, the changes we are working to deliver over the next 4 years, and sets out 21 commitments that will be the focus of our work for 2018-19. It recognises that we are on a journey and that this year we will establish a firm footing for success.

The more we are able to demonstrate the ways that people benefit from nature, the more they are likely to call for investment in it across the public and private sectors; the more investment the healthier and more resilient nature will be, and healthier and more resilient nature provides more benefits for more people – and so on. But to do that we need to transform the way we work.

Working in collaboration, and viewing nature as part of wider social and economic challenges and opportunities is central to our approach - for example, in tackling climate change and nature together.



Part of doing things differently means transforming how we work by looking for opportunities to simplify our structures and processes. It also means making sure that everyone in SNH understands how the work we all do on a day to day basis contributes to Connecting People and Nature.

Our journey isn't one we are taking alone; it's important that people across Scotland know about SNH, our purpose, and the benefits we deliver. To allow us to do this with greater impact, we are now developing a stronger narrative that places nature firmly at the heart of sustainable economic growth and provides the context for strengthening the connections between people and nature. Ensuring that our narrative is more widely understood is one of the reasons for changing our domain name to nature.scot and we hope to build this platform to engage more strongly with a range of audiences. Over this coming year we will be promoting this both across SNH and more widely where we have the opportunity.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank colleagues who work to support the essential work that we do. This plan represents the first steps towards Connecting People and Nature and I look forward to working with you all as we rise to the challenges and opportunities that 2018/19 will present.

Francesca Osowska, Chief Executive and Accountable Officer

Part One

Our Vision

By 2030, Scotland is recognised as a world leader in looking after and improving nature. Everyone is involved; everyone benefits. Scotland is greener, healthier and more prosperous.

Scotland's nature is fantastic and unique. It's a national asset that provides us with a strong sense of identity and national pride. It's a big part of what makes Scotland special. Our role is to promote, care for and improve Scotland's nature.

To focus our work, we have identified four outcomes that focus on people, places, investment, nature and transforming the way we work.

In shaping these, we listened carefully to our stakeholders, reflected on their views and considered the priorities of Scottish Government. Our outcomes cover areas of work we have been delivering for many years but they also provide us with an opportunity to take stock, to re-focus and to make sure that the work we do connects people and nature, reduces inequalities, tackles disadvantage and promotes fairness.





Our Outcomes

More people across Scotland are enjoying and benefiting from nature

Over 81% of Scots live in towns and cities but not everyone has access to good quality greenspace near where they live, and less than half of us have regular contact with nature. Everyone has a right to enjoy and benefit from the nature around us. Good quality nature encourages people to get outdoors, to get active and healthier and to become champions of nature.

The health and resilience of Scotland's nature is improved

SNH is uniquely placed to lead the improvements Scotland must make for nature on both land and sea. This is in order to meet international obligations to restore degraded ecosystems, and to help both nature and people adapt to a changing climate. That way we ensure that Scotland's nature retains its status among the best in the world.

There is more investment in Scotland's natural capital and its management to improve prosperity and wellbeing

Scotland's land, coasts and seas are always changing, both naturally and in response to choices we make about how we use them. The consequences of these choices can be complicated and impact upon nature and people in many different ways and not always as desired. We will work in partnership to encourage businesses, communities and government to make more informed decisions, using evidence-based and innovative 'nature-based' solutions that work for people and nature.

We have transformed how we work

Achieving our vision and delivering our outcomes means that we must transform the way we work with others, and within SNH. We'll do this by increasing the reach, visibility and influence of our communications. We will work collaboratively, listen and be responsive to others in pursuit of our ambition to connect people and nature.

Making Connections Our plans for 2018/19

Making Connections: Year 1 is our first Business Plan in support of *Connecting People and Nature*. It sets out 21 commitments that our Board has prioritised for this first year, describes how they will contribute to our outcomes, places these in the context of all the work we do, and explains how these help to make those connections.

It comprises 2 parts. Part One focuses on our leadership role, the changes needed to deliver our outcomes by 2022, and our focus for 2018/19. Part Two is more operational and sets out what we will do, provides detail on how we organise our work by Activities, explains how we will invest our resources – both money and people – in support of those Activities, and how the work we will undertake contributes to our outcomes.



OUTCOME 1: More people from across Scotland are enjoying and benefitting from nature

Why it matters

Connecting people and nature is important for everyone, both in rural and urban areas. Whether the contact is direct or indirect, through lifestyles, or the goods and services we consume.

Across the world, evidence shows that access to nature and high-quality greenspace helps to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing, reduces inequalities and brings direct benefits such as reducing flood risk and providing locally produced food. We need to champion nature's role in providing benefits for society.

Increasing people's contact with nature and improving the relationship they develop with it, inspires society to invest in and care for nature.

Our leadership role

Our national remit and local presence means we are uniquely placed to ensure that nature's benefits are prominent in policy, strategy and delivery on the ground.

We will develop and drive forward a wide range of partnerships across education, health and planning. Specifically through Community Planning and Health & Social Care Partnerships; we are championing the benefits of nature and through the provision of funding and advice, ensure that people and nature are firmly at the centre of placemaking.

We will help people shape the places they live in and strengthen the connections they have with nature. The more people enjoy and benefit from nature the more they are likely to champion it. This in turn helps investment in and improvement of nature across Scotland.

Change required during 2018-22

We will work with new funding streams such as City Deals, Regional Economic Partnerships and the Scottish Futures Fund to secure more investment in greenspace, building on the successes of the ERDF Green Infrastructure Fund, EcoCo Life project and National Walking and Cycling Network (NWCN) to bring benefits to more people.

We will seek out new opportunities to develop and support partnerships and projects that encourage people outdoors. Getting people involved in working with and experiencing nature in and around the places where they live, will ensure that investment is targeted to where it will have the greatest impact and reduce inequality.

We will work towards establishment of the first urban National Nature Reserve. We will use our funding to support bigger more impactful projects drawing in other sources of funding whenever possible and launch a series of new themed challenge funds, to bring people and nature closer than ever.

Our focus for 2018/19

We will provide opportunities for more people to experience, enjoy and look after nature by investing more staff time in development planning at a range of scales, influencing city/growth deals and forming creative alliances with other public bodies and partners.

We will work towards a more sustainable future for our nature reserves and land assets by testing new approaches for management that delivers our outcomes, engages local communities, facilitates events and provides volunteering opportunities.

We will target our funding to support people from some of Scotland's more deprived areas to have the chance to benefit from nature, and will launch a challenge fund to support outdoor learning to help improve the quality and use of local environments. We will enable more people to get out and enjoy nature by promoting the National Walking and Cycling Network and adding a further 120km of route joining up key gaps and upgrading connections.



Our 2018/19 commitments to this outcome are:

1. Making places better for some of Scotland's most deprived communities by opening funding for 7 new Green Infrastructure projects this year to improve the quality, quantity and accessibility of well managed green infrastructure in urban areas.
2. Increase the number of households with access to quality greenspace close to where people live, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas by influencing the design of places.
3. Connect more people with nature by increasing participation, volunteering for nature and enjoyment of the outdoors through campaigns targeting young people in the Year of Young People.
4. Provide tangible benefits to the lives of people living in the Central Belt where the need is greatest by restoring and transforming the landscape and improving access to quality natural environments by continuing to support the Central Scotland Green Network and delivering the EcoCo Life project.
5. Provide greater opportunities for people to connect with nature by working towards the establishment of the first urban National Nature Reserve.



OUTCOME 2: The health and resilience of Scotland's nature is improved

Why it matters

Scotland's rich and diverse natural environment is a national asset which contributes hugely to our economy and to our wider sense of wellbeing. However, we cannot be complacent.

Climate change and competing pressures for use of our land and sea continue to have a significant impact on the make-up and range of Scotland's nature.

Some of our wildlife is recovering, reversing considerable declines from the 1950s to the early 2000s. We must ensure that these trends continue, and that we take action to halt further decline.

Scotland needs to deliver sustained improvements to restore degraded ecosystems, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and move towards a low carbon economy by 2030.

Our leadership role

Our role is to help nature and people adapt to a changing climate in order to deliver the widespread benefits healthy and resilient nature brings to all parts of our society.

We will lead delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the Route Map to 2020; and develop the evidence base to inform our thinking post 2020. We will maintain momentum towards a national ecological network for Scotland.

We will play a leading role in ensuring that those mechanisms supporting the use of the land and sea, which will replace current EU-funded programmes, provide benefits to people and nature.

We will work with partners in Government and wider stakeholders to provide clearer priorities for land and sea and to enhance stewardship of the environment, including protected areas. We need to ensure SNH is prepared to deliver the aspirations for use of land and sea, the state of nature, and to tackle climate change in light of our changing relationship with Europe, from where much of the current statutory and policy framework stems.

Change required during 2018-22

We will work in partnership to develop a new ecosystem based approach to the management of protected areas; and deliver a new fit for purpose, risk based monitoring programme that makes use of new technologies such as Earth Observation, to inform it.

We remain committed to safeguarding and improving the most important and vulnerable areas for habitats, species populations and geology. We also recognise the need to ensure that these are not managed in isolation, and that they make a positive contribution to, and improve the state of nature in Scotland as part of a national ecological network.

We will develop new approaches for improving the health of our seas, including advice on the protection of Priority Marine Features, with work on natural capital and ecosystem services underpinning marine planning.

Our focus for 2018/19

We will lead the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy through engagement with partners and stakeholders to drive delivery of the SBS Route Map to 2020. Beyond this, we will develop the evidence base to inform our thinking for post 2020.

We will contribute to Government's vision of "clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas". We will do this through helping to implement the National Marine Plan, the development and management of regional marine plans, and by supporting the completion of a network of Marine Protected Areas.

We will encourage owners and occupiers to manage protected areas on land, through SRDP and our Management Agreement programme, ensuring that they contribute to the maintenance of healthy ecosystems and to people's connection with nature. We will start the development of a new national monitoring strategy.

We will complete our Natura Plans project to develop Conservation Objectives and Management Measures for SACs, ensuring that they remain managed in line with the agreed intent in the face of EU Exit.



Our 2018/19 commitments to this outcome are:

6. Lead delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and associated Route Map to 2020 and develop the evidence base to inform our thinking post 2020. Maintain momentum towards a national ecological network for Scotland.
7. Connect more people with the marine and coastal environment by developing a more engaging and inclusive approach to monitoring, management and communications.
8. Enhance stewardship of the environment through clearer priorities for land and sea, including protected areas, in light of EU Exit.
9. Restore Peatlands for climate change, flood management, and biodiversity benefits.
10. Ensure that our Protected Areas make a positive contribution to and improve the state of nature in Scotland, maximising their value as a resource for people.



OUTCOME 3:
There is more investment in the management of Scotland's natural capital to improve prosperity and wellbeing.

Why it matters

Scotland's land, coasts and seas are always changing, both naturally and in response to choices about how they are used and managed. Those choices can impact upon nature and people, so it's important that they result in the best overall outcome.

It is crucial that business, communities and government work together to share knowledge and to develop innovative land management solutions that work for people and nature.

Ensuring nature is part of the solution will help maintain Scotland's world-class reputation and competitive edge, creating a more prosperous country with healthier and more resilient nature from which everyone can benefit.

Our leadership role

Through our strategic leadership we will ensure the economic benefit of Scotland's natural assets is sustained through the investment of others. Our focus will be on the economic benefits that people derive from good management and development of our land, sea and wildlife. Well-made investment increases prosperity and underpins the nation's future wellbeing.

We will use our influence and expertise, to build consensus and partnerships to deliver for Scotland's nature. We will develop our relationships with Government and other funders, economic development agencies, key business sectors and primary producers to deliver this.

Through these relationships we will seek greater consensus on how our natural resources can be managed to improve outcomes for nature and the economy. Our focus will be on upland areas.

Change required during 2018-22

We will review our wildlife management strategy to ensure that it better reflects a changing world, and integrates the needs of people and land management by pursuing more consistent, adaptive and sustainable approaches.

We will improve the value our services provide in supporting business and development through the Planning system and other regulatory regimes, positioning us as an enabling body that actively helps them meet future challenges.

We will adapt to future opportunities arising from new thinking about the role of upland land use in the context of climate change and as new frameworks for national land use support mechanisms take shape. We will increase our effort to highlight the opportunities for cross-sector investment in natural capital through the food & drink supply chain, tourism and skills sectors.

Our focus for 2018/19

We will work with Government to help develop a new land use support framework focussed on natural capital, which secures high standards and delivers benefits for people and nature as we move towards EU exit.

We will actively support sustainable development of renewable energy, housing and infrastructure and champion delivery of Scottish Government's new Climate Change Plan.

We will support investment by the tourism sector to deliver a visitor experience that matches the high environmental qualities in those areas which rely upon it most.

We will deliver effective and responsive management frameworks to help those affected by wildlife, such as geese and wild beavers, play an enhanced role in mitigating their impacts.



Our 2018/19 commitments to this outcome are:

11. Refresh and re-position our planning and development services so that they are more widely recognised as making a positive contribution to inclusive and sustainable economic growth.
12. Progress our new more active and targeted approach to enhanced deer management.
13. Lead the development of common ground solutions for sustainable wildlife management, particularly in the uplands.
14. Maintaining our role as Delivery Partner to SGRPID for the Scottish Rural Development Programme.
15. Encourage innovation and investment in natural capital through our membership of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital.



OUTCOME 4: We have transformed how we work

Why it matters

We are the lead environmental body with a national presence. Our role in connecting people and nature is vital; and to deliver this we need to be dynamic and responsive to the opportunities and challenges we face.

We cannot achieve our ambition alone. We need to be creative, innovative and inspiring as Scotland's nature relies on the support of Scotland's people. We also build trust and confidence through listening to the needs of people and our partners.

Our previous successes show that we can achieve a lot, but we know we can achieve more when we work in partnership with others, and empower communities to create innovative solutions to shared issues that work for people and nature. We need to build on this to achieve on our ambitions for connecting people and nature.

Our leadership role

We need to be confident in promoting our successes and leadership role to inspire and influence others to invest in nature as part of Scotland's inclusive, and sustainable economic growth.

We will develop new approaches using digital technologies to ensure our evidence base together with the knowledge and expertise of our staff is available to the right people at the right time to inform and shape decisions about nature.

We will play a leading role to support Scottish Government in ensuring that we have effective and legal plans in place for nature as we exit the EU.

Change required during 2018-22

As we look beyond 2022 we will be an efficient, effective, digitally confident and enabling organisation.

We will increase the reach, visibility and influence of our communications, concentrating on the benefits that nature provides for Scotland.

We will ensure our internal processes increase efficiency and make use of new technologies to support the full breadth of our ambition, helping us to reduce our carbon emissions and to deliver in innovative and more inclusive ways.

We will take further action to ensure that our people and our workplaces contribute to the change we want to see, and contribute to Scottish Government's priorities by taking steps to increase the number of young people we employ and increase investment in skills development.

Our focus for 2018/19

We will ensure that our workforce is fit for the future, investing in skills development and new talent.

We will transform our workplaces to encourage more flexible, dynamic and collaborative working and to reduce carbon and waste.

We will continue our journey of digital transformation in our workplaces, improve interactions with the people of Scotland and increase the sharing of information and data.

We will reduce travel and ensure that we make the best use of newer technologies such as electric cars to further reduce our carbon emissions. We will identify alternative funding streams to support further investment in delivery for nature and people after EU exit.



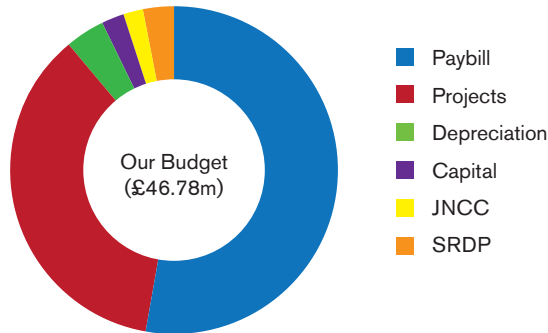
Our 2018/19 commitments to this outcome are:

16. Increase the reach, visibility and influence of our communications to promote the impact of our work and help people to become better connected with nature.
17. Ensure we have plans in place so that we continue to operate effectively and legally as we exit the EU.
18. Pursue action to diversify our core funding so that we can maintain our investment in nature.
19. Develop a workforce for the future by investing in priority skills for development.
20. Work in collaboration with communities and stakeholders to pursue a sustainable future for Kinloch Castle.
21. Develop and implement an outcome based approach for the management and delivery of our work.

Our resources

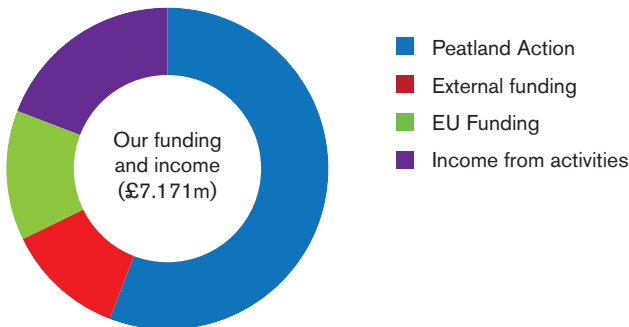
Our budget

Our total Grant-in-Aid from Scottish Government for 2018/19 is £46.78m and this is accounted for as shown below.



Additional funding and income

Although most of our funding comes from Government through our Grant-in-Aid, we do receive funding and small amounts of income from other sources. Our estimated funding and income for 2018/19 is as follows:

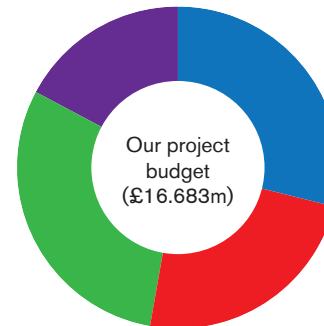


Administration of funds

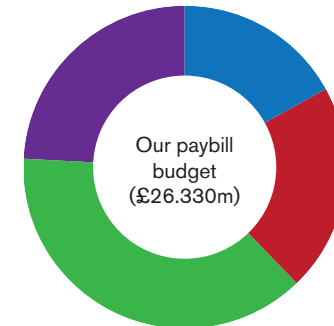
We also contribute to a range of outcomes through our role in administering the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). In 2018/19, we expect to administer the distribution of around £25m of SRDP investment in agriculture and rural development and around £7.5m of ERDF funding, which will generate £18m of investment in Green Infrastructure.

Allocations

Our project and paybill budgets are distributed across our 4 outcomes as illustrated below.



- More people from across Scotland are enjoying and benefiting from nature
- The health and resilience of Scotland's nature is improved



- There is more investment in the management of Scotland's natural capital to improve prosperity and wellbeing
- We have transformed how we work

Our People

During 2018/19 we expect an average staff in post figure of 582 full time equivalents. This equates to around 123,400 days of staff time available to deliver our work over the course of the year.

Measuring and reporting progress

Our Board has identified 21 commitments that we will prioritise as we deliver our work in 2018/19.

Our work is organised by Activity and each has identified a number of key deliverables that represent the most significant areas of work to be delivered this year. Each of our commitments has at least 1 corresponding key deliverable.

We will measure our progress against the key deliverables at regular intervals throughout the year and report our progress to SNH's Senior Leadership Team. This provides reassurance that we are making progress towards the delivery of the Business Plan.

We will report our progress to SNH's Board on those key deliverables that contribute to our commitments on those key deliverables that contribute to our commitments.

We will use a combination of case studies and survey data to make a judgement on progress towards the outcomes in Connecting People and Nature.

