

## Countryside Management Operational Plan 2003 – 05

1. CONSERVATION				
1.1 Survey & Monitoring				
Obj No	Strategic Objective	Target	Report	% Completion
1.1.1	Develop ecological databases and identify key BAP species	Complete NVC surveys for 8 properties, 4pa		
		Conduct or revise Phase 1 surveys for 4 properties, 2pa		
		Review survey and monitoring programme for 45 properties by 2005		
		Conduct and report on trials of database management systems for 2 regions, over 2 years		
		Transfer species records for 2 regions to National Biodiversity Network, 1 pa		
		Ensure reports on seabird colony monitoring for 5 properties are submitted to JNCC, annually or as appropriate		
1.1.2	Monitor key habitats and species	Carry out annually or as per specific monitoring protocols:		
		a) WEBS counts at 8 properties		
		b) Butterfly transects at 5 properties		
		c) Rothamsted moth traps at 5 properties		
		d) Deer counts at 6 properties		
		e) Bat surveys at 7 properties		
		f) Monitor fungi populations at 3 properties		
		g) Monitor rare plants at 3 properties		
		h) Monitor tree/shrub regeneration at 3 properties		
		i) Monitor sand dune erosion at 3 properties		
		j) Monitor heather condition at 4 properties		
		k) Monitor species rich grassland condition at 2 properties		
		l) Monitor raptors and ravens at 7 properties		
		m) Monitor breeding waders at 2 properties		
n) Monitor water vole at 2 properties				
o) Monitor seabirds at 5 properties				
1.1.3	Survey Designed Landscapes	Survey 1 designed landscape per annum		

1.2 Policy Development			
1.2.1	Develop internal policy	Produce Enjoyment and Education Principles by 2004	
		Initiate Environmental Principles & Policy by 2004	
		Develop Nature Conservation and Landscape Principles/Strategy by 2005	
		Develop Moorland Policy by 2005	
		Review Education Policy & Strategy by 2005	
		Complete Use of Peat Policy by 2004	
1.2.2	Contribute to external policy	Contribute to Scottish Parliament on Agricultural Holdings, Land Reform, Crofting Reform and Nature of Scotland	
		Contribute to SNH reviews of National Scenic Areas, Regional and Country Parks	
1.3 Property Statements			
1.3.1	Produce property statements for all properties	Complete the second tranche of property statements by 2004 and third tranche by 2005	
		Ensure all NNRs have current property statements by 2005	
1.4 Practical Property Management			
1.4.1	Manage upland paths sustainably	Deliver Year 2 path and track work at Mar Lodge Estate	
		Secure HLF bid: appoint project manager and demonstration team and deliver 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of contracts	
		Deliver 6 month SVQ II training course and 2 short courses pa, and publish level III/IV standards with SNH by 2003	
1.4.2	Maintain key habitats and species in favourable conservation status	Deliver grazing management and habitat restoration projects at upland properties, including deer control on 9 properties, appropriate sheep/cattle grazing on 8 properties, muirburn on 2 properties and controlling predators on 1 property	
		Manage Ben Lawers, Corrieshalloch, St Abbs Head, St Kilda and Staffa NNRs as per agreed management plans/property statements. Produce annual reports	

	Deliver the key objectives identified in the agreed Mar Lodge Estate Management Plan		
	Deliver woodland management schemes as per WGS plans including:		
	a) MFS projects at Glencoe, Kintail/West Affric, Torridon, Ben Lomond and Goatfell		
	b) Fence removal or marking at 3 properties		
	c) Bracken management to aid regeneration at 3 properties		
	d) Pilot UKWAS accreditation scheme in one region		
	Deliver invasive control programme, including:		
	a) Rhododendron ponticum at 8 properties		
	b) Japanese knotweed at 2 properties		
	c) Giant hogweed at 1 property		
	d) Mink at 1 property		
	e) Develop rat control project on Canna and rat prevention campaign on St Kilda		
	Pilot "Garden for Life" in South Region		
	Maximise nature conservation benefit within designed landscapes, including:		
	a) Managing veteran trees for wildlife at 5 properties		
	b) Managing grazing to benefit sword flora at 3 properties		
	Contribute to Integrated Coastal Zone Management, including:		
	a) "Managing" visitors to minimise disturbance to seabird colonies on 5 properties		
	b) Promoting marine conservation measures in seas around 5 properties		
	c) Assisting with the development of management plans for 3 marine protected areas.		
	Contribute to Biodiversity Action, including:		
	a) Carry out the actions proposed within 8 SAPS		
	b) Serve as lead partner for 3 UK BAPs		
	c) Provide input to 8 LBAPs and HAPs as appropriate		
	d) Produce an annual report on the above		

		Carry out specific biodiversity projects: a) Conserve corncrakes at 3 properties b) Conserve slender Scotch burnet moth on Burg c) Conserve red squirrels at 7 properties d) Conserve water voles at 4 properties e) Conserve black grouse at 3 properties and capercaillie at 1 property f) Conserve farmland birds at 3 properties g) Conserve great crested newt at the Pineapple h) Manage disturbance at raptor sites at 2 properties		
1.4.3	Develop “Agri-environment” schemes	Review grazing licences and tenancies at renewal to ensure conservation principles are incorporated by 2005		
		Develop Rural Stewardship Schemes at 5 properties		
1.4.4	Conserve key cultural landscapes	Implement the Ben Lawers Historic Landscape Project		
<b>2. ENJOYMENT AND EDUCATION</b>				
<b>2.1 Education and Interpretation</b>				
2.1.1	Agree and deliver educational priorities	Review national education strategy in relation to countryside properties		
		Develop links with the Tertiary sector, 2 pa		
		Lead c1,400 guided events for c23,000 participants		
		Deliver c150 talks per annum		
		Run 6 “Young Naturalist Clubs” and host some 100 events pa		
2.1.2	Plan, deliver & maintain interpretation projects	Write 1 Property Interpretative Plan pa		
		Review interpretation at 7 Visitor Centres by 2005		
		Develop 5 on-site interpretative panels by 2005		
		Produce 9 new trail leaflets and 2 booklets by 2005		
		Produce, enhance and develop websites for 4 iconic sea-bird colonies: STK, Mingulay, SAA & STA		
		Manage 4 CCTV sites		

2.2. Property Management for Visitors (on site)			
2.2.1	Develop & implement visitor management “best practice” principles with partners	Be an active partner within SNH led project on sustainable visitor management	
		Pilot the SVMS at St Abbs Head and Mar Lodge Estate	
		Improve the quality of visitor facilities at 6 properties by 2005	
		Introduce a further 4 “Contribute and Conserve” machines pa and monitor effectiveness of all	
		Accumulate monthly visitor figures for 15 properties annually	
		Develop “climbing and wildlife” code of conduct with MCoS and others by 2005	
		Promote access to Trust properties by sustainable means in property flyers & Guide to Properties annually	
2.2.2	Comply with Disability Discrimination Act	Complete access audit of countryside properties	
		Ensure all properties comply with the legislation by October 2004, including physical and/or intellectual access	
2.3 Access Opportunities (off or connecting sites)			
2.3.1	Contribute effectively to the introduction of the new access legislation	Establish contact with emerging Local Access For a	
		Establish effective working links with 12 local authority access officers, including LL & TNP. Report via all ranger service annual reports	
		Contribute to the development of and promulgate the Scottish Outdoor Access Code: Year 1: Produce internal guidance for all staff Year 2: Ensure all VCs promote SOAC through distribution of leaflets Both years: report on activity undertaken in all ranger service annual reports	
		Continue close co-operation with the Arran Access Trust	
		Continue to support the Blackmount Partnership	

2.4 Volunteers			
2.4.1	Offer opportunities for people to get actively involved in property conservation and presentation	Maintain current levels of short-term volunteer activity at c15 FTEs through:	
		a) CV groups: manage 4 groups	
		b) Thistle Camps: manage 36 camps	
		c) Trailblazers: offer 6 as part of Thistle Camp programme	
		d) Corporate Challenge: offer 8 projects	
		Pilot 3 volunteer ranger services	
		Continue to offer long-term volunteering opportunities within the ranger service: c5 FTEs	
3. INFLUENCE AND PROMOTION			
3.1. Working in Partnership			
3.1.1	Work in partnership with SNH	Attend 3 Concordat Liaison meetings pa	
		Brief SNH Area Operations Managers on regional CM strategies/operational plans and hold meetings with other SNH area staff twice a year	
3.1.2	Contribute to partnership programmes	Be an active member of SVMS (see 2.2.1)	
		Be an active partner of NNR NAAG	
		Be an active partner of UPAG	
		Contribute to the Countryside Training Network	
		Contribute to the work of the emerging National Parks	
		Work with LBAPs, Record Centres and local naturalist groups – see regional and ranger service work plans	
		Develop active role in Wester Ross and Dumfries & Galloway NSA projects, including appointing the latter's community ranger post	
		Contribute to the work of 7 Deer Management Groups	
		Implement the Concordat between Scottish Seabird Centre, St Abbs Head and St Kilda	
		Continue to work with Regional Environmental Education Fora	
3.1.3	Develop good working links with others	Work with Local Authority departments and ranger services	

		Involve local NTS Members Centres in countryside work, including 2 Friends groups		
<b>3.2 Working with Communities</b>				
3.2.1	Develop & maintain effective relations with local communities	Develop proposals in Ranger Work Plans		
		Offer opportunities for community involvement (see 2.4.1)		
		Develop and deliver agreed outputs from community participation projects at Glencoe, St Abbs and Newhailes and report annually		
		Liaise with community councils		
		Contribute to the work of 5 Mountain Rescue Teams		
<b>3.3 Raising NTS Profile</b>				
3.3.1	Develop a national profile in Countryside Management	Lead in standard setting for upland path management and track removal; contribute to the Upland Path Advisory Group (see 1.4.1)		
		Lead in montane scrub restoration, including via the Montane Scrub Action Group (see 1.4.2)		
		Carry out feasibility study to establish integrated Rural Skills Project in Skye & Lochalsh in 2003/04		
3.3.2	Raise public awareness through events & media	Deliver interpretative and education events (see 2.1)		
		Attend Scottish Wildlife and Countryside Fair, subject to partners review. Attend 5 local shows		
		Contribute c20 articles internally and externally		
		Participate in c10 national conferences		
		Appear monthly on radio/television		
		Rangers services to develop PR strategies with CMs and Marketing Managers		
<b>4. ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES</b>				
<b>4.1 Delivering Countryside Management</b>				
4.1.1	Plan & monitor work	Plan and monitor countryside management activity via:		
		a) National annual monitoring report		
		b) Preparation of regional CM work plan and annual report		
		c) Preparation of ranger service annual work plans, interim and annual reports		

		d) Prepare new 3year CM strategy and work plan in 2004/05, in tandem with the new NTS Corporate Plan		
<b>4.2 Employ and Develop Staff</b>				
4.2.1	Resource ranger service adequately	Employ 5 additional posts identified in national grant and regional CM strategies, to ensure delivery of strategic objectives		
4.2.2	Invest in countryside staff	Develop the team work of regional Countryside Management Teams through at least 2 events/meetings pa		
		Induct new staff, including seasonal rangers		
		Implement annual performance review for all permanent staff		
		Ensure staff achieve 60% of personal development and training targets		
		Identify and develop opportunities for skill sharing and training		
		Hold a Countryside Conference		
<b>4.3 Finances</b>				
4.3.1	Contribute to income generation	Maintain existing levels of funding support from partners, ensuring compliance with grant conditions		
		Develop membership recruitment at countryside properties and through marketing the countryside “brand”		
		Support Sole Trading income generation		
		Develop “Contribute and Conserve” car park charging in a co-ordinated fashion across the Trust		
		Contribute to the work of the Travel Trade/Holidays Dept, eg through Trust cruises and coach tours in Glencoe		
4.3.2	Contribute to sound financial management	Where appropriate, plan, manage and monitor revenue and project budgets to agreed standards		
<b>4.4 Health &amp; Safety and the Environment</b>				
4.4.1	Manage all activity in compliance with statutory and Trust Health & Safety requirements	Develop visitor in the countryside safety principles		
		Ensure Risk Assessments are current and adequate		

		Comply with all AALA and Childrens Act requirements		
		Introduce Disclosure System as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act		
		Report and investigate all accidents and reportable "near misses" and take appropriate follow-up action		
		Review lone working arrangements, and emergency procedures		
4.5 Research				
4.5.1	Contribute to and undertake research	Continue existing research at Ben Lawers, Mar Lodge Estate and Old Wood of Drum		
		Research deer movement in West Affric by 2005		
		Consider developing visitor management guidelines research in 2003/04		

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PJ/CM/CMGen/CMOP 2003-05