

The Trust's Property Management Plan Revision Process

Summary of the feedback received & next steps

Many thanks to all that have taken the time to read, respond and comment on the Trust's draft property management plans. We have endeavoured to acknowledge and reply to all the responses received, and beyond this felt it would be helpful to detail the main points – raised by a number of different responders – that we are intending to incorporate into, and / or adapt the plans in response to.

The summary below does not include all the points specific to individual properties, these will be picked up by the appropriate individual property manager and if appropriate incorporated into our plans. We hope to have the new plans completed and available to view on the website in the next couple of months.

1/ Plan length – We have deliberately chosen to reduce the length of the plans, driven principally by the desire to make the plans more user friendly and accessible to a variety of audiences, including; property managers, members of the public, Trust members, partner organisations and others. We still intend to have a good deal of detail in the appendices of the plan, but we are trying to achieve a shorter and more concise format that serves as more of a live management tool and is regularly used and referenced. The revised plans are just for a three-year period, thus again we felt a shorter format more appropriate given this timescale.

2/ Statement of Significance / Vision – A number of people have commented on the relative lightness of this section and the need for a fuller description of the special characteristics of each property, what actions we propose taking in respect of these and how this fits within the Trust's overall strategic objectives. We will therefore be making additions to this section in each plan.

3/ Recreational / Visitor Numbers Pressures / Issues – Several respondents have suggested that further context on this subject would be useful, with recognition of the changing situation over the last five years and the increased pressures, and opportunities, that are now being realised across many parts of the Highlands and Islands, and particularly on some of our properties. Doing so will give greater relevance and context to some of the management actions being proposed in the plans.

4/ Consistency across the plans – Various respondents noted the need for greater consistency across the plans with regards responses / actions in relation to an area of policy and / or management. We shall review all the plans to ensure a consistency of approach throughout.

5/ Explaining acronyms in full – Again, we note this and will address it accordingly.

6/ Lack of numbers / targets – Again, we note this point, have discussed internally and it is something that we'll look to address. We're conscious of the need to and benefits of reporting and recording progress but without making this too heavy an administrative and bureaucratic burden. We also recognise that some of our objectives are more qualitative in nature and thus harder to measure but will consider ways in which we can capture these equally important outcomes.

7/ Carbon Footprint – Several respondents have asked how the Trust will both measure and reduce its own operational footprint. This is an extremely important exercise that the Trust are embarking upon organisation wide. The results of this will be available later in the year, meanwhile all the property management plans will include measures to help reduce our operational carbon footprint.

8/ Land Use Response to the climate emergency – The Trust is also considering how best its actions and land use / management practices can contribute towards meeting the challenges of reducing carbon emissions and mitigating against the anticipated impact and effects of climate change. Much of the work and ethos of what we already do does address this, but we will also actively explore specific projects such as woodland creation and peatland restoration which would produce direct positive impacts.

The remaining property plans will be being updated, with drafts available on the website again for comment, over the next few months. So please keep an eye out for these, your feedback is much appreciated.

Any further comments or questions please do contact the Trust's Land Operations Manager;
richard.williams@johnmuirtrust.org

April 2020.