



Title: Beyond Reroute – NatureScot's Youth engagement action plan

Date: August 2020

Purpose:	Information
How does this link with our corporate priorities of improving biodiversity or delivering nature-based solutions to climate change	Young People are a key stakeholder in realising a nature-rich future and the actions proposed in this report will enable us to further embed engagement and co-design with young people across all our work to improve biodiversity and deliver nature based solutions to climate change.
Summary:	<p>At its meeting in May, the Board considered two papers on young people – the first drew on the final phase of the NatureScot -YoungScot partnership and contained proposals for the better integration of young people in the work of NatureScot from strategic decision making to operational delivery. A complementary set of recommendations were also made to the Board by NatureScot's Young Employee Panel. In discussing this work, the Board of NatureScot confirmed the on-going and strong commitment to engaging young people in NatureScot's work and sought a clear set of strategic actions required in order to deliver this.</p> <p>A Board subgroup (Angus Campbell, Ian Gillies, Kate and Susan Murray) were actioned to work with staff to oversee the finalisation of an action plan, which developed the recommendations considered by the Board in May into a single suite of NatureScot actions needed to drive this activity forward. The finalised plan presented in Annex B. On the sub-group's advice, a separate statement presented in Annex A has also been prepared to help communicate our commitment to this work within NatureScot. Both the action plan and statement have been endorsed by the sub-group.</p> <p>While this plan focuses on young people, the approaches it proposes to stronger engagement and empowerment are relevant to other stakeholder groups, therefore helping our work to reach and engage a more diverse range of people from all backgrounds and generations.</p>
Recommendations:	Board are note the finalised action plan and accompanying statement of intent.
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Appendices:	Appendix A – Statement of intent Appendix B - Action Plan

Appendix A

Draft Statement of intent

I am pleased to announce that the Board and Senior Leadership Team have now approved NatureScot's action plan for engaging young people in our work. The plan is ambitious and wide ranging, putting young people at the heart of what we do. The approaches it proposes for stronger engagement and empowerment are also relevant to other stakeholder groups, therefore helping our work to reach and engage a more diverse range of people from all backgrounds and generations.

Young people are one of our key stakeholders in realising a nature rich future. As I reflected in the Peter Wilson Lecture at the Royal Society of Edinburgh last year, a stronger youth voice is critical across all our work to improve biodiversity loss and deliver the nature-based solutions we need to address climate change. The next generation have always challenged the prevailing consensus. They are both the current and future guardians of our environment. We need to involve them more in our work.

Young people have been impacted particularly hard by the pandemic, and the action plan sets out concrete action to increase opportunities for employment both in our workforce and in the developing proposals for nature-based jobs more generally as part of the green recovery we now need. Our work on education, skills and training is also important in developing the values and knowledge of young people so that they can champion the cause for Nature in whatever profession they do.

We have come a long way in engaging young people in our work and are gaining a reputation within the sector for leadership on this issue. We now want to build on this by developing a strong culture of co-production with young people at the heart of what we do. The action plan reflects the level of ambition we need as an organisation and the commitment we have from the Board and Senior Leadership to it. The benefits are significant in terms of NatureScot capitalising on the skills, views, value and futureproofing that young people across Scotland can bring to our business model, corporate strategy and rebranding over the next 12 months.

Please read and think about how this action plan will impact on the work of your Activity or Area Team, and consider what you can personally do to support its successful implementation.

Francesca Osowska

NatureScot

Appendix B – Beyond Reroute – NatureScot’s Youth engagement action plan

	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	OUTPUTS	LEAD/CONTRIBUTING TEAMS	TIMESCALE
STRATEGIC	1. Embed our commitment to engage and empowering young people through our strategic plans and processes	a) Board (and sub group) to oversee development and progress of action plan.	Draft action plan developed and shared with sub-group. Finalised action plan August.	P&P/ POD/ YEP P&P/ Subgroup	July 2020 Aug 2020
		b) SLT to agree a statement to accompany the action plan signalling our commitment to engaging young people more effectively in all work.	Agreed statement to go with action plan to Board for Information. Promotion of statement and action plan as part of our equalities agenda.	P&P/ POD Lead Director/ P&P	August 2020 September 2020
		c) New organisational strategies and plans such as rebranding, the new corporate strategy, green recovery and SBS demonstrate effective engagement and empowerment of young people.	SLT paper on Youth Employment & Skills developed to inform green recovery proposals Use of co-design approaches in the development of the new corporate strategy, and future key organisational strategies and plans.	POD, NRM POD/ PO/SLT/ B&G/ Comms P&P/ EO	Q2 2020 Q3 2020 (and ongoing)
		d) Regularly review and evaluate action plan to ensure it is successful.	Review quarterly and report on progress to the Board in 12 months.	P&P/ POD/ Board subgroup	Q3 2021
STRATEGIC	2. Explore and develop networks and panels to engage young people more effectively in our work.	a) Pilot a flexible approach to engaging young people including existing networks and bespoke panels depending on the scale and significance of the topic.	Gain insight into existing networks and panels and develop flexible approach paper for SLT.	P&P/ POD	Q4 2020
		b) Work with EELG and other partner networks to identify youth committees and panels which use strong co- design approach.	Networks using strong co –design identified and engaged.	P&P with assistance from POD/ NatureScot lead officers	Q2 2020

		c) Develop the role and capacity of the YEP to develop relationships and work with youth committees, panel and other networks.	YEP function expanded to engage with external YP panels and committees.	YEP supported by POD/ P&P	Q3 2020
STRATEGIC	3. Increase opportunities for young people to be better represented at the various levels of our decision making.	a) Work with SG to ensure that future Board appointments are accessible and actively promoted to young people via YoungScot and other relevant networks.	Recruitment to posts to include skills requirements and accessible language to encourage young(er) applicants, and promotional information to be in an accessible format advertised through relevant networks. Identify when future opportunities will arise and develop promotional info in advance.	EO lead with input from YEP/ POD Opportunities through networks, P&P on promotion	For next Board appointment opportunity (2021)
		b) Identify and review relevant experience from other organisations and sectors.	Develop recommendations paper for further consideration by SLT and Environment & Economy Leaders Group (EELG).	P&P and POD/ YEP	Q4 2021
		c) Assess other NatureScot governance structures to see which offer the most effective route to better engage young people in them e.g., SLT, Resourcing Group, ARC, certain Programme Boards etc.	As above, develop recommendations paper for further consideration by SLT and EELG.	P&P/ POD/ YEP	Q4 2021
STRATEGIC	4. Provide leadership for our sector through sharing knowledge, skills and experience in engaging young people	a) Establish new contacts and networks to facilitate sector wide conversations and learning and skills sharing, looking at opportunities for co-support and establishing more creative ways of working across the sector.	Connect external partners with established youth networks and committees. Organise a SGP-style event to share experiences, skills and co- support opportunities.	P&P supported by Comms/ YEP/ POD/ and Board members	Q3 2020 Q4 2021

			Sponsor relevant awards		On-going
	b) Facilitate a broad, cross-sectoral approach to youth employment and training as part of the Green Recovery proposals for green skills and jobs needed to deliver net zero ambitions alongside inclusive economic growth and well-being.	<p>Ensure our Green Finance actions and developing Green Recovery proposals connect to wider opportunities for enhancing nature-based employment and skills.</p> <p>Develop an Influencing Plan to engage strategic stakeholders on our ambitions for youth employment in the environment sector.</p> <p>Commission work to identify a mechanism to measure skills gaps within NatureScot’s remit.</p>	<p>Director of Sustainable Growth/ POD/P&P</p> <p>POD supported by business leads, Comms, advised by young people.</p> <p>NRM supported by POD and P&P</p>	<p>Q3 2020</p> <p>Q4 2021</p> <p>Q2 2020</p>	
OPERATIONAL	1. Support all Activity and Area Teams to realise opportunities for engaging young people in their work through co-design and co-production	a) Ensure that each activity and area team has identified in their individual plans at least one area of their work where there is time, resources and capacity to facilitate meaningful co-design and co-production.	<p>Lead session at outcomes groups/ELT on benefits of engaging young people.</p> <p>Promote implementation of relevant Reroute recommendations in the work of each activity</p> <p>Work with each activity and area team to identify relevant areas of work for engaging young people, including</p>	<p>P&P/ POD</p> <p>P&P</p> <p>P&P</p>	<p>Q4 2021</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Q4 2021</p>

			opportunities for intergenerational engagement.		
		b) Make information, research and statistics more accessible for young people and a lay audience by co-designing how this information is communicated.	Process for identifying most relevant and co-designing resources developed and communications approach agreed.	B&G/ P&P/ Comms	Q1 2021
OPERATIONAL	5. Increase and share staff's skills, experience and knowledge of effectively engaging young people through co-design and co-production.	a) Develop and promote good practice in co-design and co-production work showing how engaging young people's views and experiences has worked in practice.	Develop good practice guidance, case studies, blogs, webinars, and workshops on benefits of a co-design approach with young people	EO/ P&P/ POD	Ongoing
		b) Promote experience and skills of staff who can help facilitate engagement, co-design and co-production with young people across different teams.	Explore through promotion of case studies, workshops and online tools such as Trello.	P&P/ All teams	Ongoing
		c) Upskill a staff member in each activity for engaging with young people and set up network to share skills. Look at potential of current champions to see if role can be incorporated into these.	Review ways in which staff members can be upskilled through OD framework/leadership programme.	POD/ P&P	Q2 2021
OPERATIONAL	6. Review and develop the use of our funding to encourage greater engagement from young people.	a) Share the learning from Future Routes Fund (FRF) within NatureScot and partner organisations.	Promote benefits and learning from FRF approach and promote with relevant partners, through blog/video/storymap.	P&P/ Young Scot	Q3 2020
		b) Use lessons learnt to develop funds administered by NatureScot to be more accessible by young people.	Review and simplify process for round 3 of FRF and promote. Review other NatureScot funds to see if they can be made more accessible.	P&P/ FPP	Q1 2021

		c) Discuss with finance/ external funding team option of including criteria which require projects to include meaningful engagement with young people.	Develop criteria and discuss with Finance.	P&P/ FPP	Q3 2020
OPERATIONAL	7. Review and improve operational procedures to better accommodate the needs of young people.	a) Work with young people to identify the type and style of engagement they would like with NatureScot and build into any future work.	Work with networks to identify best communication and engagement methods.	P&P/ YEP/ comms	Q4 2020
		b) Ensure there are no unconscious barriers when involving and engaging young people in NatureScot work.	Influence EqIA and prepare a good practice briefing note including issues around format and timing of meetings.	P&P/ POD	Q2 2020
		c) Review and develop processes and procedures for working with young people and other protect characteristics in NatureScot to make sure we are using best practice which is clear and concise and not a barrier to young people's involvement. E.g. Child protection policies, volunteering policies, equalities policy.	POD to review all policies as part of the EqIA process. Young person represented on the Equalities Team.	POD/ equalities team	Q4 2020
OPERATIONAL	8. Implement a unified approach to improve the internal employment and training of young people.	a) Make NatureScot a more accessible and open employer for young people by following YEP's recommendations and key suggestions from young people.	Implementation of YEP recommendations (as approved by the Board in May 2020). Develop an Influencing Plan to support youth employment ambitions in relation to delivering nature based solutions.	POD advised by YEP Comms supported by business leads/ POD	2020-2021
		b) Develop and implement a plan to increase the number of internal young	Identify paybill savings at end Q1, and agree scale of investment available for	POD/ Resourcing Group/ Vacancy Panel	Q3 2020

		<p>employees to meet and maintain SG target levels.</p>	<p>apprenticeships/ Operational Fixed Term Appointments.</p> <p>A future investment plan developed as integral to delivery of the new Corporate Plan 2022-26.</p>	<p>Resourcing Group / POD</p>	<p>Q4 2020</p>
		<p>c) Re-develop NatureScot's mentoring scheme to highlight the opportunity for mutual learning and skill sharing between different aged employees.</p>	<p>As part of talent management review, review mentoring scheme to reflect intergenerational learning opportunities both within and outwith the organisation.</p>	<p>POD advised by YEP/ ALS on older employees</p>	<p>Q3 2020</p>