



NatureScot
NàdarAlba

Scotland's Nature Agency
Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba

Accompanying reports

**An overview of
correspondence
received via the
Reporter email inbox**

Report number 5(b)

May 2025

A report on the proposal for a national park in southwest Scotland

Introduction

This is one of 21 reports that accompany the advice provided by NatureScot as Reporter for a proposed new National Park in southwest Scotland. The paper outlines the work undertaken to fulfil Scottish Government's commissioning of NatureScot for this task.

NatureScot set-up a dedicated email address for queries and other issues raised by correspondents on 7 August 2024: nationalparkreporter@nature.scot. This was operated by a small number of staff.

It was checked twice daily, with the aim of responding where needed within ten working days. This was until the conclusion of the public consultation in mid-February 2025. Thereafter, as staff focussed on analysing survey responses, monitoring was reduced to twice weekly. At the same time, the target time for issuing responses was extended from ten to fifteen working days. While most responses were issued within the intended period, some exceeded it. These generally involved more complex enquiries requiring additional detail.

430 emails were received from 244 individuals. There were also emails exchanged to arrange meetings.

Topics raised included queries about the consultation process, points about the region (e.g. infrastructure, visitors), expressing an opinion on the principle of a new National Park in the southwest, and requesting a vote on the issue. Many emails raised more than one issue.

In more detail:

- Most emails received (321, or 75%) included questions about the consultation process.
- The next most frequently raised issues related to infrastructure, investment, visitors etc. These totalled 275 emails, or 64%.
- There were 24 emails, or 5%, that raised questions or issues on details about the Park, e.g. planning.
- Several noted opposition or support for the proposed new National Park. Of those who expressed an opinion, 41 opposed, 25 supported and 3 were undecided.
- There were 19 emails (4.5%) requesting a vote on the proposal.

For efficiency, standard responses were used as the core for replies where relevant. Samples of these are included in Annex A. Tailored responses were written for non-standard queries.

We consider providing the email address for correspondence was an essential part of the service required during the Reporter phase.

Annex A

Selection of standard email responses for requests for information

During the Engagement Period:

Thank you for your email. Your [position on] the creation of a National Park in Galloway has been noted.

The Minister's announcement launched the process to develop details on what a Galloway National Park might entail. It is worth emphasising that very little has been decided at this point and the decision whether or not to designate this area as National Park has yet to be taken by Scottish Ministers.

NatureScot has been appointed "Reporter" to provide advice to inform this decision. We have published a [Reporter Plan](#) that provides more details. As well as working-up options for the area that might be covered (which could be larger or smaller from that proposed by the nominating groups), it will also look at powers and functions (e.g. planning, access) and governance (e.g. size of the park Board).

An integral part of the Reporting work is extensive opportunities for everyone to have their say. We have set up an online [information hub](#), via our website, and there will be meetings and events arranged with local community groups and other stakeholders. This will enable us to draw up more detailed proposals which will then be consulted on through a full public consultation of at least twelve weeks from November 2024 to January 2025.

Our advice to Ministers will include a report on views expressed during the consultation itself and in the run-up to it. Ministers will then decide whether to proceed or not to the next stage of preparing a draft Designation Order, which itself is consulted on.

I hope this explanation of the process helps. More information is available on our National Park [web pages](#).

During the Consultation period:

Thank you for taking the time to get in touch with your views.

NatureScot's role is as Reporter, we record people's views and offer them the opportunity to engage with the process. The Consultation has started, and you have the opportunity to formally record your views on:

- if the area should be given National Park status,
- what geographical area it should include,
- what form its governance should take (e.g. number of board members),
- what powers it should have (e.g. planning, access),
- its likely structure and operation

As mentioned, all stakeholders have the opportunity to formally record their views, through the Consultation survey. After the 12-week (now extended until 14th February 2025) period has ended, all views will be taken into consideration.

For further details please go to the [Information Hub](#) with further information available at [A Proposed New National Park in Scotland - Have Your Say](#).

Queries over event details

Thank you for your email.

Events announced so far are **formal consultation events**, facilitated by independent consultants on behalf of NatureScot, and all attendees will be supported to feel free to share their thoughts and opinions in a safe environment. There will be sessions within each event asking for responses on different topics, and interactive boards and spaces, as well as opportunities to leave anonymous feedback, and to complete a consultation leaflet in writing. The locations and times of further formal consultation events will be announced between November and January.

Drop-in surgeries, hosted by NatureScot, will also be announced between November and January, with the locations and times publicised via the [NatureScot website](#) and [the Hub](#) in due course. These will be informal sessions aimed at individuals with questions about the consultation. Completed surveys can also be left with us at these events.

Response to request for No option

Thank you for raising your concern.

The purpose of the consultation is twofold.

Responses to Q1 and 2 of both surveys allow us to gauge the level of support for or opposition to the proposed National Park and alternatives too it. Q1 provides more information for the analysis than a straight yes/no formulation because it includes the strength of the opinion on the issue.

Responses to the rest of the questions in the surveys allow us to gather views on the possible arrangements for the proposed National Park in terms of area, powers and functions, governance and name.

If you have indicated opposition to the proposed National Park in Q1, we will assume in our analysis that this position applies to all the other questions unless you indicate otherwise.

Both strands of the consultation will inform our advice to Ministers.

Response to emails expressing support or oppose:

Thank you for your email and I have recorded your views. I would encourage you to access one of the surveys to register your opposition.

NatureScot's role is as Reporter, we record people's views and offer them the opportunity to engage with the process. The Consultation has started and all stakeholders have the opportunity to formally record their views, through the Consultation survey. After the 12-week (now extended until 14th February 2025) period has ended, all views will be taken into consideration.

For further details please go to the [Information Hub](#) with further information available at A Proposed New National Park in Scotland - Have Your Say.

NatureScot
Great Glen House
Leachkin Road
Inverness, IV3 8NW

www.nature.scot

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