Improving Public Access

This is an old version of the page

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Introduction

The Improving Public Access option will open for applications from 28 February 2022 to 29th April 2022.

The 2022 round will **NOT** include the semi-bound path option and all applicants are reminded that they MUST have a **statement from their respective planning authority** stating whether planning permission is required or not for the proposed path project and this must be uploaded as a supporting document on or before 29th April 2022 for the application to be eligible for further assessment.

Further improvements will be made to the 2022 scheme guidance, capital items requirements and the scoring criteria will be adjusted to put more emphasis on the connectivity and accessibility of paths.

Further detail will be published during January 2022.

Applications for Improving Public Access must be made separately to other applications for the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme as it has its own separate assessment process.

The creation of new paths or upgrade of existing paths can bring many benefits:

- Improved access to the countryside, nature and outdoor spaces helps improve people's health and well-being, both physically and mentally as well as bringing social benefits.
- They can contribute to tourism related economic growth through the provision of leisure and recreational opportunities and experiences.
- They can provide for active travel journeys encouraging walking, cycling, riding and wheeling as an alternative to the car.
- They can help land managers with the management of public access on a working estate, farm, croft etc. and can open up economic opportunities linked to diversification.

The Improving Public Access option can be summarised as: ·

- Select from a menu of path infrastructure capital items, these have a fixed payment rate linked directly to meeting each capital items specification and requirements.
- Design your path, selecting from the menu of capital items, and prepare an accurate map showing the location of each capital item.
- Complete the schedule of works listing the capital items chosen, quantity and location.
- NatureScot case officers will check for eligibility and then assess all applications and make a site visit
- If successful you must build the path and infrastructure exactly as stated in the contract and in the capital items specification and requirements document. (note that a photographic record is required for most capital items).
- Once built you can claim for payment, the path may be inspected and if all is good payment is made.

Improving Public Access (IPA) projects may be small scale, to enhance a single path or they may tackle larger network improvements or long distance paths.

Aim

The aim of the Improving Public Access item is to support new and upgraded paths for public use, providing:
- improved links and connectivity
- improved path conditions
- accessible paths for all

These new and improved paths will create a path resource that encourages outdoor access for a diverse range of users, and helps to integrate responsible access and recreational use with good land management.

Eligible applicants

This item is open to local authorities and administrations, public bodies, community associations, public-private partnerships, NGOs, private companies, organisations in charge of tourist and recreational development, as well as individual farmers, groups of farmers, crofters and other land managers.

Spatial targeting

This item is available across all rural areas of Scotland, which is defined as land other than settlements with a population of over 3000.

For more details see **How to Apply for IPA**

Recent changes

Section	Change
Whole page	Updated for 2022 round.

Previous versions

Previous versions of this page

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