



Scotland's Open Government Action Plan 2021-25

March 2022





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This summary document is written in Plain English to make it more accessible. It has been edited and approved by the Plain English Campaign.

Foreword

As co-chairs of Scotland's Open Government Partnership, we are pleased to publish our third National Action Plan (NAP). This NAP builds on the progress made through Scotland's first and second NAPs, and sets out our most ambitious Commitments yet. This reflects our belief that Open Government plays a key role in creating an open, transparent and accountable government; strengthening public trust in our institutions, producing better public service outcomes, and a better quality of life for everyone.

We welcome the continued focus on Financial Transparency, Participation and Open Data. We have made significant progress in these areas through previous NAPs, but recognise there is more to do – we are confident that these Commitments will continue to drive improvement. Each of these elements are crucial to ensuring that decision making is open and accessible to the people of Scotland; that we recognise the value of, listen to, and act on perspectives outside of government; and that we enable meaningful public scrutiny.

Tackling the climate emergency and improving Health and Social Care are huge challenges faced by government. We believe that working in the open, in partnership with civil society and the people of Scotland, will improve outcomes and build public trust for these programmes of work. We are therefore delighted to include Commitments on these issues in this plan.

We are also delighted that these commitments present an opportunity for the Open Government Network to expand, collaborating with and learning from the wide range of stakeholders involved in these areas.

Scottish Government and COSLA officials, civil society partners and people across Scotland have contributed to the development of this plan. Retaining this spirit of collaboration and partnership working throughout the delivery of this NAP will be crucial to its success, and we look forward to developing these relationships across the next four years.



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1. What is Open Government?



When we talk about opening up government, we mean making governments and decision makers more accessible, more transparent, and more able to involve the people they serve.

An Open Government:

- gives the public information about the decisions it makes;
- supports people to understand and influence those decisions; and
- values and encourages accountability (responsibility for those decisions).

Open governments also explore how they can use technology to support how they work and how they serve people. An Open Government is one which values openness, accountability, transparency and involving people. This action plan includes some ambitious commitments that will make real progress towards these goals.

We have produced this action plan in line with the requirements of Scotland's membership of the

Open Government Partnership, an international collaboration of governments across the world committed to openness, transparency and public involvement. The partnership ensures that action plans are independently monitored on how well they are delivered. These findings are published in a report so everyone can see what's working and what's not, and progress can be measured according to the same criteria the world over.

What does it mean to be a member of the Open Government Partnership?

Governments that are members of the partnership must work together with civil society and communities to develop and deliver an action plan. Commitments in these plans should contain real actions that can lead to change and, ultimately, improve people's lives. Being a member of this large international partnership means Scotland is connected to other people across the world, inside governments and across communities. These people are all trying to change the way governments work, so we can learn from each other and share our experience.

Open Government and freedom of information

To become a member of the Open Government Partnership, countries need to have laws in place that protect this important right to information. But Open Government isn't just about freedom of information. An Open Government is one which gives you information about the decisions it makes, supports you to understand and influence those decisions, and encourages and enables you to hold the government to account. The purpose of opening up government is to rebuild trust with the people it serves, and to involve people meaningfully in the decisions that shape the world around them.

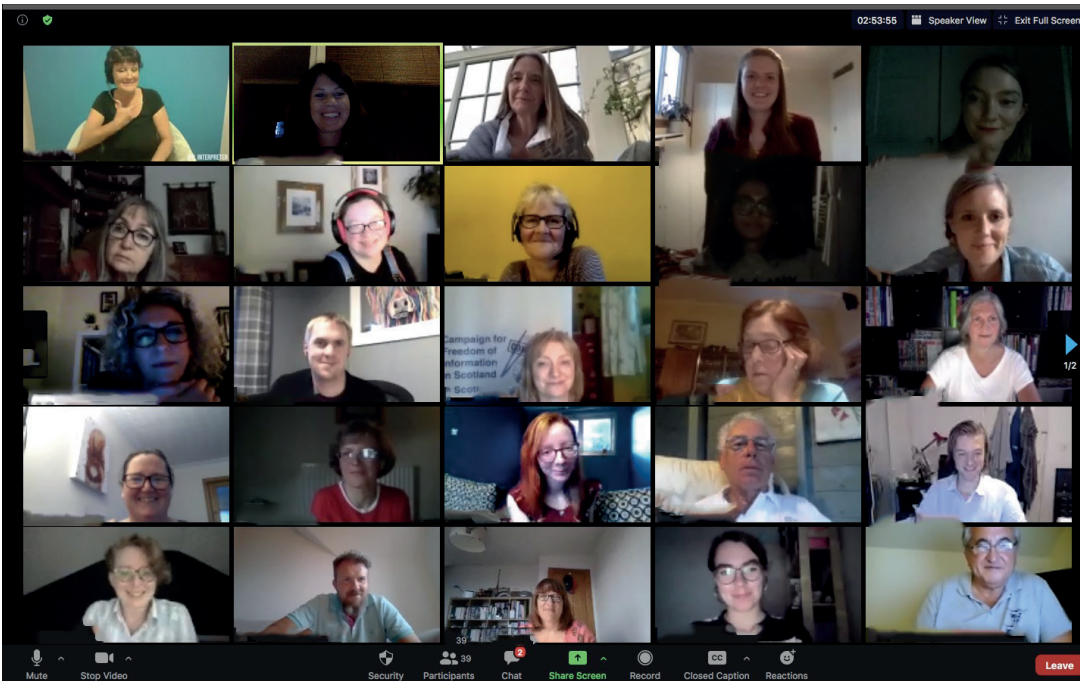
What is the Open Government Network?

Scotland's Open Government Network is a group of active and interested people and organisations. They are committed to making government at all levels work better for people in Scotland through becoming more transparent and accountable and encouraging public involvement. Scotland has had a small network of individuals and organisations interested in Open Government for several years. The network serves as an "engine" for new ideas and a voice to join with and challenge government.

Anyone with an interest can join the network. Visit the [Open Government Network website](#) to become a member. It's free and you can be involved as much or as little as you like.



2. How Scotland's Action Plan 2021-25 was collaboratively developed



A screenshot of participants in the Participation online workshop, summer 2021

What is an Action Plan?

An Action Plan is a collection of all the different ideas that we and our partners are going to put into practice over the next two years. It's a list of all the improvements and changes that we want to make, why these are important, who we will work with to deliver them, and when we will do this by.

Where did the ideas in this Action Plan come from?

The ideas in this Action Plan came from several places. Primarily the ideas came from the public: we first ran an online dialogue¹ to crowdsource ideas, and online public workshops were then held during summer 2021². Both of these identified a number of priorities. Members of the Open Government Steering Group, public-service regulators, academics, and our policy teams then worked with civil society to develop Commitments that respond to these priorities.

The co-creation of this action plan took place entirely online, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Open Government Steering Group, made up of 50% government officials and 50% civil society representatives, has overseen this process and has taken decisions as a group.

Conversation with the public around the plan was initiated through the Scottish Government's online ideation/crowdsourcing platform, "Dialogue". This gave people the chance to

¹ Help us change the ways Scottish Government works — Scottish Government Dialogue (ideas.gov.scot)

² Scotland Open Government National Action Plan 2021 (demsoc.org)



A screenshot of participants in the Health and Social Care online workshop, summer 2021

respond to and share ideas relating to five themes which had been identified as potential key areas for the Action Plan's focus. These themes were based on an evidence review of recent public engagements, such as the Citizens' Assembly of Scotland and the Climate Assembly. This opportunity was advertised on Twitter, on Scotland's civil society Network Forum, and shared with groups by email.

Following this crowdsourcing exercise, Democratic Society (DemSoc) was contracted to deliver a series of public workshops. Five workshops explored each of the five themes identified as potential area of focus for the Action Plan. A sixth workshop was aimed specifically at young people, and asked for their views and priorities across all five themes. Reports from each of these workshops were published, and formed the basis for the five Commitment themes that now feature in the Action Plan. Around these themes, Commitment leads from relevant SG policy teams and civil society were identified and began a process of collaboration.

Commitment leads convened working groups to design each Commitment, involving relevant individuals from government, local authorities, other public bodies, and civil society. The Open Government Team supported these working groups to develop collaborative ways of working, to identify problems and solutions around which they could build their Commitments.

Two online roundtable discussions were also held to consider the strategic direction for Open Government in Scotland. The first of these sessions focused on connections between Open Government and the National Performance Framework (NPF). The second session focused on how the Open Government Action Plan could support a human rights-based approach in Scotland. Relevant civil society stakeholders were directly invited to each of these events, with civil society partners helping to identify invitees. The outputs from these have informed Commitments, and the wider Action Plan.

What measures did we take to ensure diversity of representation (including vulnerable or marginalized populations) in these spaces?

Those who signed up for the online workshops were asked their age group, ethnicity, gender, level of knowledge about Open Government, and what sector they worked or studied in. This information was monitored, and additional measures were taken to publicise the event to under-represented groups, primarily through representative organisations.

The majority of people who participated in the spaces provided for open dialogue – the Dialogue platform, and the public workshops – did so as individuals.

Groups which were represented through the roundtables and working groups included:

- Strategic Development Goals Scottish Network
- Human rights organisations
- Disabled people's organisations
- Universities
- Racial equality organisations
- LGBT organisations
- Democracy organisations
- Carers organisations

Thirty groups participated in these spaces. Six public-facing meetings were held in the co-creation process.



3. Scotland's Open Government achievements and vision

What is the long-term vision for Open Government in Scotland?

Scotland's Open Government partners aspire for our country to be world-leading in our approach to transparent and accountable governance. We believe that an open approach is required to strengthen public trust in our institutions, produce better public service outcomes and a better quality of life for people in Scotland.

The importance of trust in government has been highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Its profound and uneven impact has had wide-ranging and acute effects on everyone.

We recognise that considering and applying Open Government values to government planning and work helps to focus thinking on **how** Scotland is governed, and that this can positively affect the development and maintenance of trust across a range of different social groups.

Throughout the co-creation process, stakeholders and participants have told us that their priority is implementing existing strategies and delivering on current commitments, rather than creating new initiatives. Using Open Government principles to do this in a transparent, accountable and participatory way will be a central theme of this Action Plan's long-term vision for Open Government.

This includes supporting the delivery of commitments to human rights, including those of children and young people, by seeking to put people at the heart of government reforms; by mainstreaming equalities and empowering communities. Open Government values will be applied to the Scottish Government's **manifesto commitments** and **Programme for Government commitments**, to Covid-19 Recovery, Health and Social Care reforms, to tackling the climate emergency, and to use Participation, digital technology and data to improve outcomes.

What have we achieved so far?

Scotland has delivered two National Action Plans (NAPs) since 2015. The first NAP delivered major advances in the roll-out of Participatory Budgeting (PB) in Scotland, including agreement to the target of at least 1% of local authority budgets being subject to PB. It also initiated a strand of work around financial transparency and performance measurement, aligning Scotland's National Performance Framework (NPF) with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and including openness and transparency as NPF values. Scotland's first open contracting strategy was published, and additional financial information was published throughout 2017.

Scotland's second NAP built on the successes of the first, developing the financial transparency theme further. This included publishing Scottish Government contract documentation and procurement-related spend, embedding Open Government principles in the new National Investment Bank, and making the budget easier to understand. This NAP also delivered improved access to information, through publishing all datasets underpinning the NPF in open data format and increasing the number of datasets available for small areas. During the pandemic, Covid-19 management information has been published regularly online, enabling the development of interactive data dashboards.

In addition, Scotland has tested a range of methods to involve the public in decision making, including two Citizens' Assemblies, an online platform to support participatory budgeting, crowdsourcing platform and the Scottish Approach to Service Design. The learning gained through these activities was fed into the development of a Participation Framework, which is designed to guide good practice across government in open policy-making and is now being rolled out and will be improved as we learn.

Challenges and areas for improvement

During the last year, the profound and uneven impact on society, rights and freedoms caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has brought into focus the need to ensure people in Scotland can participate in the decisions that affect them, as individuals and in communities.

As we emerge from the pandemic, Scottish Government is committed to focusing on Covid Recovery to tackle the wide range of impacts experienced. This will include a focus on human rights, equality, inclusion and participatory democracy, to allocate resources and deliver Covid Recovery in an open, accountable and person-centred way that builds and maintains trust. This partnership believes that applying Open Government principles to these priorities can support and strengthen government action.

The urgent need for action to address the climate emergency is also a priority. To achieve the system-wide transformation needed to become a net zero nation, it is crucial that stakeholders, communities, and people are aware of the global climate emergency and Scottish Government climate change policy, that everyone understands how it relates to their lives, and everyone is able to participate in its delivery. Participation is key to ensuring Just Transition, that everyone has bought in to Scotland's climate ambitions and everyone is part of the collective effort required.

This Action Plan focuses on promoting Open Government values across three policy areas which the co-creation process identified as priorities for civil society and government: Financial Transparency, Climate Change, and Health and Social Care. A further two Commitments will enable Open Government work across these policy areas and wider Scottish Government work effectively and ethically: Participation, and, Data and Digital.



These enabling Commitments provide important routes to support work embedding inclusion and human rights in how government works in Scotland. This will be supported by ensuring that Open Government principles guide the review of **Scotland's National Performance Framework**, and that Scotland is measuring what matters.

Medium-term Open Government goals that we want to achieve

In the medium term, the Action Plan focuses on practical steps that begin a process of meaningfully embedding Open Government principles of transparency and accountability, through the Commitment on financial transparency; on enabling engagement and transparency through open data; and on participation across the work of government to improve democratic engagement and access to decision making, particularly in relation to Climate Change, and Health and Social Care.

This will be achieved by focusing activity on the problems we are facing and the priorities initially identified. Milestones outlined at the time of this Action Plan's publication are initial. Into the medium and longer term, new milestones will be collaboratively developed in an iterative and responsive way, to reflect emerging priorities.

Including in this plan Commitments on Climate Change, and on Health and Social Care, provides an opportunity for Open Government values to directly impact the delivery of some of the Scottish Government's most high-profile and wide-ranging strategies, improving accountability and participation in these areas.

The Commitment on financial transparency looks to provide better access to fiscal data and information, increasing the accessibility, usability and presentation of information about the public finances, to enable better understanding and scrutiny for a wide range of users, including the public.

The two enabling Commitments (Participation, and Data and Digital), are vital to supporting the other Commitments in the plan and wider Covid Recovery work to transform government.

How does this Action Plan help achieve the Scottish Government's overall policy goals?

The Scottish Government is committed to human rights and taking a person-centred approach to Covid-19 recovery. This Action Plan enables us to incorporate priorities for democratic reforms that we have heard from the public and civil society across financial transparency, Climate Change, and Health and Social Care reforms, and to do so in a way that applies Open Government principles through the use of high-quality participation, and data and technology.



4. Commitments

This section outlines what we plan to do under each of the five Open Government Commitments in our Action Plan.

On our website you can find more detail on milestones that each of these Commitments have set out to track their progress. The first milestones are initial and these will be updated throughout the course of the Action Plan, so please periodically check to see how work is developing.

Fiscal Openness and Transparency

Commitment Title	<p>Fiscal Openness and Transparency – improving the accessibility and usability of our data and information about the public finances.</p> <p>We will improve the accessibility and usability of our data and information about public finances, to enable better understanding and scrutiny for a wide range of users, including citizens. This means continuously working to improve how open and transparent we are in Scotland, benchmarked alongside other countries and approaches, about the status, processes, and direction of our public finances.</p>
Timeframe	2021-25
Lead Implementing Directorate	Scottish Exchequer (performance, tax, budget and public spending and infrastructure), Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate, Financial Management
Civil Society Stakeholders	<p>Open Government Partnership (lead non-government stakeholder)</p> <p>Open Data Cooperative</p> <p>Glasgow Caledonian University; Equalities and Budget Advisory Group</p> <p>Scottish human rights Commission</p> <p>Young Scot</p> <p>Infrastructure Transparency Initiative</p> <p>The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland</p> <p>Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations</p>

Commitment Description

Problem

As the process of devolution has progressed, increased fiscal powers have seen the Scottish Government move from a predominantly spending government to one that now raises a significant portion of its own revenue, up to 36% in 2019-20. This means the Scottish Government has more autonomy or choice about the levers it can use to implement economic and social policy decisions to progress the National Outcomes in the National Performance Framework. The additional powers and responsibilities are intended to improve financial accountability and scrutiny; however they have also led to greater complexity.

We are aware from a range of sources and engagement with stakeholders and citizens that there is more government can do to improve the transparency of financial, procurement and performance information. We also know, from our Fiscal Transparency Discovery Report, taken forward as part of our commitment on financial transparency in the previous Action Plan, that the current fiscal information is not easily accessible or presented in a way that meets most users' needs. These challenges include:

- The Scottish Parliament and human rights / equalities organisations have called for improved published fiscal information.
- Open Government stakeholders have called for better information to enable them to “follow the money” from revenue raised to spending choices and outcomes progressed.
- The current presentation of information does not compare well with best practice of other Scottish organisations and key comparators internationally.

Status Quo

In Scotland's previous Action Plans, we made commitments to improve financial and performance transparency, by explaining how Scotland's public finances work, as well improving how we present information we publish.

Our research from the Fiscal Transparency Discovery exercise, has found that the current picture regarding the production, publication and accessibility of fiscal information in Scotland presents a complex landscape with at least 10 separate parts of the Scottish Government and associated public sector organisations who own and publish core fiscal information – in over 40 separate regular outputs and additional ad hoc outputs. There are also a number of external organisations who interpret and publish fiscal information.

The current outputs are fragmented across many websites and are not easily accessible, as content, format and communication are not always consistent and user-centred. In addition there is a limited amount of open data published, with infrequent use of dynamic data visualisations or accessible and short summary documents.

User research has shown that external users are frustrated with scattered information; disjointed timelines, impenetrable nature of the current outputs and processes; inflexible and unusable documents as well as inconsistent data.

User research with external stakeholders, conversations with internal stakeholders, and international research has identified goals and potential benefits of improved government fiscal transparency services and what these services should look like. This sets out a clear ambition but further detailed and technical work is required to map out how to progress this in ways which achieve real change that can be sustained over time.

<p>Action</p>	<p>Our goal is comprehensive, accurate, trustworthy, timely and linked fiscal information that is accessible, usable and understandable to a wide range of users, including citizens, including open fiscal data that people can easily reuse.</p> <p>These goals support collaboration with other publishers and users of fiscal information to achieve joint transparency aims, as well as to improve stakeholder and citizen understanding, engagement and participation on public finances.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmark progress on fiscal openness and transparency. • establish an approach to assess progress of fiscal openness and transparency, moving towards international best practices and transparency and data standards. • improve the accessibility of fiscal information. • implement the Fiscal Transparency Discovery Report recommendations to improve the quality, coverage, presentation and standards of current fiscal data. • deliver a procurement management information platform to improve data standards, demonstrate the impact of public sector procurement on Scotland's economy – identifying opportunities to maximise delivery of outcomes at a local and national level. • improve the transparency around the Scottish Budget, reviewing the accessibility and usability of existing and future information and guidance. • improve engagement and participation. • build on previous engagement and best practice to develop a multi-stakeholder approach to the next Infrastructure Investment Plan. • build on previous engagement, striving for a best practice approach to engagement, ensuring that we use our tax powers in a transparent policy making process.
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<p>How will the commitment contribute to solving the problem described above?</p>	<p>Delivering this commitment will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve public participation in government policy and enhance the approach into how resource allocations are made, providing opportunities for stakeholders and citizens to express their views, leading to more effective policies and improved outcomes. • provide a fuller understanding of how public finances are managed to increase trust in government data, and to enable stakeholders to explore how, where and why decisions are taken. • enhance financial accountability by improving the efficiency with which data is produced and published, enable more effective consultations, and provide information that is more open, accessible, reusable and understandable for a wide range of users. <p>Overall the commitment will improve how the Scottish Government compares with best practice of other Scottish organisations and key international comparators.</p>
<p>What long-term goal as identified in your Open Government Strategy does this commitment relate to?</p>	<p>This commitment will promote fiscal openness and increased public participation in government policy, enabling greater financial transparency and accountability across Scottish Government. This will support the long-term goal of embedding Open Government principles across the work of government.</p>
<p>Primary policy area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiscal Openness • Public Procurement
<p>Primary sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Services (general)
<p>What OGP Value is this commitment relevant to?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Information • Civic Participation • Public Accountability • Technology and Innovation for Transparency and Accountability

Why is this commitment relevant to the value(s) identified above?	<p>Improving the openness and accessibility of the Scottish Government's financial, procurement and performance data and information we will provide comprehensive, accurate, up-to-date and linked fiscal information that can be more readily interpreted and trusted. The information we provide will be open, accessible, reusable and understandable for a wide range of users, including citizens.</p> <p>Improving transparency will provide a solid basis from which citizens, stakeholder groups, think tanks and researchers can explore how, where and why decisions are taken – providing opportunities for stakeholders and citizens to express their views, both through traditional and more modern methods of engagement and participation.</p>
What resources are needed to achieve this commitment?	
Budget	<p>Budget allocation linked to existing priorities, plus an increase in the budget to progress the recommendations of the Fiscal Transparency Discovery Report.</p>
Staff	<p>Existing staff within government, plus additional resource to progress the recommendations of the Fiscal Transparency Discovery Report</p>
Time	<p>Four years</p>
Other resources required	<p>Resources and contributions required to support progress with the overall commitment, including users of fiscal information and other data producers, as well as analysts and subject matter experts.</p>
Are the resources needed to achieve this commitment already secured?	<p>Partially – Fiscal Transparency Programme resources to be secured.</p>
Optional additional information	<p>This commitment will be developed through an iterative process – we have set out activity for Year 1. We will update milestones each year, to reflect on progress and focus on opportunities for further development.</p>

Health and Social Care

Commitment Title	Improving and increasing both service user / participant, and service delivery staff, in the development, design and improvement of health and care services in Scotland.
Timeframe	October 2021 – September 2025
Lead Implementing Directorate	Directorate for Healthcare Quality and Improvement, DG Health and Social Care
Civil Society Stakeholders	<p>Open Government Partnership</p> <p>Scottish Community Development Centre</p> <p>Community Justice Scotland / Shelter / Families Outside</p> <p>Safe Families for Children</p> <p>Barnardo's Scotland</p> <p>Cancer Support Scotland</p> <p>The Pain Association Scotland</p> <p>Parkinsons UK</p> <p>Centrestage (Arts)</p> <p>Epilepsy campaigner/ parent / lived experience.</p>



Commitment Description

Problem

- The current health and care system is not consistently person-centred.
- The development and design of health and social care services are not always co-designed. People are not engaged consistently, and when they are included it is not always early enough in the policy making process to fully influence work.
- People who are using/accessing health and social care systems are not always supported to be able to provide feedback or support development work based on their experiences and in an accessible way which meets their needs.
- People, parents and/or carers are not always regarded and listened to, as experts in their own lives or the lives of those they care for. They can be excluded from involvement under the current systems.
- There are currently few mechanisms for people, parents and/or carers to be able to inform or establish the agenda in terms of health and social care development and design.
- Different sectors (national and local government, NHS, and third sector services) have different priorities, levels of funding, governance requirements and levels of accountability, which can result in disjointed services.
- The current health and social care system often focuses on crisis and urgent care needs rather than prevention and early intervention.
- There can be a considerable difference between policy intentions and delivery of services.



Status Quo

The Scottish Government is taking a proactive approach to hear from and involve people and communities in aspects of the planning, delivery and continuous improvement of services, for example:

- we support NHS Boards to engage with the independent website Care Opinion, where people can share their stories of care in Scotland, good or bad, and engage in constructive dialogue about how services could be improved.
- we fund the 'Our Voice' Citizens' Panel, which enables the voices of people to be heard including how to make communication between services and those that use them more inclusive.
- the Scottish Care Experience Survey Programme provides information on the quality of health and care services from the perspective of those using them.
- the Scottish Government is developing Community Engagement Guidance, recognising the important role that people have in shaping their local services.
- the Independent Review of Adult Care in Scotland stated "we have a duty to co-produce our new system with the people who it is designed to support, both individually and collectively".
- in Scotland's Open Government Action Plan 2018-20 a Participation Framework was created to enable and embed a strong culture and practice of participation across government.

We will build on all of the above work, drawing on lessons from each of piece of work to better embed co-production with people in priority work in health and social care.



<p>Action</p>	<p>As we remobilise the health service and begin to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, person-centred healthcare, and ensuring that the voices of people who use healthcare services are heard and can influence the design and delivery of services, is a priority for the Scottish Government and those who deliver services.</p> <p>Scottish Government will use the Open Government Principles and processes to develop actions that will support the aim of improving person-centred user design and participation in health and social care. This commitment will support developing better systems to involve people in the design and delivery of policy and services that meet their needs.</p> <p>The Scottish Approach to Service Design advises organisations on the importance of service users and delivery staff in the formation of multi-disciplinary design teams. Scottish Government is committed to this approach, ensuring that work on the redesign and recovery of services post-pandemic will make it easier for people to participate in co-designing the services they need and use.</p> <p>The action will aim to embed the principles of co-design in health and social care policy making. Co-design is an approach which involves everyone (e.g. employees, partners, customers, citizens, end users) in the design process to help ensure the end result meets the needs of those involved and is usable. We will seek to empower people to collaboratively design services, based on their lived experiences.</p>
<p>How will the commitment contribute to solving the problem described above?</p>	<p>The commitment will ensure Scottish Government has tested and effective processes for involving people in the co-design of health and care services. Previous work to review existing literature on this topic evidenced the importance of involving communities as equal and reciprocal partners in effecting change. It also highlights the importance of the evaluation of work being participatory. In embedding these principles we will design services that meet the needs of people accessing and working within them.</p> <p>Working with people to co-design services should help ensure people can access the services that they need to access at the right time. It should reduce barriers to people accessing health and care provision. By designing services that work for the people using them and those working in them they should be more efficient, hopefully reducing costs and time. This will also provide a blue print that can be used in wider policy making.</p>

<p>What long-term goal as identified in your Open Government Strategy does this commitment relate to?</p>	<p>This commitment will offer opportunities for embedding person-centred user design and participation in work to improve health and social care provision, aligning with the Open Government principles of innovative participation and engagement. It will support a person-centred approach that is open, transparent and accountable.</p> <p>This will support the long-term goal of embedding Open Government principles across the work of government.</p>
<p>Primary policy area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion
<p>Primary sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Public Services (Health & Social Care)
<p>What OGP Value is this commitment relevant to?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Participation • Public Accountability
<p>Why is this commitment relevant to the value(s) identified above?</p>	<p>The commitment makes clear that the Scottish Government recognises that by including people and supporting accessible participation in the design of services we will better meet the needs of people accessing and working within them. We will ensure a system of accountability is built in to the planned action.</p>
<p>What resources are needed to achieve this commitment?</p>	
<p>Budget</p>	<p>An estimated £400,000 is the initial annual (new) costs for the staffing of a person-centred design team to facilitate and enable this work to be planned and started.</p> <p>Further costs will be identified as work on the commitment progresses.</p>
<p>Staff</p>	<p>Existing staff: Oversight by Director for Healthcare Quality and Improvement</p> <p>Policy contribution from: C2, C1 & B3 on Participation and Community Engagement</p> <p>Office of the Chief Designer planning contribution from: C3 and C2</p> <p>New staff: Policy: C1</p> <p>Service Design team: C3, C2, B3, B2</p>

Time	<p>An initial period of four-to-five months will be needed to hire and on-board staff, establish a work plan and undertake initial engagement with Health and Social care teams working on programmes associated with this work.</p> <p>Over this initial period we will agree how and with what frequency we will bring together the civil society team to support the development of work and agree how progress can be monitored and evaluated.</p>
Other resources required	
Are the resources needed to achieve this commitment already secured?	Yes, resources are agreed for the initial stages and milestones of the commitment. Further resources will need to be identified as work progresses and more detailed plans are made.
Optional additional information	<p>In addition to embedding the principles of co-design we will draw from the below work to further enhance our work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Participation Framework. • Community Engagement Guidance. • the work of the Scottish National Action Plan for human rights. • the PANEL Principles (Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality).



Data and Digital

Commitment Title	Supporting government openness, transparency and empowerment through open data
Timeframe	Start date November 2021, end date December 2025
Lead Implementing Directorate	Digital Directorate
Civil Society Stakeholders	COSLA, Open Data Services Co-operative

Commitment Description

Problem	<p>Scotland's Digital Strategy sets our ambition to be a data-driven nation. We value the transformational role that data can play in increasing transparency, empowering communities, transforming products and services, fuelling innovation and improving outcomes.</p> <p>The pandemic has highlighted the importance of data in saving time, money and lives. Publishing and internal sharing of open data enables efficiency gains, cost savings and service improvement. We want to make more of our data available openly and make public sector data easy to find. People, businesses and developers can use open data to create products for decision making at a variety of levels.</p> <p>The data we publish must be accessible and meet users' needs, provide insight and support decision making. Different audiences have different needs. Our approach must be informed by an understanding of these needs and directed towards supporting outcomes, lessening the burden of data use and reuse.</p> <p>We need to find a way of connecting with users who are not engaged with data, by considering equalities and skills. We recognise the value of supporting other Open Government themes through data; e.g. people being empowered to use data to understand and make decisions to reduce their impact on global warming.</p> <p>The way public services make decisions using data is as important as the data they publish. This includes the use of trustworthy, ethical and inclusive Artificial Intelligence (AI), as outlined in Scotland's AI Strategy.</p>
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Status Quo

Scottish public bodies publish a wide variety of data, much of it in reusable formats. We know that this is highly valued by many users and that we have an engaged and energetic community of users.

We also know that many people cannot find the data they are looking for. In some cases, they do not know what data exists and how the data is defined and described. This means that they cannot easily use and reuse data to help them make informed decisions. We know that to create value for communities and businesses the data must be relatable to create insight, but many may lack the skills and confidence to take action.

We also know that people find some open data platforms difficult to use - their skill level or needs are unmet. We acknowledge that people often cannot adequately access data to inform or answer the questions they have.

Reducing the amount of time people spend trying to find the data will release more time to help answer some of our nation's biggest questions. This will aid decision making on a number of challenges that Scotland is tackling.

There are both varying levels of data maturity and data literacy across organisations who produce data. These differences can create organisational barriers to opening up data.

Many people are unaware of or unclear on the use of AI in the Scottish public sector. Developing an AI algorithm register will allow people to understand and influence public sector applications of AI, and help earn their trust, which is essential to the delivery of Scotland's AI strategy.



<p>Action</p>	<p>Over the four years of the plan, we'll apply an enabling methodology to develop open data infrastructure and share examples of the value generated from use cases across a series of thematic areas to support plan commitments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery – of current open data landscape and standards; learn from other administrations. • User needs – stakeholder identification, develop communications channels, understand needs. • Identify and Share Use Cases - share value from real-life use cases. • Commit to Continuous Improvement – ongoing feedback. • Data Needs – support to create the connection between data users and producers, so that data are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. <p>We will:</p> <p>1 – open up data relevant to other Open Government themes, such as key climate change datasets used by government for modelling and reporting, data on public transport and public sector expenditure</p> <p>2 – run a CivTech challenge to evaluate if technology can make public sector data easy to find, assess outcomes and set out the way forward</p> <p>3 – set up the Data Transformation Framework (DTF) stating what “good data” looks like and the process by which organisations can improve: this focuses on opportunity for organisations to improve data maturity, data literacy and adoption of standards, through collaboration and engagement with local government and other public sector bodies, to be useful for civil society</p> <p>4 – review the front end of our official statistics open data publishing platform, www.statistics.gov.scot</p> <p>5 – increase the amount of Scottish public sector open data being published, through collaborations such as the Data Standards and Open Data Community of Practice</p> <p>6 – develop a public register of AI algorithms</p>
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How will the commitment contribute to solving the problem described above?

ACTIVITY 1

- Increase number of useful open datasets to help people better understand and make decisions on the climate emergency and public transport, health and social care and the flow of public money in Scotland.
- Present these datasets in a useful format.

ACTIVITY 2

- People able to search for and discover the public sector data they need using natural language.
- Data are discoverable, both from portals and websites.
- We can identify gaps in the data we publish, based on user searches.

ACTIVITY 3

- Improve and enable data reuse in the Scottish Public Sector.
- Develop the DTF, outlining realistic and measurable maturity stages, setting out what “good data” looks like and the process by which organisations can improve.
- Identify a Data Maturity Assessment model which will help Public Sector organisations both understand their current data status and plan steps for data improvement.

ACTIVITY 4

For www.statistics.gov.scot, an increase in:

- Products built using data from the site.
- Success in task completion rate.

ACTIVITY 5

- More public sector datasets being published in an open format.
- Sustained positive collaboration amongst public sector bodies to open up their datasets; using the Data Standards and Open Data Community of Practice and other routes.
- Use cases where opening up access to data empowers people to answer questions, make decisions and drive improvements.

ACTIVITY 6

- The public has understanding and agency over how AI is used to help make decisions.
- The Scottish Government and partners can develop public trust, so AI can benefit society, economy and public services.
- Constructive dialogue between people and policy makers, developers and users of AI systems and processes in the public sector; contributing to improved design and implementation of AI.

What long-term goal as identified in your Open Government Strategy does this commitment relate to?	<p>We have recently published a number of strategies and commitments, such as Scotland's Digital Strategy and Scotland's AI Strategy. Within these strategies, we recognise and value the transformational role that data and AI can play in increasing transparency, empowering communities, transforming products and services, fuelling innovation, and improving outcomes. The purpose of the data commitment within the Open Government Action Plan is as an enabler: to align and implement the ambitions within these strategies in line with Open Government principles.</p> <p>By focusing on thematic areas in support of the action plan, we will connect open data with the value we are seeking to create. This will drive greater engagement across civil society and government and create a clear alignment across the Open Government Action Plan.</p>
Primary policy area	Open Data
Primary sector	Public Services (general) Science and Technology
What OGP Value is this commitment relevant to?	Access to Information Technology and Innovation for Transparency and Accountability
Why is this commitment relevant to the value(s) identified above?	People need to find data and information to be empowered to make informed decisions. People need to be able to use technology as an enabler to understand the data that affects them.
What resources are needed to achieve this commitment?	
Budget	No additional resources bid for this year so either as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing. or to be part of a bid in the next Financial Year.
Staff	One of the responsibilities of the open data team within the Scottish Government is to manage the programme of activities outlined within the Open Government Action Plan, and crucially, to connect to the correct people to ensure delivery of results. <p>No additional resources bid for this year so either as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing. or to be part of a bid in the next Financial Year.
Time	Four years
Other resources required	Resources required to improve front end of www.statistics.gov.scot

Are the resources needed to achieve this commitment already secured?	Partially
Optional additional information	<p>The commitment “Supporting Open Government openness, transparency and empowerment through open data” links closely to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A changing nation: how Scotland will thrive in a digital world. • Scotland’s Open Data Strategy. • Scotland’s AI Strategy. • National Performance Framework. <p>This commitment links closely to other programmes for which open data are an enabler to achieve other Open Government commitments. For example, opening up data in a reusable format can provide enhanced access to the background evidence on climate change in Scotland.</p>



Climate Change

Commitment Title	Establish an Open Government stakeholder network to deliver on participation and engagement requirements across key milestones for climate change policy
Timeframe	September 2021 to August 2025
Lead Implementing Directorate	Directorate for Energy and Climate Change
Civil Society Stakeholders	<p>A full co-creation process has not yet taken place for this Commitment. Five external stakeholder groups were consulted on the draft commitment (Climate Outreach, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Zero Waste Scotland, CEMVO and Stirling University).</p> <p>Stakeholders will be involved in the development of the network as the first milestone of the commitment's work across four years. A core group will be formed to co-create the remit and governance for the network in the first phase of implementation.</p> <p>A full process of co-creation will then begin. This will initially focus on public participation and engagement in climate change policy and just transition to net zero. Over the course of the four years of this NAP, collaboration will continue and new opportunities for applying principles of openness, transparency and accountability in these areas will be agreed.</p>



Commitment Description

Problem

The Scottish Government has set climate change ambitions to become a net zero greenhouse gas emitting nation by 2045, with interim targets of 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2040, against 1990 baseline levels. It has also committed to doing this in a way that is just and fair for all people across Scotland. These are ambitious targets and require a collective effort from all corners of society to play their part, including governments, businesses, organisations, communities and households.

To achieve the system-wide transformation needed to become a net zero nation, it is crucial that stakeholders, communities, and people are aware of the global climate emergency and Scottish Government climate change policy, understand how it relates to their lives, and are able to participate in its delivery. Participation is key to ensuring all groups are bought-in to Scotland's climate ambitions and are part of the collective effort required.

Reaching a diverse audience and different sections of Scottish society to enable participation and engagement in climate change policy will require collaboration with the many and varied organisations across Scotland best placed to deliver these activities. There is currently no singular forum to bring together current engagement involving climate change policy makers and stakeholders with a reach across the public that can support and streamline this.

In line with the Just Transition approach and the principles of the Public Engagement Strategy for Climate Change (PES) there is a need to consolidate and widen the existing pool of stakeholders regularly consulted on policy, streamline consultative processes on climate policy, and use these connections to maximise opportunities to develop new options for and drive public participation and engagement.

Status Quo

The latest data released in June 2021 showed that Scotland had missed its greenhouse gas emissions targets for the third year running – with a reduction of 51.5% against a target of 54% for 2019. This highlights the urgency needed over the next few years to catch-up to targets in order to meet the 2030 interim target.

In recent times, the Scottish Government has developed and delivered a range of policies and initiatives to respond to the climate emergency and support the transition to net zero. These include Scotland's Climate Assembly and the Just Transition Commission – both of which provided recommendations to be responded to this year – as well as the Climate Change Plan update (2020), the new PES (2021) and the second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (2019). In addition to responding to recommendations and delivering against strategies, the implementation of planned Community Climate Action Hubs is now underway, building from the now-closing Climate Challenge Fund. We have responded to the Just Transition Commission's recommendations (including Just Transition sector plans) and recently announced plans for a new Commission. The focus over the next four years is therefore to deliver against these policies.

Currently, our stakeholder engagement involves consulting a wide range of stakeholders from individuals, business, local authorities, parliament and NGOs on specific policies, where often inputs overlap with other related climate change policy work. This leads to multiple inputs from the same organisations whilst limiting engagement outside established networks/ groups. Some activity involves stakeholder organisations in implementation, though this tends to be focused on the delivery of the policy rather than on participation and engagement elements or ensuring inclusive representation of the Scottish public.

<p>Action</p>	<p>In line with OGP values, an initial core group of stakeholders will be set up to co-create the terms of reference for the network, set out governance and initial plans for the selection and membership process. This will ensure a clear understanding of the network's remit, and a solid basis on which to begin a process of co-creation.</p> <p>The Open Government Partnership will then co-create a four-year action plan for the commitment, with additions and revisions during delivery. This will contain the activities and targets for the network to advise on, as well as key milestones, plus practicalities like the resource ask of the network and the method of participation (online/in-person).</p> <p>The partnership will undertake as its initial milestone establishing a stakeholder network to support in delivering on participation and engagement requirements across delivery of aspects of climate change policy. Given the established climate change policy landscape, the network would be focused on implementation rather than policy design. During the four years of the Action Plan, there will be collaborative reflection to revisit this and refocus as required.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the network will include a broad range of stakeholders, from the public, private and third sectors and civil society. The network would act as a pool from which to draw advice via different methods on a range of climate policy issues, rather than acting as a "steering group".</p> <p>The network will be drawn on to convene relevant organisations to advise on key policy milestones in the action plan, seeking to bring in a wide range of views and expertise across climate, equality and inclusion, policy participation, community engagement, etc. The expected result from the network is advice that supports more participation/engagement in implementation on key climate change policies, including delivering against objectives in these policies.</p>
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<p>How will the commitment contribute to solving the problem described above?</p>	<p>Having a stakeholder network to support delivery on participation and engagement activities will provide advice, accountability and transparency on Scottish Government actions. It will also provide a robust and representative basis for co-creation of new opportunities for applying principles of openness, transparency and accountability throughout the four years of the Action Plan. Milestones will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>We expect the outcomes of this commitment to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expert advice to support on and deliver key climate change policy. • greater transparency and accountability of government activities and performance. • increased participation in policy delivery. • rationalisation of existing steering groups. • contribution to net zero targets.
<p>What long-term goal as identified in your Open Government Strategy does this commitment relate to?</p>	<p>That people in Scotland actively participate in shaping and delivering on just, fair and inclusive policies that promote mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.</p>
<p>Primary policy area</p>	<p>Inclusion</p> <p>Social Accountability</p>
<p>Primary sector</p>	<p>Environment and Climate</p>
<p>What OGP Value is this commitment relevant to?</p>	<p>Access to Information</p> <p>Civic Participation</p> <p>Public Accountability</p>
<p>Why is this commitment relevant to the value(s) identified above?</p>	<p>People need to access information, be aware of the action that all of Scotland is taking to tackle climate change, and understand how it relates to their lives.</p> <p>People need to actively participate in shaping and delivering just, fair and inclusive climate change policies, so that they are bought-in to the whole-societal effort required to reach net zero.</p> <p>People need to understand what action the Scottish Government is taking to tackle the climate emergency and hold them to account in this action, in order to achieve our climate change targets.</p>

What resources are needed to achieve this commitment?

Budget	No additional budget allocation currently available
Staff	Secretariat (one or two people in Scottish Government). Chair.
Time	Four-year commitment. Core group initial development of network will be six-to-nine months.
Other resources required:	Civil society joint chair. Commitment of staff time to support core group co-creation of network.
Are the resources needed to achieve this commitment already secured?	Yes for the initial co-creation period of the commitment. Further resources will need to be identified as the work progresses.
Optional additional information	A full co-creation process has not yet taken place for this Commitment. Setting up a representative stakeholder network is a required key step in the co-creation of new opportunities for applying principles of openness, transparency and accountability throughout the four years of the Action Plan. Milestones will be updated accordingly.



Participation

Commitment Title	Powering Participation in Scotland
Timeframe	October 2021 to September 2025
Lead Implementing Directorate	Local Government and Communities
Civil Society Stakeholders	Involve Democratic Society Glasgow University TPX Impact



Commitment Description

Problem

During the last year the profound and uneven impact on society, rights and freedoms caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has brought into focus the need to ensure people in Scotland can participate in the decisions that affect them, as individuals and in communities.

Scottish Government is committed to human rights, equality, inclusion and participatory democracy, and will deliver Covid Recovery in a person-centred way. However, it is recognised that participation in decision making currently lacks diversity, an intersectional approach is rarely taken and participation methods used may not help address these inequalities. There is a lack of diverse representation within civil society and too few opportunities for these vital organisations to see themselves as important voices in creating a culture of inclusive participation.

There remains an appetite for increased participation, but too often the purpose and outcomes are unclear and participants cannot see how their input has influenced decision making.

There is insufficient understanding of the benefits of participation in public service. Levels of collaboration in policy making between government, stakeholders and the public is uneven. Too often this is accompanied by a lack of:

- skills, confidence and resources to commission or deliver effective participation, using the method most suited to the task.
- accountability and transparency, with little monitoring and evaluation of participation.
- alignment of participation with equalities and human rights.
- understanding of how participation supports the delivery of other goals and priorities.

This has created uncertainty and risks undermining work to improve democracy, trust in government and participation in decision making.

Status Quo

Scotland's previous Action Plan produced a Participation Framework, to improve Scottish Government's approach, build skills and confidence. The Participation Framework is under-utilised and needs improvement to ensure inclusion and equality are at its core and is useful beyond government.

Scottish Government is focusing on mainstreaming human rights and Equalities, and the rights of children and young people. This will create a legislative foundation and guidance. A recent review of the Participation Framework identified changes that are needed, with a key recommendation that participation is designed and conducted with those "furthest away" from government in mind – to help everyone engage.

There are wider problems with the status quo, centring around a lack of inclusive opportunities, lack of skills, and lack of transparency and accountability.

- Methods used (e.g. consultations) tend not to be inclusively designed, or part of a systematic and accountable approach to generating and using evidence from participation.
- Engagement often does not reach beyond a limited and up-skilled group, as processes are not typically designed with the needs of individuals with protected characteristics in mind.
- There are insufficient feedback loops to inform participants how their input has influenced decision making.

These work together to prevent a fully inclusive and intersectional approach to participation.

Innovative forms of democracy such as participatory budgeting, Citizens' Assemblies, and making the most of digital platforms have strengthened public involvement. These would benefit from more systematic application to avoid creating unmet expectations that can lead to further exclusion.

<p>Action</p>	<p>This commitment will deliver actions around three interlinked themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the Participation Framework to be better used and more focused on inclusion and equality. Link policy, practice and decision making to build access to tools, advice, skills and confidence, better connecting participation resources to community practice. 2. Provide advice and support to ensure participation focuses on equality of access. Scottish Government is focusing on mainstreaming human rights and Equalities, and the rights of children and young people. This will create legislation and guidance that recognises participation is a human right. It is key that participation is designed and conducted with those 'furthest away' from government in mind – to help everyone engage. <p>The actions will seek to overcome barriers of: lack of understanding, skills, transparency and accountability. This means recognising and systematically addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That methods used (e.g. consultations) are often not inclusive, or seen as a core part of the system of generating and using evidence. • The need for careful resourcing, design and recruitment so that engagements are not with a limited and already up-skilled group. When individuals with protected characteristics are engaged with, processes should be designed with their needs in mind. • That it is often unclear if outputs from participation are influencing decision making. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Innovative forms of democracy such as participatory budgeting or Citizens' Assemblies; use of digital platforms; and focused deliberation with particular groups, will be further strengthened. The Participation Framework will provide guidance so that these are institutionalised, with more systematic application to avoid creating unmet expectations that can lead to further exclusion.
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<p>How will the commitment contribute to solving the problem described above?</p>	<p>This commitment will contribute to solving the problem described above through the following outputs and outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance and advice to support the delivery of high-quality participation for Scotland's Covid Recovery, as well as the equalities and reform priorities. • Establish high-quality Citizens' Assemblies and other forms of participatory democracy as routine. • Establish a network with civil society to progress improving the Participation Framework and implementation of this Plan. • Develop an approach that builds on best practice, to ensure high-quality engagement and participation in the review of the National Outcomes. <p>There will be outputs from Participation Framework improvements that will feed into guidance, training and advice on participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a clear definition of participation and the expectation that co-production or co-design will be used where possible. • Improve guidance on representation and sampling, making these as inclusive and intersectional as possible, including linking to Equalities Data Improvement Programme. • Explore ways to contribute to community capacity building to build more equitable participation, including ensuring participation funding incentivises inclusive engagement and targets marginalised communities. • Establish transparent monitoring and evaluation that records how participation is happening and what it has influenced. • Explore ways to align participation with equalities and human rights. • Implement programmes of training to roll out the Participation Framework and build capacity on equalities mainstreaming. • Work with CSOs and procurement policies to ensure funding is targeted at under-funded groups or communities. • Work with Open Government Network to bring in voices with lived experience to Plan Commitments.
<p>What long-term goal as identified in your Open Government Strategy does this commitment relate to?</p>	<p>This is an enabling Commitment. It will work to embed high-quality and meaningful participation across the work of government, as well as supporting other Commitments to deliver in a participatory way.</p>

Primary policy area	Civic Space Inclusion
Primary sector	Citizenship and Immigration Public Services (general)
What OGP Value is this commitment relevant to?	Civic Participation
Why is this commitment relevant to the value(s) identified above?	This commitment is an enabling commitment, supporting the wider OGP Action Plan and Scottish Government to improve the ways people can be actively involved in the decisions that affect them and to support democracy and civic space.
What resources are needed to achieve this commitment?	
Budget (estimated budget allocation)	This commitment is overseen by the Open Government Team in Scottish Government along with an OGN lead. The SG budget for the coming year is not yet approved. The current administration has made a commitment to institutionalising participatory democracy, including at least a Citizens' Assembly each year for the remainder of this plan period.
Staff (number of staff required to implement the commitment)	There are three members of staff in Scottish Government to manage the Open Government plan and to take forward the Participation Commitment.
Time (months needed to implement the commitment)	This commitment will run for the whole duration of this four-year plan. The priorities and milestones will be regularly reviewed to keep them current and stretching.
Other resources required:	Because this is cross-cutting there are a number of interdependencies. Depending on the route taken to make Citizens' Assemblies routine, there will be a resourcing requirement and a bid for budget.
Are the resources needed to achieve this commitment already secured?	Partially. There is a requirement to define the roles and tasks that are needed to deliver the Citizens' Assemblies and institutionalise participatory democracy. An expert working group will report in Autumn 2021, outlining what is required.

Optional additional information

The milestones outlined below represent a starting point for the Participation Commitment's work.

Twice-yearly throughout the four years of the Action Plan, milestones will be reviewed, developed and added to.

This Action Plan contributes to the achievement of a range of the current administration's overall policy goals. This includes the refresh of the Community Empowerment Act; the Local Democracy Bill, stemming from the Local Governance Review; the upcoming refresh of the National Performance Framework (NPF); and the new human rights Bill. All of these are opportunities to embed Open Government principles.

As much of this work is at an early stage, details on Open Government activities and identification of relevant milestones in these areas will be developed during the course of this Action Plan, with regular review points. Additional milestones will then be set out.

This commitment will support the work of the Local Governance Review (including the Bill which will come out of this work), as well as the review of the Community Empowerment Act, and will seek to agree relevant milestones at a future review date.

5. What happens next?

How will we coordinate between government agencies and departments to implement this action plan?

The Open Government Steering Group, Scotland's "multistakeholder forum", brings together leads from each of the Commitments on a quarterly basis. This ensures that each area is well sighted on the progress and actions of the others, and can make appropriate connections and input as required.

Between these meetings, the Open Government Team and civil society Network act as coordinating points between the different teams and organisations involved in delivering this work, identifying synergies, opportunities, and bringing areas together when appropriate.

In addition, the Open Government Team (within Scottish Government) meets with officials from the UK Government and devolved Governments within the UK, to support coordination of Open Government work across the UK.

How will government and non-government stakeholders continue to collaborate through the implementation of the action plan?

The delivery of each Commitment will be overseen by one government and one non-government Commitment lead, who will report on progress to the Open Government Steering Group.

How will we monitor the OGP Action Plan?

An independent reporter will be commissioned to ensure it is possible to track progress of the Action Plan, and to continue to compare that progress with other Open Government Partnership members.

This contract will be with the Scottish Government, but will be developed and overseen by a subcommittee of the Steering Group, made up of equal numbers of civil society and government representatives. This will help ensure transparency and credibility of the reporting.

In addition to an appointed independent reporter, there will be rigorous and regular self-reporting (at least twice a year) to the Steering Group. This will be published on the Open Government web page.

Scottish Parliament will also monitor progress on Open Government as part of an expanded set of duties for the [Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee](#).



What types of activities will we have in place to discuss progress on commitments with stakeholders?

Regular Steering Group meetings will provide a formal process for reviewing progress on Commitments with stakeholders. Milestones identified by each Commitment will be the key mechanism for this. Each of the Commitments will have working groups through which government and civil society collaborate to oversee implementation and the development of additional milestones as the Action Plan progresses.

Steering Group meetings will also be informed by a monitoring and evaluation framework that will be developed in collaboration with each Commitment, providing indicators to measure the extent to which a Commitment's strategic aims are being achieved. Commitment milestones will form part of this, as will additional quantitative and qualitative data relevant to the activities and their intended aims.

Civil society and government will work together to maintain a healthy civil society network around Open Government in Scotland. This network will also be involved in monitoring the progress of Commitments. This will include pro-actively identifying existing and upcoming cross-cutting strategies and policies that will be engaging stakeholders, who could in turn be involved in the network.

How will we regularly check in on progress with implementing agencies?

Steering Group meetings will be held at least quarterly each year, and will provide an opportunity to check in on progress with implementing agencies. In addition to this, a monitoring and evaluation framework will provide background information on the extent to which a Commitment's aims are being achieved – this will be updated whenever a milestone is due to be completed, or new relevant data is available.

How will we share the results of your monitoring efforts with the public?

The minutes of all Steering Group meetings will be published online. The monitoring and evaluation framework will draw on publicly available information, or will publish new information. Updates on this framework will be published on the Open Government pages of gov.scot after each Steering Group meeting.

How can I get involved?

Scotland's Open Government Network is a group of active and interested people and organisations. They are committed to making government at all levels work better for people in Scotland through becoming more transparent and accountable and encouraging public involvement. Scotland has had a small network of individuals and organisations interested in Open Government for several years. The network serves as an "engine" for new ideas and a voice to join with and challenge government.

Anyone with an interest can join the network. Visit the [Open Government Network website](#) to become a member. It's free and you can be involved as much or as little as you like.



This summary document is written in Plain English to make it more accessible.
It has been edited and approved by the Plain English Campaign.



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