



## **NatureScot New National Park Summary Survey - Response Support**

*The summary survey was published on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and will be open for responses until 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025.*

*This document has been created by the No Galloway National Park group to support those who wish to oppose the proposal in responding to the NatureScot survey. Below, you will find question by question guidance to use and/or adapt in your own responses.*

*The survey can be accessed: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/nationalparksummaryconsultation/>*

### **Page 2: A brief understanding of who is responding to this consultation**

If at all possible, tick “publish response” as this is likely to carry more weight. Even better if you are happy to be named.

### **Page 3: “The key issues we would like your views.”**

Q1: Tick “strongly oppose”

In the “additional information” box, you can cite whatever reasons you wish to prioritise, but the No Galloway National Park campaign strongly believes the following:

“A national park will only bring a needless layer of bureaucracy operated by a brigade of civil servants, overseen by a board dominated by unelected government appointees and cost around £35 million a year to run.

“I believe there are far more important priorities for our area, such as better roads and infrastructure, more affordable housing, sustainable year-round jobs and careers for our young people, and a stronger year-round economy.

“By prioritising tourism growth, a national park will only result in higher property prices, loss of homes for local people, low-paid seasonal jobs, and an unacceptable interference with planning and our vital agriculture sector.

“And all of the claimed benefits of a national park can be delivered by the existing public enterprise and tourism agencies which are already well funded.”

#### **Page 4. “What area should a National Park cover?”**

Q2: Tick no opinion (only because there is no ‘no’ option)

Q2b: You can put your own reasons, but our view is as follows:

“This question is deliberately skewed to make people choose one of the options and it is unacceptable that there is no option to reject any boundaries. This question has been framed in a dishonest way and should never have been included in this format. To be clear, my response is ‘None of these boundaries’, not ‘No Opinion’.

“I strongly believe a national park is neither needed nor wanted in Galloway and as such no boundary is acceptable.”

#### **Page 5. What a new National Park Authority could do**

Q3: You are asked to comment on a set of suggestions, none of which includes the rejection of a national park plan. Again, you can submit your own views, but our position is below:

“I am dismayed that the above narrative makes no attempt to at least acknowledge the option to reject a national park. This quite openly encourages responses to select from the ideas it contains, and so to validate the proposal for any sort of new park authority for our area. I therefore reject the basis of this question.”

#### **Page 6. Who should be members of the National Park Authority?**

Q4: Do you support these proposals for Board size and percentage of directly elected members?

Tick No

You can put your own response to the next questions, but our view is as follows:

Q4b: No, I do not have any alternative proposal because I disagree with the need for a national park in Galloway, for reasons explained earlier in this consultation.

Q4c: I reject the proposal to impose a national park on Galloway, so I do not agree that either proposal, or any other, is necessary.”

## **Page 7. Expertise on the Board**

Q5: Should Scottish Ministers appointments to the Board include expertise on nature, farming and forestry?

This whole question looks deliberately aimed at validating the contents of the previous question. Tick Yes, and you accept the principle of unelected members of the board. Tick No, and you reject the idea of having experts involved in scrutiny. On balance, No is the only option.

Q5b: Our view is as follows:

“The question quite obviously does not acknowledge that if there was no board it would not need more expertise, and it would not have been difficult to frame the question differently.

“Not only does the question presume there will be a park and there will be a board, but that it will include unelected, unaccountable government appointees, which is quite extraordinary.

“To be clear, I do not want a national park in this area and the question is therefore irrelevant.”

## **Page 8. What should the name of the National Park be?**

Q6: Do you agree the park, if established, should be called the Kingdom of Galloway National Park?

Tick No

Q6b: This is an extraordinarily presumptive question, when the consultation has barely begun. Our response is:

“It is quite staggering that those who designed this consultation thought it was appropriate to ask what a park could be called before the consultation had even begun. This proposal has very serious implications for our region, yet this reduces it to the level of a children’s competition to name a classroom pet.

“Again, it is a deliberate attempt to frame the proposal in a positive light, but it serves only to trivialise this process.”

## **Please add here any other comments that are relevant to the proposal.**

This is the last section open to comment and should refer to the FAQs available on Page 9. Do submit your own opinions, but the No Galloway National Park views are as follows:

“This consultation is fundamentally flawed in its presumption that a national park will be established. In my opinion, a national park will not solve the problems we face in Galloway. We need investment to: improve roads, offer affordable housing, conserve biodiversity, and provide attractive, well-paid opportunities for young people all year round. With a national park costing an estimated £15million/year, there are far more prominent issues which would be better served by this funding giving long lasting benefit to the community.

“I question the motivation of the national park proposal. With no comprehensive review of the other two Scottish national parks, how can the Scottish Government claim that they “have performed well as models of sustainable development”? There is widespread coverage of the difficulties that communities have faced in each of the other national parks given the dilution of local governance. The proposal of a third national park is driven by politics, not the needs of our community.

“The proposal is full of uncertainties and a lack of information. Indeed, the only certainty given is a national park “would not solve all the issues faced by this area” (Page 9). How can a rigorous and fair consultation take place based on information such as, “While the arrangements for Scotland’s next National Park could be similar to the first two, it could also be different.” (Page 9) In Galloway, we need a solution that is guaranteed to work. Further bureaucracy and red tape will be detrimental to the future of our community; a national park is not in the best interests of Galloway, and I am fully opposed to the proposal.”