
CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

Title: UPDATE AND FORWARD LOOK

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Purpose: This paper provides an update on the main areas of work both undertaken and planned towards delivery of the five year outcomes in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17.

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2012-17.

Long term outcome: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences

Key work package 9 - Active Cairngorms

1. Active Aviemore

CNPA has £40k Sustrans funding and equivalent from NHS to develop non-motorised access provision for the proposed new hospital in Aviemore. The objective being to design-in a high standard of provision to ensure that car-free access opportunities are more widely available and chosen by visitors/users. We are currently working with Highland Council, Sustrans and Hitrans to look at the most effective way to develop these plans over next 18 months.

2. Wee Walks Week 2017

This year's WWW will be held over the week 16- 23 Sept including a CNPA Staff Walk. Members are asked to get involved and promote the event amongst their networks. Please see the following link for details: <http://cairngorms.co.uk/event/wee-walks-week/>

3. Active Cairngorms Health Walks

- a) CNPA Volunteer Co-ordinator, Mike Woolvin has recently undertaken Health Walk Leader training and continues to develop the project and strengthen Health Walk Groups operating in the Park.
- b) Mike is based at CNPA HQ and in addition to delivering physical activity projects such as the Health Walks project he is developing a programme of environmental volunteering opportunities, including a Volunteer Ranger Service.

- c) Eight Volunteer Rangers have now been recruited from a variety of backgrounds and are gearing up for a programme of working alongside existing full time Rangers to support the important work they already carry out.

Key work package 12 - Visitor and access infrastructure

4. Management of core paths and outdoor access:

Long Distance Paths (LDR's)

- a) **Deeside Way Extension** – A planning application was submitted recently however for technical reasons it was temporarily withdrawn. An improved, more detailed application is anticipated Oct/Nov 2017.
- b) **Speyside Way Extension** - The next phase of the SSW extension from Ardbeg (Kinncraig) to Insh has now been submitted with a decision currently awaited. Funding for construction continues to be sought from partnering organisations. The remaining planning applications to extend the path to Kingussie will be submitted by the end of the year.
- c) **Upholding Access Rights** – access casework continues to be reported and dealt with according to protocols. Since the last LOAF meeting procedures were tested when Kinrara Estate installed 3 new gates across established access points which duly placed unlawful restriction on access rights. The matter was ultimately resolved without the need for formal LOAF involvement. Despite a small seasonal upturn the number of active cases remains low overall. An update will be given under Agenda Item 2.

Other National Park Initiatives/Matters

- 4. **Visitor Giving** – CNPA is currently working with Cairngorms Business Partnership to develop early thinking on a visitor giving scheme. The intention is to create a mechanism whereby the visiting public are able to make a discretionary 'donation' towards sustaining key infrastructure in the Park which facilitates high quality visitor experience.
- 5. **Mountain Paths** Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust managed HLF and partner funded (CNPA, LL&TNPA, FCS, SNH) project 'The Mountains and the People' continues apace year three and continues to upgrade and improve key mountain paths in Aberdeenshire, Angus, Perth and Drumochter as well as Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. Further details available at the project website: <http://themountainsandthepeople.org.uk/>
- 4. **HLF Tomintoul / Glenlivet Landscape partnership Project** – All posts associated with the project have now been recruited including Land Management Officer Lynn Cassells. Lynn is now co-ordinating the access project outputs which include improving the Tomintoul Spur (Speyside Way) and a new low level path linking Glenlivet Distillery and Blairfindy Castle. Blairfindy Castle is also programmed for repair and improvement. The Access Project delivery budget is £360k.

5. **A9 Dualling** – The first ‘Stage 3’ consultation response has now been submitted for the Killiecrankie to Glen Garry section. We remain encouraged by the thorough approach taken in dealing with impacts affecting non-motorised users and this was borne in the first of the Stage 3 design detail, which incorporated innovative solutions to key access considerations. It should be noted that objections have been submitted by some communities along the route.
6. **Cairngorms Capercaillie Framework HLF Bid** – CNPA continue to work with partners to develop a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Capercaillie (safeguarding populations) project. This follows on from the drawing up of the CNP Capercaillie Framework. The HLF development phase will involve shaping a sustainable recreation management model that benefits communities and caper, raising the profile of and building support for caper (hearts and minds), and achieving sustainable caper populations. A Stage 1 bid was submitted June 2017 and a decision is currently awaited. C LOAF will be consulted/involved further as things develop..
7. **Snow Roads Scenic Route** – The project has recently been shortlisted for a Scottish Government Planning Award . This comes hot on the heels of Cairngorms Business Partnership securing £245k funding from Scottish Enterprise to develop the Snow Roads Scenic Route visitor experience from Blairgowrie to Grantown-on-Spey. CNPA continue to support the project.
8. **Interpret Europe Conference** – this important conference will be held in Inverness over the 3 – 6 October. Presentations will be given to delegates on the Cairngorms National Park and the Snow Roads initiative in addition two of the four field trips available will be to the National Park. These are Tomintoul, Glenlivet & the Snow Roads, and Cairngorm and Glenmore. Overall a superb opportunity to promote the CNP and showcase high quality interpretation of heritage. See here for more details:
<http://www.interpret-europe.net>

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