

CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

ÙGH DARRAS PÀIRC NÀISEANTA A'
MHON AIDH RUAIDH

Cairngorms National Park Authority
Communications and Engagement Strategy 2018-2022



VISION

*“An outstanding National Park,
enjoyed and valued by everyone,
where people and nature thrive together”*

MISSION

To lead the way in delivering for the Cairngorms National Park by:

- **Bringing people together towards a common purpose**
- **Enhancing the Park for everyone**
- **Inspiring new generations to be Park champions**

OUTCOMES

Conservation: A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced

Visitor Experience: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences

Rural Development: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities

AIMS

- Increase levels of **awareness** of the Cairngorms National Park
- Increase **engagement** with the Cairngorms National Park
- Increase **involvement** in caring for the Cairngorms National Park

CORE PRINCIPLES

Digital first
Evidence and insight
Robust evaluation
Collaboration
Innovation

AUDIENCES

Visitors
Local Businesses
Land managers and estates
Developers
Community groups
Residents
CNPA partners/influencers
CNPA staff/board members

WORK PRIORITIES

Digital communications
Communication campaigns:
Cairngorms Nature,
Active Cairngorms, Make It Yours
Stakeholder engagement
Corporate communications

TARGETS by 2022

Awareness

- 91% of visitors are aware they are in a National Park
- Of those, 93% are aware before their visit
- 47% visitors describe the Park brand
- Most MSPs know a little about the Park
- A third MSPs know the Park well
- 43% MSPs are favourable towards the Park
- 400,000 website sessions
- 50,000 social media followers

Engagement

- 3,000 participants enjoy the Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend
- 600 participants take part in Wee Walks Week
- 2,500 John Muir Awards each year
- 100 visitor facing staff benefit from Make It Yours presentation each year
- CNPA supports 13 ranger services across the Park

Involvement

- 220 local businesses are brand charter holders
- 60 junior rangers/30 volunteer rangers are recruited and trained
- A visitor giving scheme is trialled to raise funds for the Cairngorms Trust in support of two community projects

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Overview

Communicating with visitors, communities and stakeholders is vital for the work of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA). Our role is to raise the profile of the Park and create a connection and commitment to care for it with identified audiences so they actively support the Park and benefit from doing so.

Building trust and understanding of the CNPA's and delivery partners' roles will ensure we work collaboratively and make best use of our public resources to make a significant contribution towards delivering Scottish Government Outcomes in terms of Conservation, Visitor Experience and Rural Development.

Over the next four years we anticipate considerable change both in terms of how we communicate and engage with our audiences and in terms of the political climate and our available resources. Consequently, this Strategy supports the Scottish Government Communications Plan's five core principles:

- **Digital first**
We will focus on our digital and social media activities and capabilities in recognition that more people than ever are engaging with us in this way and that it provides an effective and cost efficient way of reaching specific audiences.
- **Evidence and Insight**
We will ensure our communications activity is based on sound evidence and audience insight, so we can take a strong audience-led approach to our work, particularly through our digital communications.
- **Robust Evaluation**
We will evaluate our work measuring outcomes where possible, to test impact and continuously learn and improve.
- **Collaboration**
We will support effective and efficient communications across the organisation, through our key partnerships and with the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Scottish Government Directorate organisations.
- **Innovation**
We will develop and embrace innovation and continually test new ways of working through our organisational development strategy work, particularly in terms of making better use of new technology and learning from others.

Strategic Context

The Cairngorms National Park was established in 2003 to deliver the four National Park aims as set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area
- To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area
- To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public
- To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities

Over the last 15 years the Cairngorms National Park has developed its own brand and built up a strong identity with visitors who enjoy the Park as well as stakeholders and partners who make a significant contribution towards caring for the Park and delivering the National Park aims.

The role of the CNPA is to provide leadership for the National Park to tackle the big issues in the Park in a collaborative way. The vision, mission and values are important statements of what the organisation wants to achieve and how it will go about achieving it.

Cairngorms National Park Vision

An outstanding National Park enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together.

CNPA Mission

To lead the way in delivering for the Cairngorms National Park by:

- Bringing people together towards a common purpose
- Enhancing the Park for everyone
- Inspiring new generations to be Park champions

The CNPA plays an essential role in leading the delivery of the **Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (CNPPP)**, which sets out the context for close cooperation and partnership across public, private and voluntary organisations in the Park.

CNPPP Outcomes

The CNPPP sets out three long term outcomes for the Park. These have been used as the basis for developing the **CNPA Corporate Plan**.

- A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced
- People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences
- A sustainable economy supporting businesses and communities

The CNPPP provides the framework for the CNPA's Corporate Plan which sets out how the CNPA will contribute to the delivery of the CNPPP over the next four years. Within this context, the Communications and Engagement Strategy aims to support the delivery of our Corporate Plan and the collaborative delivery of the CNPPP.

Long Term Aims

Our Communications and Engagement long term aims are to continue to raise the profile of the Park and create an emotional connection and commitment to care for it with identified audiences so they actively support the Park and benefit from doing so. Specifically, we aim to maintain the levels of awareness with visitors, grow the reach and active supporters of our digital audiences, increase engagement with the Park and the involvement of people actively caring for the Park through more opportunities to do so.

Awareness of the Cairngorms National Park

Visitor survey results in 2016 show:

- 91% of visitors are aware they are in a National Park
- of those, 93% were aware before their visit
- 47% can describe the Park brand

An MSP survey in 2016 shows:

- most know at least a little about the Cairngorms National Park
- a third know it well or a fair amount
- 43% are favourable towards it

In addition, through our digital communications during 2017 there were:

- over 190,000 website sessions (visits)
- over 24,000 social media followers
- a reach across all our social media of 4.6 million accounts

Our long term targets are to maintain the level of visitor awareness of the Park and the Park brand, maintain the level of awareness and favourability by MSPs towards the Park, increase our digital communications reach and active supporters by 20% each year.

Specific targets for the next four years include:

Maintain awareness by visitors

(Visitor Survey 2020)

- 91% of visitors are aware they are in a National Park
- of those, 93% are aware before their visit
- 47% can describe the Park brand

Maintain awareness by MSPs

(MSP Survey 2020)

- most know at least a little about the Cairngorms National Park
- a third know it well or a fair amount
- 43% are favourable towards it

Increase awareness through digital communications — by 2022

(google analytics)

- 400,000 website sessions
- 50,000 social media followers

Engagement with the Cairngorms National Park

In 2017, through our communications campaigns, visitors and residents have engaged with the National Park, resulting in:

- over 2,000 participants enjoying the Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend
- over 400 participants taking part in Wee Walks Week
- 2,500 John Muir Awards undertaken each year
- over 100 visitor facing staff from 26 organisations benefiting from the Make It Yours presentation

Our long term targets are to increase the number of participants at the Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend and Wee Walks

Week by 10% year on year, and to maintain our engagement in terms of John Muir Awards and Make It Yours presentations.

Specific targets for the next four years include:

Increase engagement in our campaigns — by 2022

(CNPA evaluation and feedback survey)

- 3,000 participants enjoy the Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend
- 600 participants take part in Wee Walks Week
- 2,500 John Muir Awards each year
- 100 visitor facing staff benefit from Make It Yours presentation each year
- CNPA support for 13 ranger services across the Park

Involvement in caring for the Cairngorms National Park

Our communications activities provide a variety of opportunities for people to get involved and benefit from the Park. By the end of 2017, this has resulted in:

- 148 Park brand charter holders
- 33 Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend events delivered by estates and ranger services
- 56 junior rangers and 8 volunteer rangers being recruited and trained

Our long term targets are to increase the number of organisations benefiting from the Park brand by 10% year on year and to increase the number of people actively involved in helping to care for the Park.

We will also provide more opportunities for people and organisations to make a contribution towards caring for the Park through a visitor giving scheme which will raise funds for the Cairngorms Trust.

Specific targets for the next four years include:

Increase involvement in caring for the Park — by 2022

(CNPA evaluation)

- 220 local businesses are brand charter holders
- 60 junior rangers and 30 volunteer rangers are recruited and trained
- a visitor giving scheme is trialled to raise funds for the Cairngorms Trust in support of two community projects

The Communications and Engagement Strategy will build on our three communication campaigns – Cairngorms Nature, Active Cairngorms, Make It Yours – to strengthen the delivery of a consistent message. We will also support the delivery of priority work areas set out in our Corporate Plan and promote the CNPA's work and reputation as a public body with statutory duties as the planning and outdoor access authority.

Approach

Our approach will be to build our capacity in the use of digital communications to reach and engage with our target audiences. We will also focus on our three campaigns to encourage more people to get close to the Park and create new ways to get involved in caring for the Park through volunteering, helping to promote the Park, making donations and corporate partnerships.

In addition, to support the delivery of our Corporate Plan and the three long term outcomes for the Park, we will focus on specific audiences who are essential to the successful delivery of the CNPPP to build strong and supportive relationships and a shared understanding of how we can tackle the big issues in the Park in a collaborative way. Building these relationships will involve face to face engagements with key audiences where staff and board members will play an important role.

Target Audiences

The CNPA Corporate Plan identifies key work priorities to deliver specific outcomes in conservation, visitor experience and rural development.

To achieve these outcomes we need to engage with specific audiences and ensure they are aware of the CNPPP, how they can support and contribute towards its delivery, opportunities for them to get involved and how they can benefit from our projects and campaigns.

These audiences include:

- visitors
- local businesses
- land managers and estates
- developers
- community groups
- residents
- CNPA partners and influencers
- CNPA staff and board members

Priority Areas of Work

To direct this work we will concentrate on four main work priorities:

- **Digital communications and social media**
To continually improve our website, develop and deliver a social media strategy, create online networks with our audiences, particularly Park residents.
- **Communication campaigns**
To promote consistent messages about the Park and opportunities for people to engage and get involved through the following three campaigns: *Cairngorms Nature* which encourages visitors and residents to get out and enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the Park; *Active Cairngorms* which encourages visitors and residents to be more active in the Park; *Make It Yours* which encourages local businesses and residents to promote the Park, deliver a better visitor/customer experience and benefit from using the Park brand.
- **Stakeholder engagement and events**
To promote the work of the Park and Park Authority through our stakeholder engagement and events.
- **Corporate communications**
To meet our corporate responsibilities as a public body and promote the work of the CNPA through our corporate publications, public consultations, media relations and our Gaelic Language Plan.

Outcomes

Our Communications and Engagement work aims to build trust and understanding with our audiences, to influence their views relating to the Park and Park Authority, and ultimately gain their support and active involvement in caring for the Cairngorms National Park. Over the next four years we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- The Cairngorms National Park is recognised as one of Scotland's leading visitor destinations which provides high quality, distinctive and authentic experiences, attracting new and repeat visitors from its target markets, making an important contribution towards the Scottish economy.
- Local businesses, land managers and estates, community groups and individuals are actively involved and contribute to the Park's conservation and economic success and benefit from doing so.
- Young, inactive and minority groups are aware of the Cairngorms National Park as a great place for active recreation and are supported to visit and enjoy the Park, making an important contribution towards equality, improving people's health and education.
- Residents see the value of being part of the Cairngorms National Park and the role that the Cairngorms National Park Authority plays in this.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Cairngorms National Park Authority is recognised as the best small public body in Scotland.
- Cairngorms National Park partners and stakeholders recognise the Cairngorms National Park and the Cairngorms National Park Authority as significant contributors towards the delivery of the Scottish Government Outcomes in terms of conservation, visitor experience and rural development.
- Cairngorms National Park partners and stakeholders work cooperatively under the recognised and valued leadership of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, becoming more self-sufficient and less dependent on public sector funding.
- Cairngorms National Park Authority staff and board members are motivated, committed and clear about their contribution towards delivering the Corporate Plan and enjoy working for the Park Authority.

The Communications and Engagement Strategy will be reviewed alongside the Cairngorms National Park Authority's Corporate Plan twice a year (June and December) and updates on progress will be included on a quarterly basis as part of the Chief Executive Officer's update paper prepared for every CNPA board meeting.

In addition, an annual (September) Communications and Engagement board paper will consider progress made against agreed targets and set out priority work activities for the year ahead.