

CAIRNGORMS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

**Meeting held on Wednesday 1st September 2004 at 10.30am
at the Albert Hall, Station Square, Ballater**

Present

Bruce Luffman (Chair)	Auld Cummerton, Strathdon
Elaine Booth	Scottish Enterprise Grampian
Neil Black	Visitscotland
Sally Dowden	Speyside Wildlife
Ian Dunlop	Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board
Patricia Eccles	Nethy House, Nethy Bridge
Roger Edwards	MBSE
Murray Ferguson	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Heather Galbraith	Cairngorms National Park Authority
John Grant	SRPBA
Andrew Harper	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Paul Higson	ECAP Project Co-ordinator
Jane Hope	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Bob Kinnaird	Cairngorm Mountain
Pierre Masson	Moray Council
Siobhan MacDonald	Cairngorms National Park Authority
James Macfarlane	Muckrach Lodge Hotel, Dulnain Bridge
Ann Napier	Association of Cairngorms Community Councils
Ian Reynolds	Scottish Enterprise Tayside
Debbie Strang	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Bill Taylor	Scottish Natural Heritage
Casia Zajac	Highlands of Scotland Tourist Board
Jim Knowles	Aberdeenshire Council

Apologies

Danny Alexander	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Scott Armstrong	Highlands of Scotland Tourist Board
Simon Blackett	Braemar Tourist Association
Andrew Bruce Wootton	Atholl Estates
Pete Crane	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Alistair Gronbach	Visitscotland
Gary Marsden	Balmoral Estate
James Milne	Kinross House, Grantown
Caroline Mitchell	Aberlour Distillery
Christine Morrison	Rothiemurchus Estate
Elma McMenemy	Royal Deeside and Mearns Tourism Forum
Douglas Ritchie	Perth and Kinross Tourist Board
Colin Smith	Angus and Dundee Tourist Board
Elizabeth Thompson	Dalwhinnie Distillery
Tim Walker	Sportscotland Glenmore Lodge
Andrew Wells	Glenlivet Estate, Tomintoul
Bob Wilson	Aberdeen & Grampian Tourist Board

In Attendance

Alan Ainsley	Navyblue Design Consultancy
Helen Grimley	Navyblue Design Consultancy

Welcome and Apologies

Action

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced Alan Ainsley and Helen Grimley of Navyblue Design Consultancy, and noted the apologies.

Minutes of the Meeting of 12th May 2004 and Matters Arising

2. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
3. Cairngorms Visitor Guide: It was confirmed that Royal Mail is unable to deliver the guide to households within the park, because it marginally exceeds the allowable weight limit. The Tourist Boards assured the Group that the Guide was being delivered through the usual channels, but encouraged Group members to request as many copies as they felt able to distribute.
4. Travel Trade Workshop: HOST are running a workshop in November for stand-holders who have booked for VisitScotland Expo 2005 focusing on exhibition attendance. Although this session should be useful for those businesses that have not previously attended tradeshows, it was agreed that some training on information gathered and contact follow-up at these events would be useful. HOST agreed to investigate this with the CNPA. **HG / HOST**
5. Information was circulated on *iPoint* (Paper 2), a touch screen visitor information system and Murray Ferguson agreed to arrange a demonstration for the next meeting. **MF**
6. Aviemore TIC: The Group were advised that HOST will be leasing new premises on Grampian Road in Aviemore with effect from 27th November.

Developing the Cairngorms Brand

7. Alan Ainsley from Navyblue gave a presentation on the development of a Cairngorms National Park brand, and outlined the early stages and the development of a brand audit. There was discussion on the importance of park residents 'buying-in' to the brand and being fully involved in its development. Ann Napier advised that a range of community events are being held in November to consult on the local plan, and two Local Plan co-ordinators have been recruited as part of this process. It was agreed that Navyblue should contact the co-ordinators to see whether there might be an opportunity to seek views of local people on the development of the brand. **DA**
8. The VisitScotland Pride and Passion initiative was mentioned, which encourages the whole community to support tourism; and Bob Kinnaird who is involved with the initiative agreed to provide an update at the next meeting. **BK**
9. Sam Ham, an interpretation consultant from the University of Idaho is currently visiting the Park area, and three workshops in Ballater, Tomintoul and Kingussie have been arranged to develop a framework for interpretation. Navyblue are attending one of the workshops, and this will help to ensure that the brand is developed in line with the interpretation work and marketing strategy.

Action

10. A steering group has been set-up to keep a watching brief on the brand development project, comprising Danny Alexander, Lucia Campbell, Alasdair Colquhoun from the Association of Cairngorms Community Councils, Sally Dowden, Alistair Gronbach, Heather Galbraith, and a member of the agricultural community, to be suggested by Siobhan MacDonald.

SM

UK National Parks Pathways Branding Project Update

11. The Pathways Project aims to develop a collective brand identity for all UK National Parks. The project is at an early stage but there are plans to develop a web portal for National Park websites and investigate joint working with other national organisations. The value of the project to the CNPA was discussed and it was agreed that generating interest in national parks collectively would provide a useful platform for promotion of the CNPA.

Cairngorms Marketing Strategy & Action Plan Update

12. It was noted that the Marketing Strategy had been approved by the Park Board, and Paper 2, was tabled outlining the key marketing activities that will be included in the Marketing Strategy Action Plan. Further consultation will take place with partner organisations and a detailed action plan, including timescales and funding, will be available by mid-December.
13. The final report on the Cairngorms Visitor Survey is imminent and it was agreed that a presentation should be arranged for the next meeting. It is the intention to make the full report as widely available as possible, and a small leaflet with the key findings for local businesses will also be produced.

HG

HG/PC

Development of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy

14. Paper 3 was tabled and provided an update on the Sustainable Tourism Strategy. The consultants are in the process of gathering initial information by questionnaire survey and telephone interviews. There was a discussion about the selected telephone interviewees and it was decided that a hotelier should be added, and that the missing representative from AGTB should also be included.
15. An issues paper will be produced at the beginning of October by the consultants and this will be circulated to the Strategy Sub-Group to seek comment in advance of the Sustainable Tourism Workshop scheduled for Wednesday 27th October.

DS

Cairngorms Visitor Guide 2004/ 2005

16. Paper 1 outlined the evaluation of the 2004 Visitor Guide and the process to oversee the production of the 2005 Guide. It was agreed that no further evaluation is required on the 2004 guide.
17. A mailshot has been sent out to some 650 tourism businesses on the CNPA database including a copy of the 2004 guide and advertising ratecard for the 2005 guide. It was agreed that businesses that are solely accommodation should not have been sent this

information as they will not be allowed to place an advert. Accommodation that includes a restaurant or facilities to non-residents are allowed to advertise

18. It was agreed that more information on the park communities should be included in the 2005 guide.

HG/PC

Scottish Tourism Network Update

19. Industry Update No 2 was tabled by Casia Zajac, and Ian Dunlop outlined the political processes involved in making the change to the new integrated tourism network.
20. The Chair updated the group on 3 recent meetings he had attended. The first with ministers, Frank McAveety & Alan Wilson, had been positive and the special status of Scotland's National Parks had been recognised, with the idea of the CNP as a pilot for the national tourism exercise being raised. A further meeting with the Chief Executives from both NPs, VisitScotland and senior Civil Servants will be held in due course.
21. A second successful meeting was held with Peter Lederer, Chair of VisitScotland, who supported the progress of the TDWG and finally; the Chair had attended a meeting with COSLA, which had discussed a number of relevant tourism issues.

Transition of Working Group to Advisory Forum

22. The Park Authority has reviewed its current working arrangements and decided that Advisory Forums mirroring the 4 aims of the Park will be set up (Integrated Land Management, Visitor Services, Tourism and Information and Local Access) together with an Advisory Forum on the issue of joined-up working
23. The new Visitor Services, Tourism and Information Advisory Forum will have a similar remit and membership to the existing TDWG, but will be adapted to include Visitor Services and Information issues. There will be strong links to the other Forums, particularly the Social and Economic Development Advisory Forum.

MF

Point of Entry Signage Update

24. Debbie Strang gave a brief update on the Point of Entry Signage Project, and said that the Board had endorsed a set of guiding principles for the project (covering aspects such as maintenance, siting, inclusion of gaelic) and favoured seeking funding to install high quality granite markers together with appropriate upgrading and visitor information provision at the key sites.
25. She went on to say that further developmental work was taking place with the consultant so that accurate costings together with timescales could be produced. The project can be completed in just over two years once funding is in place, and if this is the case it is likely that the first markers could appear in summer 2005.
26. The provision and need for directional signage was also discussed, and Murray Ferguson advised that a new member of staff will be recruited to look at signage and interpretation, and an update will be given at the next meeting.

MF

Project Updates

Action

27. Roger Edwards updated the Group on the research commissioned by MBSE to looking at the development of business and community groups in Badenoch and Strathspey from a visitor perspective. It was stressed that this work should feed into VisitScotland's product development work as well as the Cairngorms Brand Development work and Sustainable Tourism Strategy.
28. Paul Higson advised that some new ECAP paths had been opened.
29. There was a discussion on the role of Tourist Board Training in the tourism network and Casia Zajac confirmed that they will also be merged with VisitScotland. It was suggested that they be approached to deliver the proposed exhibition follow-up training course.

HG

AOCB

30. James MacFarlane suggested that Derek Reid, visiting Professor of Abertay University and a former Scottish Tourist Board chairman, be invited to address the group at the next meeting, because he has undertaken research in New Zealand which has great relevance to the Park area.
31. Siobhan MacDonald advised that an audit is ongoing to identify what products are being produced by farmers within the park, and the associated marketing and branding strategies that might result.
32. Bill Taylor announced that he would no longer be representing SNH on the Group as he has accepted a new post as Natural Heritage Manager at HIE. It was suggested that SNH should be contacted to see whether a replacement could be suggested.
33. Murray Ferguson advised that 6 local workshops to discuss the setting up of Local Access Forums, are being organised throughout the Park area, during September.
34. The Sponsorship of a Tourism and the Environment Award at the Aberdeen and Grampian tourism businesses Northern Light Awards, was raised as a possibility for the CNPA to consider.
35. The Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Group Management Plan is out for consultation, and Group members are encouraged to respond.

HG

DS

Date of Next Meeting

36. The workshop for the Sustainable Tourism Strategy will be held on Wednesday 27th October, and the programme will include a meeting of the TDWG during the afternoon to discuss the direction of the strategy and action plan development.
37. Thereafter, the next meeting will be held on 15th December 2004 at a Badenoch & Strathspey location.

The meeting ended at 13:15pm

Heather Galbraith
September 2004