
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR INFORMATION

Title: INTEGRATED GRANTS PROGRAMME - FIRST UPDATE AUGUST – DECEMBER 2005

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Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to report back on the initial progress made by the CNPA's Integrated Grants Programme (August – December 2005).

Recommendations

That the Board:

- notes the successful establishment and promotion of the Grants Programme;
- notes the status of the programme and consequent expected delivery outputs by the end of financial year 2005/06; and
- notes progress made in pooling public funds to grant aid Park related activities.

Executive Summary

Following approval of the Programme by the Board on 3rd June 05, we officially launched the programme at the Dee River Festival and Newtonmore Games in the first week of August. We have made a concerted effort to communicate about the programme. We have dispersed over 500 grant packs, placed information on our Web Page and in the new issue of ParkLife, as well as achieving local media coverage of the programme and individual projects.

To date, we have approved 26 projects and activities, to a total of over £77,000. This includes 21 Small grants and 5 Medium grant offers. The large number of projects under development means we conservatively estimate we will deliver in excess of 45 projects within this year and provide grants of over £150,000. This will be 26% of the 2 year target number of projects and minimum 60% of funds available this year.

We have also made some progress in developing partnerships for pooling public funds to grant aid activities related to the aims of the National Park. Of particular note has been positive consideration by SNH and Historic Scotland, with SNH ready to make further contributions beyond the Biodiversity Scheme as we go into 2006/07 financial year.

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Background

1. In Board Paper 1 03/06/05, we set out how we would implement an integrated grants programme, through an initial set of six grant schemes. This took up where we left off the previous year, utilising the Grants Programme as an effective, efficient and economic way of achieving the goals within the Corporate Plan and engaging with partner communities living and working within the National Park area.
2. The Board approved the following targets for the programme over the two year period;
 - a) For Small Grants, the CNPA will contribute £85,000 in 05-06 and £80,000 in 06-07 and we would expect to support between 100 and 125 projects worth a total of £367,000.
 - b) For Medium Grants, the CNPA will contribute £70,000 in 05-06 and £80,000 in 06/07 and we expect to support between 25 and 45 projects worth a total of £350,000.
 - c) This is expected to be matched by other public funds, initially in part from LEADER+, but later through other public / EU funding streams and agencies such as SNH.
3. We have now reached the stage where the programme is fully operational, and we are in a position to give initial feedback to the Board on early progress made towards the targets above.

Update/Issues

4. In follow-up to the launch, press releases appeared in the Badenoch and Strathspey Herald and the Deeside Piper. We have also continued to expand our mailing list and have now sent out over 500 grant information packs and placed the information on our Web Page. We have also actively taken up opportunities to present our Programme to SNH, Marr Area Partnership/Aberdeenshire Council, and tourism service providers at the Tourism in the Cairngorms Conference 2005. In addition to publicity achieved for individual events, the winter 2005/06 edition of Parklife also includes a double page spread on progress, making it clear the types of project we will support and that there are funds available through to 2007.
5. The allocation to each scheme was made against commitments made in the Operational plan 2005/06. The CNPA made available the largest allocations to the Investing in Communities (£51,000), Cultural Heritage (£40,000), Marketing and Events (£30,000), with smaller allocations made to Interpretation (£23,000), Outdoor Access (£6,000) and Biodiversity (£5,000) respectively.
6. We have to-date had over 200 enquiries, (via telephone and email communications), approved 26 proposals, totalling over £77,000 and are in the process of providing developmental support to 11 proposals, with many more enquiries being worked up into full proposals. Approved projects include 21 Small grants and 5 Medium grant offers. Our average contribution to the small grants has been £2,700 and medium grants £4,350. The table in Annex 1, shows the activity breakdown by scheme with

details of all projects approved and those currently under the final stages of development.

7. Based on the progress to-date, we expect to deliver more than 45 projects by the end of the year, with spend to reach a minimum 60% of available budget agreed by the board. This is our best conservative guess at this stage, but we would reiterate that it is still early to draw any final conclusions.
8. Of particular note is the initially higher take up of grants in the Investing in Communities and Marketing and Events Schemes. This may be related to seasonal priorities, with projects such as support to the Wildcat Art competition, the Grantown Farmers Market and the Carrbridge Gathering Chainsaw competition requiring good weather. We would expect this to restart with winter specific events and activities now vying for grant support. However, we are also now seeing the other schemes generating interest, particularly Biodiversity (with full commitment of funds imminent) and Cultural Heritage, where projects have perhaps taken longer to develop. In the coming months we will monitor all the schemes and try to proactively promote projects in schemes where the take-up has been slower.
9. The majority of proposals have to date been from the north and the west of the Park. However, after a busy summer period we hope that initial enquiries from the south and east of the Park will lead to applications for grant support.

Issues for Consideration

10. While we recognise that we have made significant steps forward in establishing the new programme, we are still very much in the early stages of making the most from grant giving as a tool to deliver Corporate Plan goals. We will therefore continue to work hard to refine our administrative and substantive support systems, to share development experience internally and good practice across our diverse range of clients. Of particular relevance is maximising the contribution these projects make to our Corporate Goals and the achievement of the Park Aims.
11. An important operational issue which we have been monitoring is whether our project ceiling may be too low within the Medium Grants schemes. We can currently support projects where the total costs do not exceed £20,000. Although we will inevitably always find exceptions to a rule, we have recently had several applications just over £20,000. This will need to be considered upon completion of this financial year, as increased flexibility may facilitate other partnership funding.
12. As our expectation for delivery of funds this year is still not at our target of available funds, we are working to ensure that communities are given the support they require to develop their proposals and to get them in for appraisal in good time. By using all our networks to encourage groups to take advantage of the schemes, as well as trying to initiate applications in areas of priority for the Park we are confident we can reach the targets set for the two years, but at this stage it looks unlikely we will reach budget ceilings this year.

Joining up Public Funds

13. A central component of the grants programme has been to better service our clients living, working and enjoying the special qualities of the National Park area. To this end we have endeavoured to make our systems and procedures clear and simple, yet robust. The partnership with LEADER+ is a key element of this using a well recognised and established system to enable joined up grant giving in one funding stream. Building on this (as well as the contributions to the Biodiversity scheme from Aberdeenshire, Angus and Highland Councils), we have already begun discussions to pool wider grant funding (specifically public sector funds) coming to the area. So far we have had positive consideration by SNH and Historic Scotland, with SNH ready to make further contributions beyond the Biodiversity Scheme as we go into 2006/07 financial year. This is also significant as funds available through LEADER+ dwindle in the coming year and we seek to replace them and to maintain grant giving levels.
14. In addition to the use of the grants mechanism to deliver the Park Authority's Corporate Plan goals, we have also been developing operational arrangements to carry forward the Scottish Executive's policy of promoting joined up government. This we hope will lead to pooled resources and collaborative and participatory project development and appraisal.

Consultation

15. The information and issues highlighted in this paper are the direct result of open and collaborative management, including Champions (focal point for each scheme) meeting for a monthly review of all proposals and highlighting areas for improving our service. We have also taken into account feedback from customers (both verbally, by email), and in project reports as well as a result of discussions with other public sector agencies.

Policy Context

16. The grants proposed are directly linked to the Corporate Plan; funds will only be awarded if we are persuaded that the projects proposed deliver one or more of its goals, and that this is the most effective and efficient way to achieve those outputs.
17. During the coming year emphasis will be placed on the use of grants to support groundwork and preparation for Park Plan implementation.

Delivering Sustainability

18. Firstly, we see the process of engaging the communities in delivering their objectives and linking these in with the aims of the Park as a broader contributing factor in the long term sustainability of our work. However, on a more project specific basis, all proposals that are submitted to us are developed with their sustainability in mind. The following projects illustrate some of the elements that we feel should contribute to a project's sustainability;

T071.007 - Investing in Communities, Dee Kayaks (Aboyne Canoe Club)

19. To buy 6 kayaks and accessories, to equip a new canoe club for river kayaking. To be used by all members of the club, young and old. This project demonstrated strong **commitment and participation**, with the group already holding fund raising events and signing up over 100 members before they even have any kayaks.

T072.003 - Marketing and Events, Grantown Farmers Market, Cairngorms Farmers Market Association

20. To support the early development of the Farmers Market, preparing for expansion next year. This proposal demonstrated a demand from both the producers and the community locally, and was approved as a **new pilot project**, that will be further developed based on the results of this small grant.

T074.052 – Interpretation, Osprey Wishing Well, Aviemore Business Association

21. To put in place an iconic sculpture of an Osprey over a wishing well. Made of local materials the well and sculpture will act as a milestone on the Speyside Way, attract visitors to view the sculpture, the incorporated mountainscape and to **generate revenue** for maintenance and to donate as seed funding for other local community events.

T073.001 – Biodiversity, Cairngorm Mountain children's tree planting initiative, Cairngorm Mountain Trust.

22. To give local children the opportunity to plant a tree on Cairngorm as part of the development of an area of montane scrub. This project has in the past only involved one off tree planting visits by local children. The new proposal took the **multi-year** opportunity offered by the grant programme, to involve the same groups of children in nurturing trees through all the seasons. The outputs expected are to connect the children with the natural environment and consequently to develop their long term interest and understanding.

T072.010 - Marketing and Events, Husky Torchlight Parade, Aviemore Business Association.

23. A torchlight procession and Husky parade through the village accompanied by a pipe band and entertainment. This event connects the torchlight parade with the nearby Sled dog racing taking place in early January. Both events generate significant interest, at a slow time of the year and their combination is seen as something that will substantially increase the **interest, impact and viability** of each event.

Delivering a Park for All

24. As with the SGS during 04-05, we have sought to publicise the availability of these grants widely and encourage a good uptake from across the Park and from all sections of the local communities. We accept that this is a gradual process and are making every effort to proactively reach all potential community applicants.
25. While all projects are expected to demonstrate that they are inclusive, the following specific approved projects are early examples which have targeted the disadvantaged;
26. ***T071.005 - Caberfeild cycles***, use of specially designed bicycles to get families with members who are disabled out into the countryside.
27. ***T071.006 – Speakeasies Youth Consultation series***, encouraging youth members of the community to discuss their issues and then possible solutions, to be taken to the Scottish Executive.

Delivering Economy, Effectiveness and Efficiency

28. The Programme has been designed to deliver economy, effectiveness and efficiency (three “e’s”), by bringing together different funding sources around a broad range of areas within which we give grants. Given that last year these were delivered through a range of systems, we have already achieved a greater degree of the three “e’s” by streamlining our procedures and operational systems within the grants programme.
29. To ensure that we maximise these benefits we hold regular monthly review meetings with those concerned (Champions, related policy staff and managers). This meeting ensures that we maintain coordination and consistency in our approach, that we learn from each other in our dealings with external customers and that we identify areas for improvement and take follow-up action to improve delivery of the Programme.
30. One key area that we will focus on is the further development of partnerships with other public grant giving bodies. We have already initiated discussion with SNH and Historic Scotland, and our templates and procedures are being looked at by some of our Local Authorities as a starting point for further discussion. Our mutual success in reducing duplication and increasing leverage of other funding sources will improve both the impact of all local public funding streams and increase economy and efficiency in use of these funds.

Implications

Financial Implications

31. As has already been mentioned above, sufficient funds have been allocated through the Operational Plan 2005/06 (£155,000 in total). Although we started the Programme late, in August 2005, we have seen a good number of proposals going through the system. The delay may have reduced grant take-up, and consequently we can expect an under spend of up-to 40% (Small and Medium Grants combined), for this financial year. This will however have no impact on our use of LEADER+ funds which are spread through both years. The same is true of other partners’ funds, currently restricted to the Biodiversity Scheme where we are confident we will fully meet our funding ceiling.
32. As intended, the majority of grants given by the Authority are being processed through the Programme, however, there continue to and we expect always will be a small minority which for reasons of scale or orientation do not fit within any of our schemes. To date these include approval of 5 projects, totalling £36,000. These do not currently impact on the funding available to the grant schemes.

Presentational Implications

33. The Programme has been well received by stakeholders, both customer communities and partner public agencies. Media coverage has been satisfactory, but we need to maintain clear communications and reinforce the way the scheme works through all opportunities we get.
34. The Grants Pack has been praised for clarity and simplicity of materials, despite some confusion over application forms for small and medium grants.

Implications for Stakeholders

35. The current status of the Programme, which we are communicating to potential applicants, is that we have funds available for this financial year and are keen to work with them to develop proposals. The response we have had to date has been very positive concerning our efforts to work with applicants to draw out mutually beneficial elements. This will continue and represents an opportunity for joint working for stakeholders with the Park Authority.

Next Steps

36. As discussed previously with the Board, we will provide a full review of the Integrated Grants Programme for the 2005/06 financial year and any recommendations for changes to the structure or operational procedures, including in-kind contributions in lieu of the current 10% cash contribution, in May 2006.

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November 2005

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Annex

Cairngorms National Park Authority Small Grants Project Status (only those projects where a draft or full application has been received are included)

CNPA IGP SG Ref. No.	Project Title	Registered Community Name	Description of Project	SGS Input (£)	Other Funds (£)	Total cost (£)	Status (Date)	Date of Event/ Activity	Notes
Investing in Communities									
T071.001 - Investing in Communities	Community Newsletter Editors Training	Touler training Group	To share experience and to develop community newsletters across the Park.	£680	£0.00	£680	Completed	Jun-05	A commitment made pre – IGP, doesn't include LEADER+ funds
T071.002 - Investing in Communities	FWAG Shetlands Conference	FWAG	Sharing experience of retention of cattle on marginal land	£3,440	£1,026	£4,466	Completed	2-4 Sept 05	Final Payment issued October 2005
T071.003 - Investing in Communities	Wildcat trail Art Competition	The Wildcat Centre	To carry out a weekend Art competition around the Wildcat trail and local area, establishing it this year and helping to make it an annual event by supporting next year a well.	£1,577	£1,080	£2,657	Approved	16-18 Sept 2005 and in 2006	
T071.005 - Investing in Communities	Caberfeidh Cycles	Health and Happiness, Badenoch and Strathspey	To purchase all abilities cycles and ordinary bikes for families with less able members to join in appreciating the Newtonmore area.	£3,101	£1,874	£4,975	Approved		
T071.006 - Investing in Communities	Speakeasies Youth Consultation series	Scottish Youth Parliament Ltd.	One day youth discussion seminar (est. 100 young people). To discuss problems, reasons and possible solutions to issues that they face in rural life - to be taken to the Scot. Exec.	£1,359	£151	£1,510	Approved		
T071.007 - Investing in Communities	Dee Kayaks	Aboyne Canoe Club	To buy 6 kayaks and accessories, to equip a new canoe club for river kayaking. To be used by all members of the club, young and old.	£2,000	£400	£2,400	Approval in process		
T071.008 - Investing in Communities	Lifeguard Training	Grantown Swim Club	To provide lifeguard training for six people to enable the club to develop the training facility the swim club offers	£1,474	£200	£1,674	Awaiting reply from club.		

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CNPA IGP SG Ref. No.	Project Title	Registered Community Name	Description of Project	SGS Input (£)	Other Funds (£)	Total cost (£)	Status (Date)	Date of Event/ Activity	Notes
T071.009 - Investing in Communities	Crofting Study	Cairngorms Crofting Communities Association	To provide a baseline information and strategic blueprint for crofting, which will inform the Cairngorms National Park Authority, Crofters Commission and partners of the requirements of crofting in the National Park.	£4,320	£480	£4,800	Approved		
T071.010- Investing in Communities	YMCA Feasibility Study	Grantown Community Centre/YMCA	Feasibility study to give the Management Board a realistic view of the centre's present situation. Includes a recently completed survey of the opinions of locals who have access to the present centre. Looking at various options for the present site including; renovation, sale, redevelopment	£4,500	£500	£5,000	Approval in process		
T071.051 - Investing in Communities	BofG/Carrbridge Community Support Worker	Boat of Garten Community Company	The project provides core support for Community Support Workers in both Carrbridge and Boat of Garten.	£2,500	£7,680	£10,180	Approved		Pre-IGP and does not include any L+ contribution
T071.052 - Investing in Communities	Zero Waste	Community Recycling Network for Scotland	To hold an event to promote recycling, re-use and reduction of waste in the CNP area	2925	6575	£9,500.00	Approved		
T071.053- Investing in Communities	Extend Lunch and Learn, Personal Development Weekend	People Positive							Park may decided to support
Marketing and Events									
T072.002 - Marketing and Events	Celtic Club Champions Challenge	Kingussie Camanach Club	Inter-club/sport challenge between local Scottish and Irish National champions	£1,912	£425	£2,337	Approved		Pre - IGP, has own letter of offer
T072.003 - Marketing and Events	Grantown Farmers Market	Cairngorms Farmers Market Ass.	To support the early development of the Farmers Market, preparing for expansion next year.	£942		£942	Approved		

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T072.004 - Marketing and Events	Midsummer Event - Wildcat Trail	Newtonmore Community Woodland and Development Trust	Combines Scottish traditional entertainment with a midnight walk. Up to 150 residents and visitors are expected to attend, stimulating the local economy, with benefits to participants in environmental awareness and participating in a healthy activity.	£1,182	£131	£1,314.24	Completed		Pre-IGP Grant with L+, awaiting Final Claim
T072.005 - Marketing and Events	Grantown Try Tri	Grantown Try Tri Club	To support the development of a package of communications tools, including participants web page to register and updates on the try tri.	£3,918	£442	£4,360	Approved		Advance issued October 2005
T072.006 - Marketing and Events	Grantown Festival	Grantown Business Association	To organise a festival of local activities, including community and business groups, over a week long period.	£1,350	£1,985	£3,335	Postponed to next year		
T072.007 - Marketing and Events	Carrbridge Gathering	Carrbridge Community Council	To organise a village fair whose main focus will be a chainsaw sculpture competition	£3,297	£500	£3,797	Approved		
T072.008 - Marketing and Events	Big Breakfast and Great Porridge Fun Run	Carr Bridge and Vicinity Community Council	To broaden the existing World Porridge Championships which are now under the Highland Food and Drink Festival, Including a healthy community breakfast and fun run.	£2,840	£400	£3,240	Approved		Advance given 20/09/05 £946.67
T072.009 - Marketing and Events	Extension of Carr Bridge Live	Carrbridge Community Arts	Extends the existing festival by 2 days to include a golf tournament, guided walk and cycle ride, showcase primary Shinty championship, music, song and dance.	£2,232	£248	£2,480	Approved		Advance given 20/09/05 £744.00
T072.010 - Marketing and Events	Husky Torchlight Parade	Aviemore Business Association	A torchlight procession and Husky parade through the village accompanied by a pipe band and entertainment.	£2,310	£300	£2,610	Approval in process		
T072.051 - Marketing and Events	CCC Web Page	Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce	Development and hosting of the CCC Web page for 1 year.	£1,200	£1,200	£12,000	Approved		Pre-IGP approved.

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T072.052 - Marketing and Events	Dee River Festival	Ballater Royal Deeside Ltd		£3,500	£500	£4,000	Approved		Total £4500 from L+, £5000 from CNPA, from 2004/05 (CNPA £3k, L+ £2k) to 2005/06 (CNPA £2k, L+ £1.5k)
Biodiversity									
T073.001 - Biodiversity	Cairngorm Mountain children's tree planting initiative	Cairngorm Mtn Trust	To give local children the opportunity to plant a tree on Cairngorm and watch it grow over the coming years.	£1,833	£2,541	£4,374	Approved	26/09/20 05	
T073.002 - Biodiversity	Strathdon Lapwing Project	Grampian FWAG	To provide advice, training and raise awareness of managing land to benefit lapwings on farms in Strathdon	£5,000		£5,000	Approved		
T073.003 - Biodiversity	Biodiversity Village Audit	Boat of Garten Community Company	Undertake an audit of the local environment involving local people trained by specialists, produce report, leaflet and interpretation	£5,000		£5,000	draft application		
T073.004 - Biodiversity	Remote camera survey	Boat of Garten Wildlife Group	Use a remote camera to undertake species surveys of the area around Boat of Garten	£550		£550	draft application		
T073.005 - Biodiversity	Wildlife garden & pond creation	Laggan Community Forest Trust	Create a wildlife garden and pond for use by local community and visitors	£4,900		£4,900	draft application		
T073.006 - Biodiversity	Wildlife hide & equipment	Frog-hoppers & Boat-bugs Wildlife Clubs	Provision of equipment for two children's wildlife groups, build a hide and pond dipping platform	£4,951		£4,951	draft application		
Interpretation									
T074.001 - Interpretation	Osprey Centre Interpretation Facilities	RSPB	Adding and improving existing wildlife interpretation for visitors to Loch Garten Osprey Centre	£4,473	£497	£4,970	Approved		
T074.051 - Interpretation	Unfolding Landscape	NVA	A national 2 day seminar for practitioners and policy makers who may have an interest or involvement in creating innovative work in Scotland's	£2,000		£2,000	Approved		

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			landscape.						
T074.052 - Interpretation	Osprey Wishing Well	Aviemore Business Association	To put in place an iconic sculpture of an Osprey over a wishing well. Made of local materials, the well will mark the Speyside Way, attract visitors to view the sculpture, the mountainscape and to donate money to community events.	£8,000		£8,000	Under development		
Outdoor Access									
T075.001 - Outdoor Access						£0.00			
Cultural Heritage									
T076.001 - Cultural Heritage	History and Archaeology of Glen Feshie	North of Scotland Archaeological Society	To publish a small book on the history and archaeology of Glen Feshie. This publication will include local walks, and some of Landseers drawings.	£3,531	£1,464	£4,995	Approved		Advance issued £1,177.00
T076.002 - Cultural Heritage	Strathspey Curling Club	Strathspey Curling Club	To upgrade outdoor curling facilities.	£4,500		£4,500	Waiting reply from group		
T076.003 - Cultural Heritage	Anagach Woodland Art Part 1	Anagach Woods Trust	Establish a greater cultural link between local people and their woodland	£540	£600	£600	Approved		
T076.004 - Cultural Heritage	Bowling Club Archive	Kingussie Bowling Club	To preserve archive materials including photos and old receipts in one booklet available or local historians and public interest.	£800		£800	Still under development		
T076.051 - Cultural Heritage	Kodally Choir	Deeside Kodally Choir	To bring together the communities of Upper Deeside to learn to read and sing music using the Kodaly method.	£3,127	£3,822	£6,950	Approved		Pre - IGP, has own letter of offer.

Large / Miscellaneous Grants;

Project Name	Group Name	Description of Activity	Date of Activity	Amount of grant
Strathmashie Forest community Heritage Project (Stage 1) - Archaeological Survey	Laggan Heritage	Strathmashie Forest community Heritage Project (Stage 1) - Archaeological Survey		5,000
Feis Spe Ceilidh Band	Feis Spe	Follow on from successful pilot to provide musical opportunities for young people.		9,000
Auchtavan Cottage	Braemar Community Ltd	Erection of canopy to facilitate the restoration and protection of a unique 'A' listed cottage with traditional "hanging lum"		8,000
The Four Corners	Dannsa	Traditional dance development in the Cairngorms		10,000
FishSpey	FishSpey Website Pilot Project Steering Group	To establish an internet service to promote and facilitate the marketing, availability and awareness of all recreational rod fishing and other water sport tourism in the Spey catchment.		4,000
Total				36,000