



*Pounds to People: a briefing paper on the progress of
the “Communities in the National Park Grant
Scheme”.*



Credit: Aviemore Walking Festival 03

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Executive summary

This briefing paper draws together information on the progress so far of the Cairngorms National Park Authority's, “Communities in the National Park Grant Scheme”, from its launch in early March to mid May 2004. The most significant features of progress so far have been;

- The Board agreed in December 2003, to set up a small grants scheme to help communities mark their inclusion in the National Park.
- A budget of £100,000 was allocated, with the majority from CNPA, and £45,000 from the LEADER+ programme.
- Grant size was decided between £500 to £3000, available for activities this financial year.
- Since the scheme's launch in March 04, we have received 60 enquiries, leading to 15 applications. Of these, 8 have been approved and 5 rejected and 2 pending.
- Most of the approved projects are in Badenoch and Strathspey, with 1 in Upper Deeside.
- This level of activity is in line with expectation. However, we are about to undertake a new round of promotion through ParkLife, flyers and a press release.

Finally, the paper calls for support, using the networks of both staff and Board members to increase promotion of the scheme to communities throughout the National Park.

***Dicken Higgins
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Introduction

1. The Communities in the National Park Small Grants Scheme was launched on 15 March 2004 and is intended to assist and encourage communities in the National Park to undertake activities and events to mark their inclusion in the National Park, and, through this to deepen their involvement and commitment to the aims of the National Park. To that end, a grant of between £500 and £3,000 is available for events and activities related to the 4 aims of the Park, and in particular the natural or cultural environment of the National Park in the area in which the applicant community is situated. It is also important that the impact of the event or activity should continue after it has taken place, and this is a criterion in assessing applications. It is not the aim of the Scheme to be prescriptive and community groups are being encouraged to be innovative and imaginative in the applications that they put forward.

Background

2. This scheme is being undertaken under the terms of Section 9 and Schedule 2, paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2, of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. Approval in principle to set up the scheme was given by the Park Board at its meeting on 12th September 2003, when a sub-group of the Board was delegated to work up proposals. This Sub-group reported back to the Board at its 5th December 2003 meeting when approval to proceed with the scheme was agreed and on 2 March 2004 Scottish Executive approval was received.
3. The principles agreed by the Board for the Scheme’s operation are:
 - Events should get people out into the Park both physically and imaginatively to enjoy it, understand it better and celebrate it.
 - Events and activities should be open to and involve as wide a cross section of society as possible.
 - Where possible, events should be conceived and organised by community interests, whether geographical communities or communities of interest.
 - The Authority’s support whether through financial or other means should be acknowledged in all cases.
4. The specific objectives of the scheme are as follows:
 - a. To support projects involving at least 25 community groups or organisations in the National Park area.
 - b. To ensure that there is a spread of supported projects across the National Park and across the range of community organisations.
 - c. To support projects that wherever applicable reflect the National Park’s aims of inclusiveness and a “Park for All”, and which demonstrate that consideration has been given, and implemented in practice, to the needs of all sections of the community.

5. In the original press release about the scheme, Andrew Thin, Convenor of the Board, said, "This scheme will enable communities to mark in some way the fact that they are part of this very special National Park. We want to encourage imaginative and innovative ideas and so the range of projects that might be eligible for support is very broad" (Appendix 1).
6. For a detailed description of the operational processes used in management of the scheme, see "Cairngorms National Park Authority, Communities in the National Park - A small Grants Scheme for Community Activities and Events, Guidance notes for Community and Voluntary Groups" - previously sent to all Board Members (March 04), now available on www.cairngorms.co.uk.

What was done to launch the scheme?

7. The launch of the scheme followed comprehensive development of the application, processing and feedback systems, and involved a press release which appeared in the Strathspey and Badenoch Herald on 17 March 2004, and the Press and Journal on 18 March 2004 (Appendix 1). Additionally, we mailed out Guidance Notes and Application forms to approximately 180 organisations active in and around the National Park. We have since tried to ensure that those missed in the first mailing receive the information. Similarly, an article was also posted on our web page in the news section, allowing interested organisations to also download the Guidance and Application form.
8. Internal presentation of the scheme to staff at an all staff meeting led to verbal promotion and further awareness raising, as well as take up by several Board members, who actively promoted the scheme in their own communities. A request for a simple flyer was also met, and this has since been available via the Association of Cairngorms Community Councils, National Park Offices (both Grantown and Ballater), and via the Post office in Newtonmore. Over 100 flyers have already been taken by interested persons.

What has been the response?

9. As a result of the launch we have had approximately 60 enquiries about the scheme, many of which have subsequently been sent application packs, or gone to our web page to read more and to download the forms. We have also had some contact with other small grant schemes operating in the area, and agreed to share proposals which may be of interest. This would either be to fund separately or where funds needed are greater to share the costs, giving communities the chance to increase the scale of their activities or events.
10. We have also operated a process of reviewing draft proposal ideas, and this has led to clearer and more appropriate final applications being

submitted. So far we have had received 15 proposals, some of which are in the process of refinement, with many other groups preparing their applications.

11. Most interest in the scheme has come from communities such as Ballater, Braemar, Logie Coldstone, Laggan, Kingussie, Newtonmore, Aviemore, Carrbridge, Nethybridge, Boat of Garten, Grantown and Tomintoul. With the majority of applications from community groups from Grantown and Newtonmore (also indicated in Fig. 1 below)

Fig 1. Areas of Impact (Approved projects only):

National Park Area	Group Location	Areas of influence*
Badenoch	√√√√	√√√√√
Strathspey	√√√	√√√√
Upper Moray		√√√√
Upper Donside		√√√
Upper Deeside	√	√√√√
Angus Glens		√√√

*applicants own assessment.

12. The nature of proposals covers a broad range of community events and activities. However, of particular interest has been the growing number of proposals from groups identifying with a local figure, and promoting awareness of their contribution both locally and to specific fields or issues. For example, the Patrick Geddes project, and the Kingussie Arts Network tribute to Donald Campbell.

What have we approved and rejected?

13. So far we have approved 8 projects, they are;
 - **“Carrbridge in Motion”** - Carrbridge Community Arts Group, a training for young people in film-making, to produce a documentary around the idea of their community at this time. The film will later be shown in the local community and may be available for other groups around the National Park. Viewing expected in July/August.
 - **“Out and About in the National Park”** - Newtonmore and District Floral Art club, part of celebration in the village hall, they will have a display with the above title during the Kingussie Folk Museum’s 60th Anniversary in 21-22 July.
 - **“Awareness and Promotion”** - Uphill Ski Club, based at Glenmore, will seek to raise awareness about what they are doing, and how more people from local communities can get involved in snow sports as participants if disabled, or as volunteers supporting others - from Aug. 04 - Feb. 05.
 - **“Patrick Geddes Project”** - Ballater (RD) Ltd, preparing an exhibition on the local man who has been called the founding father of British Town Planning, as well as being an active environmentalist. The exhibition will be based in the local tourist information and also involve other media and information to raise awareness about Patrick Geddes (from Aug - Oct. 04). It will later be available to tour other locations.

- **“Pantomime and Workshops”** - Newtonmore Drama Group, to write and produce a pantomime for Christmas, including local references and references to the National Park. Preparation will also include workshops to generate greater interest in drama (Summer workshops, performance in Dec. 04)
- **“Ceilidhs in the Cairngorms”** - DANNSA, workshops and community Ceilidhs in Kingussie, Tomintoul and Braemar in the late summer, early autumn.
- **“Gaelic Songs - a tribute to Donald Campbell”** - Kingussie Arts Network, inspired by local Gaelic bard Donald Campbell's songs. The project will bring together interested parties and local singers in talks, workshops and a performance to the community in Kingussie (1 Sept. 04 - 1 Feb. 05).
- **“Model garden”** - Grantown Playgroup, information to be shared with playgroups around the National Park. Including lessons learnt, challenges faced, thinking and ideas that could be replicated by other groups. Garden to be completed in August, with media coverage, open day and leaflet dissemination across the National Park pre-school groups.

Fig. 3 Calendar of Events and Activities;

Event	Organisation	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Carrbridge in Motion	Carrbridge Community Arts	■	■								
Out and About in the National Park	Newtonmore & Dist. Floral Art club			■							
Uphill Ski Club Awareness and Promotion.	Uphill Ski Club				■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Garden Redevelopment	Grantown Play Group					■	■	■	■	■	■
Patrick Geddes Project	Ballater (RD) Ltd					■	■	■			
Pantomime and Workshops	Newtonmore Drama Group			■	■	■	■		■		
Ceilidhs in the Cairngorms	DANNSA					■	■	■			
Gaelic Songs - a tribute to Donald Campbell	Kingussie Arts Network					■	■	■	■	■	■

14. Of the projects that we have rejected, the majority of these have again come from the Badenoch and Strathspey areas. In most cases they did not meet the criteria due to a lack of real engagement between the community and the National Park or its aims. They also included ongoing events looking for funding, and events where our contribution would be absorbed into purchase of high cost items such as computers, tents or Christmas lights. Those rejected have since been advised on redeveloping their proposal and/or re-directed to other potential funding sources.

Are we on target to meet our objectives?

15. At the start of the scheme, we expected to distribute between 30-40 grants of up to £3000, to at least 25 community groups around the National Park. To date we have approved 8, with a value of £19,408 out of a budget of £100,000. See Appendix 2 for the budget breakdown.
16. Given the lead in time for community groups to discuss and present proposals, this level of activity is what we expected.
17. However, the spread of approved projects is a bit uneven, with a particular focus in Badenoch. This is probably the result of a particular push by one of the Board members in that area. Whilst we would continue to welcome applications from groups in Badenoch, we will need to make particular effort to encourage applications from the south and east of the National Park.

What next?

18. We are about to launch a new round of publicity for the scheme through the following routes:
 - The next issue of **ParkLife** will include an article about the scheme and will be a great opening with which to stimulate interest.
 - A **new Press Release**, will demonstrate how easy it is to access these resources.
 - **More Flyers** will go out to associations and groups who may have a wider network in a specific area.

This should generate renewed interest and lead to more applications. However, it is clear that it will be most effective if Board members are also able to encourage groups within the National Park to take up this opportunity.

Finally, we will continue to review the progress of the scheme and take action as necessary to meet objectives agreed by the Board.

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23/05/04

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Appendix 1: Press release: Articles published in Strathspey and Badenoch Herald (17.03.04) and Piper and Journal (18.03.04)

National park groups get activities cash

by Nicola Stow

COMMUNITY groups in the Cairngorms are being offered cash to fund activities associated with the national park.

Under a new scheme launched this week by the National Park Board Authority, groups will have the chance to apply for grants up to £3,000 to provide "activities and events relating to aspects of the park".

As well as relevance to the national park, successful applications will have to show that a number of people in the community are involved and will have to leave some lasting impact or result in the community after the project is completed.

Any properly constituted



Andrew Thin . . . aiming for park enjoyment community or voluntary group may apply.

Communities working together on joint projects will

also be eligible for support. The scheme will run until March 1, 2005, and completed applications need to be received at the Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA) no later than September 1. The CNPA can provide up to 100% of the cost of the project, with a maximum grant of £3,000 per project and a minimum grant of £500.

Andrew Thin, convenor of the board of CNPA, said:

"This scheme is part of our aim to get all sections of the community out into the park, both physically and imaginatively, so that they can enjoy it, understand it better and celebrate it.

"The communities of the Cairngorms have a vital role to play in what is now the UK's

largest national park. From the outset, the board of the park authority has made it clear that involving communities in the development of the park is key to its long-term success. The communities in the park initiative are one part of that process.

"This scheme will enable communities to mark in some way the fact that they are part of this very special national park. We want to encourage imaginative and innovative ideas and so the range of projects that might be eligible for support is very broad.

"Examples of the sort of project that could qualify might include a play or concert relating to the national park and its aims."

£100,000 in project cash up for grabs

COMMUNITIES in Badenoch and Strathspey are being invited to apply for a share of a £100,000 cash pot for funding projects, to mark the creation of the Cairngorms National Park.

The "Communities in the National Park" scheme gives community groups in Scotland's second national park the chance to apply for funding of up to £3,000 for local projects.

The money will enable them to undertake activities and events that relate to some aspect of the national park and its four aims.

Completed applications need to be received at the Cairngorms National Park Authority by this September, and the initiative will run until March 1, 2005 - the second anniversary of the creation of the park.

The Cairngorms NPA is offering to cover up to 100 per cent of the cost of projects, and the minimum grant available will be £500. The scheme is being part funded by the LEADER+ Programme and the total budget is currently £100,000.

Andrew Thin, Cairngorms National Park Board convenor, said: "This scheme is part of our aim to get all sections of the community out into the park both physically and imaginatively so that they can enjoy it, understand it better and celebrate it.

"The communities of the Cairngorms have a vital role to play in what is now the UK's largest national park.

We look forward to receiving applications and to working with communities on their projects

- Cairngorms National Park Convenor Andrew Thin



By GAVIN MUSGROVE

"From the outset, the board of the park authority has made it clear that involving communities in the development of the park is key to its long-term success. The 'Communities in the Park' initiative is one part of that process.

SPORTING EVENT

"This scheme will enable communities to mark in some way the fact that they are part of this very special national park. We want to

encourage imaginative and innovative ideas, and so the range of projects that might be eligible for support is very broad.

"Examples of the sort of project that could qualify might include a play or concert relating to the national park and its aims.

"A book, sporting event or competition, particularly one that had an 'across the park' aspect, or which used the recreational assets of the park, could also qualify.

"Other activities which qualify could be relating to the natural or cultural environment, such as habitat improvement, undertaking a census of wildlife, or restoration of a historic or cultural site.

"We look forward to receiving applications and to working with communities on their projects."

Successful applications will have to show that a number of people in the community are involved and will have to leave some lasting impact or result in the community after the project is completed.

Any properly constituted community or voluntary group can apply. Communities working together on joint projects will also be eligible for support.

Any groups who are interested in applying can visit the park's website at www.cairngorms.co.uk or contact the Cairngorms National Park office in Grantown-on-Spey on (01479) 873535.

Appendix 2: Budget summary

Income:	Total
Sources:	
CNPA	£55,000
LEADER+	£45,000
Total Income:	
Expenditure:	
Approved applications:	
Carrbridge community Arts Group	£3,000
Newtonmore and District Floral Art Club	£500
Uphill Ski Club	£3,000
Patrick Geddes Project	£2,980
Newtonmore Drama Group	£928
DANNSA Ceilidh's in the Cairgorms	£3,000
Grantown Playgroup model garden	£3,000
Kingussie Arts Network	£3,000
Total Expenditure Committed	£19,408
Total Funds as yet uncommitted	£80,592