

Business Update 2011/2012

Cairngorms Business Partnership

Your Local
Chamber of Commerce
Working for You



Introduction

Welcome to the Cairngorms Business Partnership Business Update. It's been a busy year since the CBP was formally constituted in April 2011. The CBP is an affiliated Chamber of Commerce and seeks to support economic development in and around the Cairngorms National Park. Our Business Update 2011-2012 outlines the activities we have undertaken on behalf of member businesses. Our work splits into three key areas: **Development, Promotion** and **Advocacy**.

Development

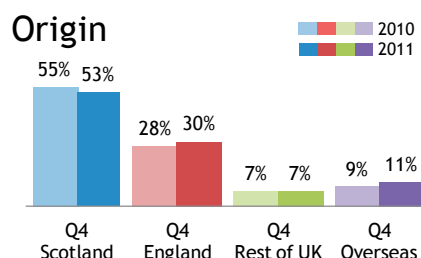
Business Workshops. The CBP continued with the highly successful business workshops running three in the year covering: Social Media, Connecting with the Customer and Digital Business. 144 delegates attended the one day sessions.

Member Offers. The CBP introduced a member to member offers scheme where members can post online deals and offers to fellow members. We hope this will generate more 'local' business and help businesses better understand what is on offer right here on our doorstep. In the coming year the CBP will launch third party discount schemes that will save members cash on purchases of a wide range of goods and services.

Customer Feedback. The surveys did not go entirely to plan due to technical hitches. 750 surveys were collected within the area. The coming year will direct effort towards online and App based feedback mechanisms.

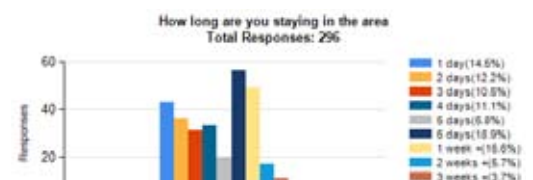
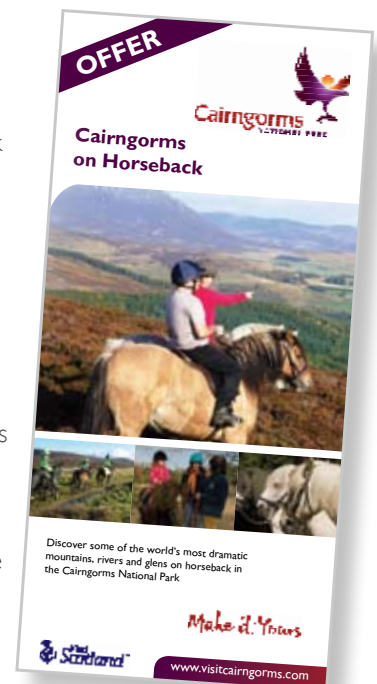
Business Barometer. We published four quarterly Business Barometer reports. The survey provides the area's only snap-shot on business trends and provides a great deal of valuable information for business planning purposes.

During the year the survey gathered 469 responses and launched a second survey covering the Royal Deeside DMO area.



Sector Development. Working with our sector groups we held several group meetings over the year.

- The Cairngorms Equestrian group came into being and together we launched the new Cairngorms on Horseback leaflet.
- In Spring the Hostels group finalised a brand new leaflet promoting Hostelling in the Cairngorms.
- We are also forming an attractions group and a business tourism group
- The Activity Providers Group, and Golf Group met during the year with each group laying plans to develop promotional material and activities.



Promotion

Website. The Visitcairnngorms.com website has gone from strength to strength with traffic up by a massive 26% on 2011. The all important click throughs to members' websites now averages 12,755 per month, up by 19%. We carried out two Google pay per click campaigns targeting the October holidays and the Easter holidays, both campaigns increased traffic by 65% over the same period the year before! The site will undergo a redesign and refresh in early Spring 2012.

Mobile App. Our groundbreaking mobile App went through a major change with the launch of a web enabled version. We now have an i-phone based App and a web based mobile version for all operating systems. With this change our main content on the website is now available on all mobile phone types that can access the internet. During the year traffic from handheld devices rose fourfold and now accounts for 20% of all web traffic.

Village Network. Together with CNPA we are working with communities to help develop an innovative and groundbreaking network of community websites across the CNP. Boat of Garten was the first community to invest in a networked site where consumers have access to localised information but are also connected to the business and events database covering all of the CNP.

Social Media. We now have over 7,100 people following our daily postings on Facebook and 2,000+ following our Tweets. Our blog is also helping to keep people engaged and improves our search engine visibility.

Photographic Campaign. We launched the Make it Yours Photographic Competition in Spring and it will run into June 2012. The campaign, sponsored by Pentax, will provide us with a great new photo library, increased consumer database, increased Facebook followers and increased visits to the Park.

PR. Over the past year we generated £1.2m of PR value from campaigns and press coverage. We co-ordinated a series of press trips, each one hosted by member businesses. PR remains a vital element of our marketing and promotion mix.

Advertising. The CBP took adverts in a number of publications including the Sunday nationals, VisitScotland guides, specialist magazines and websites. In addition we ran successful Google pay per click campaigns and trialled advertising on Facebook.

Publications. Whats On continues to be the area's leading monthly events and local information magazine and in 2011 we expanded the magazine to cover the whole of the CNP. Park i had a major facelift to the new brand format and is now an annual publication. The 'wee book' remains the favourite pocket guide in the CNP.

Make it Yours. 2011 saw the full role out of the Make it Yours strap line to support brand development and promotional activities. The strap line now appears on all CBP marketing and has been adopted by the CNPA on customer facing communications. Supported by VisitScotland and the CNPA we have commenced a three year journey to promote the Cairngorms National Park as a world class destination. The CBP team will, in partnership with areas and sector groups, look to develop targeted marketing campaigns to key target segments.

Events. The CBP launched an online and App based events calendar offering customers unrivalled access to local event information. With support from LEADER, our Events and Festivals Liaison Officer has been developing a range of services and benefits for event organisers.



Advocacy

National Park Plan 2. Perhaps the biggest piece of work this year outside our Marketing activities was concluded when the CBP submitted a Business Manifesto to the CNPA as a business response to the consultation around the National Park Plan 2. Drawing on 218 business contacts the submission sought a more defined Economic Development and Diversification Strategy for the area and the formation of an Economic Forum. Several other measures to support businesses operating in the CNP were submitted within the Business Manifesto.

Business Lunches. Networking lunches returned in 2011 with a series of well attended events attracting 119 local business people.



Business Conference. Our 2011 conference at Macdonald Aviemore Resort had John Swinney MSP give the keynote address and Malcolm Roughead CEO at VisitScotland and Liz Cameron, CEO of Scottish Chambers of Commerce address delegates. 91 delegates also had an opportunity to attend workshops on a variety of subjects.

National Rail Consultation. In partnership with the Scottish Chambers the CBP submitted a comprehensive response to the Scottish Government consultation.

Adventure Safety Licensing. The Scottish Government called a consultation on licensing requirements for the outdoor activities industry. The CBP through the Activity Providers group made a full response to the consultation calling for greater clarity around any new scheme.

Planning. The CBP met with the CNPA and local developers in response to Special Guidance around planning introduced by the CNPA. The CBP also met with the CNPA Planning Committee, and attends the Developers Forum.

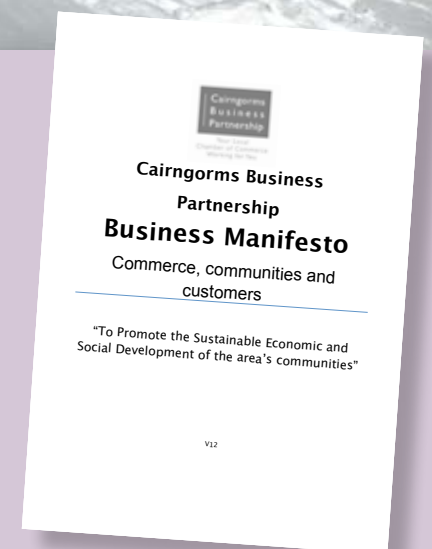
Representing Our Members

During the year the CBP represented your interests in a wide range of meetings and discussion groups including:

- CNPA Brand Management
- CNPA Sustainable Tourism Forum
- CNPA Developers Forum
- CNPA Board Briefings
- CNPA Tourism, Business, Understanding and Awareness Group
- CNPA Food Group
- CNPA Outdoor Events Group
- CNPA Strengthening Communities
- VisitScotland.com steering group
- Highland Economic Forum
- Highland Tourism Partnership
- National Tourism Strategy steering group
- Scottish Chambers' Council
- Community Planning Partnership

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CBP - One year on

New CBP Board. A new board took the helm of the CBP in September 2011. The board is made up from members representing each key sector and the five main geographic areas of the CNP. The board meets every quarter and is charged with the ongoing governance and direction of the CBP. The board relies on the volunteer support of the Directors who have given a great deal of time to the organisation. The board is undertaking a Visioning process that seeks to set out the agenda for the future development of the CBP.

Staff. We had two new arrivals in the year! Carole Butler our Events and Festivals Co-ordinator and Rachael Gingles, Marketing Manager both gave birth to little boys whilst on maternity leave. Sarah Caird continues to manage the website, Whats On and many aspects of our member and customer facing activities. Jacqui Bell manages our office administration having taken all our book-keeping in-house during 2011. Angela McBrearty joined us as maternity cover for our marketing post. Donna MacPherson joined us on a part-time basis to undertake advertising sales for Whats On and Park i . The CBP team continue to do a massive job in supporting the objectives of the organisation. Alan Rankin continues as CEO.

CBP Procurement. Over the year the CBP purchased £74,000 worth of goods and services from member businesses. Supplies included; print, catering, accommodation, meeting rooms and professional services. The CBP will continue to source locally whenever possible. Going forward, each monthly newsletter to members will note CBP purchase plans thus offering members an opportunity to quote.

Stakeholders. The CBP continues to work closely with and greatly appreciates the support from our public sector partners. Regular meetings and partnership development has been taken forward with; Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland, along with; Highland, Perthshire, Moray, Aberdeenshire and Angus. The CBP also meet regularly with SNH, RSPB and Forestry Commission Scotland and have also secured support from Business Gateway and LEADER.



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Make it Yours

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