
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: **Developing the Brand**

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Purpose

To update the Board on progress to date in developing the National Park Brand and to decide on how to take this work forward.

Recommendations

That the Board:

- a) Agrees to change the Brand Management Group to a Brand Development Group as outlined in the paper.
- b) Approves the changes to the terms of reference for the group to allow this change to happen.

Executive Summary

This paper outlines the work undertaken since 2005 in developing and promoting the Cairngorms National Park Brand. The impact of new policy on the development of the brand is discussed and specific challenges and opportunities are identified. Changes to the Brand Management Group are recommended to create a group that can advise on future brand development while retaining an overview of brand use.

DEVELOPING THE BRAND - FOR DECISION

Background

1. In February 2005 the Board approved the 'roll out' of the Cairngorms National Park Brand .This was the culmination of a year's work in developing a brand wheel with industry partners in the Tourism Working Development Group, and the design and testing of a brand identity (the bird image) with a range of partners and through focus groups. Annex I provides background to the development of the brand.
2. At the meeting in 2005 the board approved several actions including:
 - a) The establishment of a Brand Management Group (BMG) to take decisions about how the Brand should be implemented and used;
 - b) That use of the CNP Brand identity (Fig 1) for marketing and promotional activity will be linked to appropriate existing quality assurance schemes;
 - c) The insertion of the word 'Authority' to the CNPA's corporate logo (Fig 2) and that the CNPA logo should only be used as a corporate logo to represent official business of the Park Authority. It should not be used in a broader context to promote the National Park.

Fig 1 CNP Brand Identity



Fig 2 CNPA Corporate Logo



3. The copyright for the Cairngorms National Park brand identity (fig 1) is owned by CNPA. The word "owned" can also be used in another sense, namely that the CNPA's intention has always been that the Brand is deployed for the benefit of the National Park, and those who live and work in the Park – in that sense we want to try and develop the sense of shared "ownership" much more widely, to marry up with wide usage of the Brand. So the word "owned" has proved sensitive, and care is needed. But the fact is that someone has to own the copyright and manage its use - that is the CNPA. In exercising that responsibility, and leadership, we do so by engaging with others with an interest, for which the BMG was set up.
4. The BMG is an implementation group of the CNPA with agreed terms of reference and a membership comprising one representative from the Association of

Cairngorms Communities, the Cairngorms Business Partnership, VisitScotland and five CNPA board members.

5. The recent development of a Marketing Framework (2011) by the Cairngorms Business Partnership, Sustainable Tourism Strategy (2011), CNPA Communications and Engagement Strategy (2012) and the National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17 are reasons to look again at our management of the brand.

Brand Implementation

6. The brand has been successfully used in a range of applications and by a range of partners since 2005. Annex 2 provides a summary of uses and exposure to date.
7. This use has contributed to some key outcomes:
 - a) A coordinated marketing campaign for the National Park.
 - b) 82% of all visitors being aware they are in a National Park.
 - c) 51% of visitors saying that being a National Park was important to their visit.
 - d) 47% of business saying the National Park has a high influence in attracting first time visitors & 41% in attracting repeat visitors.
 - e) 46% of visitors being able to describe the brand identity without a visual promote.

However, as discussed later, we consider that there could be many more opportunities to encourage people to make a positive emotional commitment to the brand i.e. the Cairngorms National Park.

Policy

8. The **National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017** sets out our long-term vision for the Cairngorms National Park :

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

The CNP Brand represents the landscape of the National Park, its people and the experience it offers.

9. The **CNPA Communications Strategy** states, 'looking to the future we need to develop the brand so that it meets our overall communications and engagement objectives and encourages use of the brand identity by a wider range of partners. This has the potential to add value to products and services, support high quality experiences within the Park and encourage people to get involved in caring for the Park.'

10. The development of the brand is key to delivering the three outcomes:
- a) Increased awareness of the Park: why it is a special place and its value as a national asset
 - b) Increased sense of 'closeness': a deeper connection with/appreciation of the Park, its special qualities and how it's managed
 - c) Increased sense of responsibility/ ownership: engagement with/ support for how the Park is managed

11. Development of the brand features significantly within the **Sustainable Tourism Strategy** including:

2a Develop and convey the essence of the brand, based on the Cairngorms' core values

In the last few years the Cairngorms National Park brand has been established and exposed through the presence of a striking visual identity which has achieved strong visitor recall. It is now important to deepen awareness and understanding of what the brand stands for and to convey it in ways that are meaningful to:

- a) *visitors and potential markets, to secure their interest and response.*
- b) *stakeholders and users of the brand, to strengthen their understanding of what it links and commits them to.*

Work on the brand essence should relate to three requirements:

- a) *Developing and conveying the personality attributes of the Cairngorms brand in terms of its overall character, for example as a welcoming and authentic place.*
- b) *Distilling, capturing and conveying the specific components of the Cairngorms which define its unique selling proposition that distinguishes it from other destinations. There should be a close link here to what have been termed the area's special qualities.*
- c) *Reflecting inclusivity and accessibility as core brand values.*

This brand essence will need to be communicated to tourism enterprises and other stakeholders together with materials (including text, images etc.) that can be used by them.

12. The brand is key to the **Marketing Framework** with the 'make it yours' strapline developed specifically to encourage visitors to connect with the National Park and to start to deliver the three outcomes outline in paragraph 10.

Consultation

13. In developing this work we have consulted directly with the Brand Management Group, who support the idea to move to further develop the use of the Cairngorms Brand, and recognise that there are a number of strands of thinking to take further:
- a) Improving quality standards (a) for visitors, (b) for residents
 - b) Making the emotional connection (leading to people getting involved)

- c) Merchandising/fund raising
 - d) Promoting shared messages about the Cairngorms National Park (to and by partners, communities, Scottish Government)
 - e) Marketing the Park
14. This is complex territory. While clearly there is vast experience in the world with commercial branding, what we are trying to do with the Cairngorms Brand is rather different, and in many ways quite subtle, so much of the body of knowledge is not directly applicable. And yet the very success of the Brand depends on potential users (i.e. those who live and work here, all our partners) being “bought in” to the idea.

Discussion

15. The ‘roll out’ and recognition of the brand identity has been successful to date. However, we have little evidence of people making an emotional commitment to the brand. This assertion is supported by our policies and discussions with BMG.
16. In taking the work forward we feel that there are a number of challenges and opportunities:
- a) There is still confusion with partners between the CNP Brand Identity and the CNPA Corporate Logo – an opportunity to look afresh at how we present the National Park Authority alongside CNP Brand.
 - b) Business uptake of the brand identity has slowed and includes few non tourism businesses – an opportunity to increase these partnerships.
 - c) Existing use of the brand identity by business is varied – an opportunity to improve use.
 - d) Public Sector, NGO and Community use is varied and inconsistent, and there are still some misunderstandings about the brand – an opportunity to improve these partnerships.
17. The brand identity is used on some commercial publications but not in merchandising – an opportunity to develop merchandising using the brand.
18. We see the brand identity being widely used but is it directly associated with:
- a) Quality and sustainable experiences
 - b) Authentic experiences
 - c) Experiences that are distinctively Cairngorms
 - d) Adding value/benefits for those who use the brand
19. An opportunity to make greater connections between the Brand and quality, sustainable, authentic and distinctively Cairngorms experiences: to deliver the brand promise.

20. Do people leave the CNP with an “emotional connection” to the Cairngorms National Park? Put another way, do people:
- Tell good stories about the National Park (promote CNP)?
 - Visit again?
 - Seek out opportunities to purchase goods and services from the National Park?
 - Contribute to the area (responsible behaviour, volunteering and payback)?
21. An opportunity to increase emotional connections and demonstrate the value to partners of linking their work to the Cairngorms National Park.
22. In taking this work forward we consider it is worth looking at the role of the BMG. To date this group has been extremely successful in implementing the roll out of the brand, and the group deserves much of the credit for the success of the brand. But in order to develop the brand as outlined we now see the need for a Brand Development Group. Its role would be to advance thinking on, and advise the Board on, strategic development and management of the Brand, rather than detailed management of the image. To avoid a proliferation of Groups, however, it makes sense that the issue of “Image management” remains with this group, but as a standing item, dealt with in very short order (and possibly even by e-mail as far as simply providing updates is concerned).
23. In light of this, we suggest composition of the Brand Development Group might be as follows:
- CNPA Board members: 3
 - Businesses: up to 3, to include Alan Rankin from CBP, and two business people with relevant experience and able to make a contribution.
 - Other public sector partners up to 3: to be selected on basis of individuals with something useful to contribute.
 - An active community person from a community, who will liaise with AoCC
 - Staff from CNPA Communications and Engagement Group (and others as required) as secretariat and advisers.
 - Other individuals to be invited to meetings as appropriate, to bring in particular expertise or advice (but not as “voting members”).
 - Chair to be decided among the Group.
24. The terms of reference of the of the BMG would require to be changed to:
- Reflect the new name of the group
 - Reflect the new membership of the group
 - Reflect the role in providing advice to the Board on brand strategy, including:
 - Improving quality standards;
 - Making the emotional connection (leading to people getting involved);

- iii. Merchandising/fund raising;
 - iv. Promoting shared messages about the Cairngorms NP (to and by partners, communities, Scottish Government);
 - v. Increasing commercial advantage/marketing the Park;
 - vi. Managing use of the image.
25. The Board is ultimately responsible for the Brand, would continue to provide leadership and strategic direction and agree any modifications to brand strategy.

Recommendations

26. **In view of the clear need to further develop the Cairngorms National Park Brand we recommend that the Board:**
- a) **Agrees to change the Brand Management Group to a Brand Development Group as outlined in the paper.**
 - b) **Approves the changes to the terms of reference for the group to allow this change to happen.**

Implications

Financial Implications

27. There are no financial implications as a direct result of this recommendation.

Presentational Implications

28. If the recommendation is agreed we need to recognise and celebrate the good work undertaken to date by the Brand Management Group and be clear that this change is the evolution of an already successful group to meet new challenges in developing the brand.

Next Steps

29. If the recommendations are approved the next steps would be to:
- a) Finalise the membership of the Brand Development Group.
 - b) Use the group to develop new approaches to developing and enhancing the use of the brand.
 - c) Come back to the Board to seek approval for any new brand strategy and action plan.

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Annex I - The Cairngorms National Park Brand

The Components that make up a 'Brand'

1. Branding is often mistaken for being the logo but it is far more than this. In component terms, a brand is made up of:
 - a) The **positioning statement** which is the core and underlying truth of any brand;
 - b) The **personality attributes** which informs its tone of voice;
 - c) The **'strapline'** which emotionally connects with its audience;
 - d) The **copy and imagery** used which projects the brand values and reinforces the product offering; and
 - e) The **brand identity (logo)**, which helps create awareness and recognition.
2. Each of these components is connected and cannot exist in isolation. Done well, the total effect is greater than the sum of the parts.

How the Cairngorms National Park Brand was Developed

3. In 2004 a wide range of tourism partners worked together on a Tourism Marketing Strategy for the Park through the Tourism Development Working Group. As part of that work a brand wheel was developed for the Park identifying a positioning statement, personality attributes and values for the brand. The brand wheel formed the basis for the design of the Cairngorms National Park brand identity (logo) which has now been widely used throughout the Park.
4. In 2010/11 the Cairngorms Business Partnership led a piece of work to draw up a Marketing Framework for the Park, aligned with the development of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy. The original brand wheel and marketing strategy were used as the starting point for this framework but also considered relevant subsequent work and research e.g. the Sharing the Stories guidance, Park Plan(s), Visitor Surveys, creation of the Cairngorms Business Partnership, review of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy, local and national research, work on the Special Qualities of the Park, and much more. The positioning statement and personality attributes for the brand have been reviewed and updated as part of the Marketing Framework. The brand identity (logo) remains unchanged in order to maximise current brand recognition but is still considered representative of the brand and its key messages. To strengthen the brand and brand identity, further components of the brand have now been developed, including the strapline, 'Make it Yours'.

The Components of the Cairngorms National Park Brand

5. The components of the Cairngorms National Park Brand are identified as part of the Marketing Framework and are detailed below.

Positioning Statement

6. The positioning statement identifies the core and underlying truth of any brand:

The Cairngorms National Park's location in the Scottish Highlands and each of its defining qualities on their own are special but it is the combination of all these in one place that make the Cairngorms National Park truly unique and world class. The Park is a living and breathing place and at its heart is each people's own personal discovery of what makes it theirs. Like nature it cannot be tamed or boxed in. Like nature its more friendly when you can just be yourself. This leads to it being a much loved and cared for place by the people who live and work there and by the people who visit.

Personality Attributes

7. The Cairngorms National Park Brand represents the landscape, its people and the experience it offers. It is not an organisation. It is living, breathing destination. Its personality attributes are collectively what makes up its character and gives it its distinction over time. Personality is crucial; it gives life to a brand and helps create affinity and likeability. The Cairngorms National Park has 8 personality attributes, as defined in this section. Their purpose is to influence how we communicate, both through prepared communications and in dialogue with our audiences. Depending on the target audience, each attribute will resonate differently.

Personality Attribute	Description
Authentic	Being authentic is an ingrained attribute of the Cairngorms National Park. Its raw beauty has evolved over millions of years. As for the people of the Cairngorms, they are genuine to a fault, as natural as the elements around them – an attribute that many of today's brands want to claim, as it has real resonance with today's consumers, but have to manufacture it. The Cairngorms National Park's authentic claim, however, couldn't be more real. So we should ensure it is brought to the fore in all communications. It creates trust. And trust brings loyalty.

Personality Attribute	Description
Welcoming	Visitors to the Cairngorms National Park are often heard remarking on how welcome they've been made to feel. They always speak warmly of the Highland hospitality. This comes from the open-hearted nature of the people who live and work there. In terms of place, the Cairngorms National Park spans over 1748 sq miles, a landscape that is an inviting one to explore and enjoy time and time again. And, of course, it is a Park that is open to everyone, welcoming visitors all year round; this is by no means a winter or summer destination.
Thoughtful	The awe-inspiring natural beauty of the Park encourages people who both live in and visit it to care about their environment and the impact of their actions on it. The attribute also denotes the kindness evident from people in the area in ensuring the needs of others are met, often without being asked to do so. Sometimes it's the small details that make so much difference.
Spirited	Unlike some other national parks, the Cairngorms National Park is a living and breathing area (as opposed to being isolated and remote), populated with friendly towns and villages, each with their own sense of community. It is an area full of get up and go, with over a hundred different activities and experiences on offer. But let's not confuse this with adventure; it's richer and more multi faceted than that, with a real strength of character about it.
Inspirational	To be inspirational you have to be pretty special. The Cairngorms National Park is exactly that. This is never truer than in the eyes of those who choose to visit it – the people who fall in love with the sheer beauty and inspiration it gives them. When somebody or somewhere is inspirational, it encourages followers, evokes strong emotions, incites action, and adds a sense of value to lives. Many places strive to be inspirational. The Cairngorms National Park is one of the few places, which we can say with a quiet confidence, actually is.

Personality Attribute	Description
Impassioned	<p>A key aspect that unites the Park is the great emotion people feel for it, a Passion for the Place – as articulated in the Sharing the Stories document published by the Cairngorms National Park Authority, which had considerable business & stakeholder input. The Passion for the Place is rooted very much in the people who live and work there and comes from the heart. We want to inspire and spread that zeal and intensity of feeling to everyone who comes into contact with the Park, whether they are visiting, working or living there. We should never be impassive or matter of fact when communicating the Park.</p>
Astounding	<p>The Cairngorms National Park is without doubt awesome, remarkable and amazing. Yet we deliberately haven't selected such adjectives as core personality attributes, as we don't want to come across as thinking we're 'God's gift' in our communications. That's not the persona of the Park. However, we should not be shy either. The Cairngorms National Park is an astounding place, one we should never take for granted. It's worth remembering that first time visitors are often surprised by what they discover. It is not until people experience it first hand and begin to find its many layers and hidden secrets, that they realise just how impressive it really is and just how much there is to see and do. Our job collectively is to help bring that to the fore in our communications, whether these are verbal, written or visual.</p>
Revitalising	<p>The Cairngorms National Park is a place that affects many of its visitors on a number of different levels. It can feed your soul, leaving you feeling at one with the world and nature; it can offer invigorating and refreshing experiences; it lets you break free from the day-to-day chain of events to give you a new lease of life. Whatever level it affects us, it is unquestionably a special place that revitalises. And for that reason alone, it makes us want to come back. Again and again.</p>

Strapline

8. Our Brand Strapline is centred on the human experience of the place, communicating that it is a place for people to enjoy. It is designed to connect the target audience with the Cairngorms National Park and add something to the overall communications. As a focused set of words they cannot possibly cover all of the special qualities of the Park, but they do express the brand attitude and its core philosophy. 'Make it yours' is all embracing, across all geographies, all seasons, all themes, all activities, attractions and businesses that serve the area. It doesn't constrain the Cairngorms National Park's offering; it lets people decide what they want to do (which is very important). The Strapline is:

Make it Yours

Copy and Imagery

9. Design and Style Guidelines have been developed to identify the types of photographs and language that should be used in communications to help effectively portray the brand personality.

Brand Identity (logo)

10. The Brand Identity was developed in 2004 and is widely used throughout the Park:



ANNEX 2: Brand Exposure

Brand Use	Outputs	Exposure
Pre arrival signage , entry markers, transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Trunk and A roads with branded pre-arrival signs. • 29 entry point markers. • All stations branded & most bus stops. 	30,000 vehicles per day past branded signs (c. 11 million per year)
Coordinated marketing campaign developed by CBP using 'make it yours'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites CBP,CNPA and some communities branded • Adverts • Visitor Leaflets • All VIC's joint branded • 136 businesses including branded panels in major attractions • Branded information in 9 community notice boards • 32 events applied to use brand 	<p>260,000 unique visitors annually to visitcairngorms.com and cairngorms.co</p> <p>Over 500,000 branded visitor leaflets annually (including partners leaflets - VisitScotland and SNH)</p> <p>280,000 visitors to branded VIC's</p> <p>Over 300,000 visitors to branded attractions</p>
Promoting responsible access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 ranger services joint branded & all ranger bases using the brand • Branded 'Tread Lightly' campaign and Outdoor Access signage • 12 branded community path leaflets 	<p>28% of visitors indicate they have been to a ranger base</p> <p>24% of visitors go low level walking</p>

Brand Use	Outputs	Exposure
Supporting Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools media project and education competition branded • John Muir Award and Junior Rangers promoted using the brand • Interpretation panels in 9 schools 	<p>Over 2,000 young people completing awards each year</p> <p>Some 2,750 pupils at schools with branded information</p>
Supporting product sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Ordnance Survey maps at 1:50,000 and 1:25,000 joint branded • Footprint path maps for Aviemore and Grantown joint branded • Harvey's Cairngorms Map 	