
CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

Title: UPDATE AND FORWARD LOOK

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Purpose: This paper provides an update on the main areas of work both undertaken and planned towards delivery of the five year outcomes in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17.

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2012-17.

Long term outcome: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences

Key work package 9 - Active Cairngorms

1. 2014 Commonwealth Games Legacy Physical Activity Project –

- a) Three out of the four planned physical activity Medical Practice Referral projects are now underway: Tomintoul & Glenlivet and Strathdon. The other two projects (Aviemore and Ballater) have been significantly delayed due to late delivery of activity trackers from the chosen supplier. These are being vigorously pursued.
- b) Funding and contract for Active Cairngorms Coordinator post comes to end November 2016 (to be replaced by new CNPA Volunteer Coordinator).
- c) Project evaluation by James Hutton Institute and Strathclyde University - report to be completed by end December 2016.

2. Active Cairngorms Health Walks –

- a) CNPA has secured funding (£10,000 pa x 3 years) from Paths for All to extend the new CNPA Volunteer Co-coordinator post to FTE.
- b) Additional £2,000 pa will be contributed by NHS Highland.
- c) The new Volunteer Co-coordinator will spend a minimum of two days a week delivering physical activity projects, including scaling up the health walks projects. The other 3 days will be spent delivering environmental volunteering opportunities, including a Volunteer Ranger Service.
- d) The joint funding successfully demonstrates the Active Cairngorms Partnership is effectively sharing resources to deliver joint outcomes.

3. Scotland's Natural Health Service –

- a) David Clyne is now a member of the RAFE Natural Health Service communications delivery group.
- b) The group is chaired by Dr Gregor Smith (Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Scotland). Three key audiences are: Health Professionals (mainly practitioners); Non Health Professionals (policy stakeholders in environment, education and planning); the Public.
- c) The group met on 25th August 2016 and decided to prioritise engagement work with healthcare professionals this financial year.
- d) A design consultancy has been recruited to deliver new videos, infographics, and display materials which promote the health benefits of outdoor activity and access to greenspace.

4. Cairngorms National Park Step-count Challenge -

- a) Teams of 5 people working in the Park receive free entry and SILVA pedometers to take part in the four week challenge.
- b) CNPA staff will be taking part including the Senior Management Team.
- c) Challenge starts 31st October 2016.
- d) **LOAF members** are encouraged to enter a team and promote through other networks.

Key work package 12 - Visitor and access infrastructure

4. Management of core paths and outdoor access:

- a) **Deeside Way Extension** – Early discussions are taking place over an initial first phase project to link Braemar with the Keiloch Car Park at Invercauld via the existing Lion's Face path. Route choice and landscape issues are being examined with involvement from SNH to agree a suitable line.
- b) **Speyside Way Extension** – The link path between Kincaig and Ardeal is now complete, however recent heavy rain has caused some washout of the surface. The contractor has been asked to carry out the necessary repairs. Planning applications for the remaining sections between Ardeal and Kingussie are presently ongoing. Funding options continue to be explored. To date Sustrans have expressed interest in supporting this next phase.
- c) **Cairngorms Wee Walks Weekend** – Scheduled for 5-11th September 2016. To promote physical activity and celebrate walking CNPA is co-ordinating the Wee Walks Weekend event by encouraging all Health Walking Groups, Ramblers Clubs, schools, clubs, and groups of friends to go for a walk on the second weekend in September. LOAF members are encouraged to participate and register a wee walk during the event. Register at cairngorms.co.uk/weewalks.
- d) **Path Leaflets** – The Laggan path leaflet has been revised and re-published to incorporate the new national path grading system. The Boat of Garten leaflet is

currently undergoing the same revision and will be re-published shortly. The
Dulnain Bridge leaflet is in the early stages of review.

- e) **Upholding Access Rights** – access casework continues to be reported and dealt with according to protocols. The number of active cases remains encouragingly low. An update will be given under Agenda Item 2.
- f) **Storm Frank** – The damage affecting access infrastructure on Deeside has been fully costed at £1.8million (including the two historic suspension bridges) and an approach by Aberdeenshire Council (supported by the CNPA) to the Scottish Government to secure additional funds to reinstate damage in the area has now been confirmed as unsuccessful. Although some damage to access infrastructure will be re-instated as a result of necessary flood-defence works the rest remains unfunded (including the two historic bridges). It is not yet clear how this situation will progress.

Other National Park Initiatives/Matters

- 5. **HLF Tomintoul / Glenlivet Landscape partnership Project** – The second round submission has now been completed and the results are awaited. Feedback from HLF is positive and award of grant is expected barring any unforeseen problems. The access project delivery phase outputs include investment towards improving the Tomintoul Spur (Speyside Way) and a new low level path linking Glenlivet Distillery and Blairfindy Castle to encourage visitors to spend more time in the area. (Blairfindy Castle is also programmed for repair and improvement). The project delivery budget is £360k.
- 6. **A9 Dualling** –CNPA have now submitted Stage 2 consultation responses to designs for Project 8 Glen Garry to Dalwhinnie and Project 9 Crubenmore to Kincaig Sections. Consultation input includes highlighting key issues affecting non-motorised users interests such as road crossings, core paths and routing of National Cycle Route 7. We have also flagged a requirement for careful consideration of equestrian interests along this section. The next formal phase will commence with preparation and consultation on 'Stage 3' designs for these and foregoing Projects. Stage 3 will see working up of detailed road designs and infrastructure catering for specific issues such as non-motorised users.
- 7. **Cairngorms Capercaillie Framework HLF Bid** – CNPA are currently working with partners to develop a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Capercaillie (safeguarding populations) project. This follows on from the drawing up of the CNP Capercaillie Framework. The HLF development phase will involve shaping a sustainable recreation management model that benefits communities and caper, raising the profile of and building support for caper (hearts and minds), and achieving sustainable caper populations. The plan is to formulate and submit a Stage 1 bid by end of February 2017. The LOAF will be consulted/involved further in due course.

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