

# **Cairngorms National Park Authority**

## **OPERATIONAL PLAN – ACTIVITIES REPORT 2004/05**

### **Progress to 31 March 2004**

**CORPORATE PLAN THEME: To foster a Park for All**

The CNP must be a Park which is accessible to and able to be enjoyed by everyone. It is not just a Park for the fit and the few or just for the better-off. Making it genuinely a Park for All means that the CNPA will take a lead role in making sure that:

- there is widespread awareness of the CNP; why it is there, its special qualities and what it has to offer (see policy theme 2);
- there is an integrated transport strategy in place and working to enable visitors and residents of all abilities and background to get around within the Park, with minimal impact on the enjoyment of the Park by others;
- people have access to the information they need about the CNP;
- everyone including the less able can exercise and enjoy their right of responsible access under the Land Reform Legislation, while respecting the needs of landowners and land managers for whom the land is also the basis of their business.

**Objectives:**

To deliver this theme we will focus on:

**Infrastructure:** Work with partners to develop an integrated transport strategy and a strategy for signage, information centre. As the statutory access authority we will implement and maintain a core path network which is sufficient for giving the public reasonable access throughout the Park. We will also ensure that information about the path network is accurate, helpful and widely accessible, and signage of paths is effective.

**Outdoor Access Management:** As the outdoor access authority we will set up a local access forum(s) to advise on and assist with disputes about the exercise of access rights, the existence and delineation of rights of way, and the adoption of a core path network. The CNPA will publicise the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

**Ranger Services:** the CNPA will work with the many different ranger services (approximately 14), that currently exist within the National Park and agree how best to provide the equivalent of a pan-Park ranger service, and what functions this would deliver.

**Information Provision:** As mentioned under the next policy theme, the CNPA will take a lead in ensuring a coordinated approach to information provision to ensure that information for visitors is accurate, up to date, innovative and accessible, and uses a full range of media as appropriate.

**All Abilities:** The CNPA will work to ensure access for all abilities becomes integrated into thinking across the Park by all organisations. It will also work to ensure that recreational facilities and in particular paths provide for the needs of people of all abilities.

**Youth:** The CNPA recognises the importance of ensuring that young people are able to get involved in the National Park, to feed in their ideas, and to understand and enjoy it. Programmes of youth involvement will be developed including local schools, the Youth Parliament and universities, tailored to their needs.

**Health & Fitness:** The CNPA will be looking to encourage enjoyment of the outdoor recreation opportunities of the Park as means of enabling people to improve their health and fitness.

**Social Inclusion:** The CNPA will look at ways of reaching out to socially excluded groups within and outwith the CNP to increase understanding and appreciation of the natural environment.

**Action for 2004/05**

|   | <b>Actions/outcome</b>   | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | <i>Integrated transport strategy</i><br>Policy context and issues paper to Board             | Dec 04      | ESD         | <b>Completed.</b> Strategic objectives presented to the Board in April 2005. Issues papers to be further refined in line with Park Plan timetable. As an immediate action- work commissioned on a public transport timetable for the Park, with links to walking/cycling opportunities. Co-funding secured from HI-TRANS and NESTRANS. |
| 2 | <i>Strategy for Signage: Gateways signs</i><br>Scoping report for entry point signs complete | Jul 04      | VSR         | <b>Completed.</b><br><b>Completed:</b> Station signs in place. <b>On track:</b> Interim road signs scheduled for April/May. Landscape architects/design consultants contracted for permanent sites.  |
| 3 | Signs in place at rails stations and Speyside Way.<br>Work commenced on some road signs.     | Mar 05      | VSR         |  |
| 4 | <i>Core path plan</i><br>Electronic path management system in place for CNPA                 | Mar 05      | VSR         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> to 05/06 to tie in with recruitment of Outdoor Access Officers (Sandra Middleton now appointed to lead on Core Paths Plan.)<br><b>Completed.</b> Data to be incorporated in Outdoor Access Audit.   |
| 5 | Compile Catalogue of Rights of Way for Park  | Mar 05      | VSR         |  |
| 6 | <i>Outdoor Access Management:</i><br>Local Access Forum in place                             | Jan 05      | VSR         | <b>Completed:</b> Cairngorms LOAF appointments made mid-February. Inaugural meeting 31 March.<br><b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Draft audit report   |
| 7 | Outdoor access strategy – audit work complete and presented to LAF                           | Mar 05      | VSR         |  |

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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b>                | <b>Lead</b>       | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|---|----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| 8  | Six training events on access legislation and SOAC delivered for rangers, land managers, and community paths groups.  | Mar 05                     | VSR               | will be ready end of March, finalised by end April.<br><br><b>Completed.</b> 6 events have been delivered (including Ranger Services, land managers, Wild Scotland and to local paths groups on funding). Plans in place for training in January through LBB scheme. |
| 9  | Agreement on management arrangements and funding mechanisms for, and coordination of access delivery in Park.   | Mar 05                     | VSR               | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> through preparation of outdoor access audit (see above) and preparation of Access Strategy in 2005/06.  |
| 10 | Delivery of specific outdoor access projects:<br>- Steering group (CNPA led) established for Aviemore-Glenmore off-road route;<br>- Laggan Challenging Off Road Cycle Route opened (with CNPA financial support)<br>- Speyside Way extension: options on route presented to Board | Nov 04<br>Oct 04<br>Nov 04 | VSR<br>VSR<br>VSR | <b>Completed:</b> Steering group in place (but not CNPA led); little progress yet.<br><b>Completed.</b><br><b>Completed.</b> Public consultation ends on 25 March.   |
| 11 | Agreement with LAs on maintenance burdens on paths to be passed to CNPA   | Feb 05                     | VSR               | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Introductory meetings have been held with various local authorities.  |
| 12 | <i>Ranger Services</i><br>Strategy for Park Ranger Services – paper to Board  | Feb 05                     | VSR               | <b>Completed:</b> Board paper to March Board.  |
| 13 | Ranger events leaflet for 05/06   | Feb 05                     | VSR               | <b>Completed.</b> Distributed in March.  |
| 14 | Ranger workshop as part of improving communications among rangers and other field staff   | Nov 04                     | VSR               | <b>Completed.</b> Successful meeting on 6/7 December 04.   |

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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|--|
|    | <i>Information provision</i>  |             |             |  |
| 15 | Visitor Management strategy – paper to Board  | Sep 04      | VSR         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Now combined with work on Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Interpretation Strategy (action 57)                              |
| 16 | System in place for tracking and recording visitor questions and feedback to CNPA                             | Sep 04      | VSR         | <b>Completed.</b> Internal system in place, coordinated by Peter Crane   |
| 17 | Visitor survey completed (September) and results disseminated   | Dec 04      | VSR         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Report now ready for circulation in April.  |
| 18 | Visitor information and interpretation strategy paper to Board  | Mar 05      | VSR         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> rescheduled for May to allow incorporation of advice from April VISIT Forum.  |
| 19 | Visitor element of CNPA website developed   | Mar 05      | VSR         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Events leaflet to be included in April.   |
| 20 | Produce materials for visitors and for enquirers; pilot completed on use of electronic information terminals. | Mar 05      | VSR         | <b>Delayed.</b> Company managing “I-point” changed ownership.  |
| 21 | Policy for mass-participation events developed.   | Mar 05      | VSR         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> To be addressed through Park Plan and National Access Forum. Meeting of stakeholders in core mountain area in April/May.    |
|    | <i>All abilities</i>  |             |             |  |
| 22 | Report on year’s activities by All Abilities Communication Network.   | Mar 05      | ESD         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Park for All update report planned for May.   |
| 23 | Involvement in Fieldfare Trust European project   | Mar 05      | ESD         | <b>Delayed.</b> Project relates to all abilities volunteering in the Park. Fieldfare Trust currently trying to identify potential European partners. |
|    | <i>Youth</i>  |             |             |  |
| 24 | Report on year’s activities by schools youth group.   | Mar 05      | ESD         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Park for All update report planned for May.   |

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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>   | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>   |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|---|
| 25 | Develop young Cairngorms website   | Sep 04      | ESD         | <b>Completed.</b> Website launched - hosted by Grantown Grammar. Schools working on development of content. Competition held for design of 'Young Cairngorms' logo. |
| 26 | Develop youth programme for implementation in 2005/06                              | Mar 05      | ESD         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Youth Strategy and Action Plan to be developed in 05/06.   |
| 27 | John Muir award: 2005/06 business plan agreed                                      | Feb 05      | ESD         | <b>Completed</b> - Agreed in Feb.   |
| 28 | <i>Health &amp; Fitness</i><br>Park wide conference to share best practice lessons | Feb 05      | ESD         | <b>Completed</b> - Conference held on 4 March. Jointly funded and organised with NHS Highland and the Highland Council.   |

**CORPORATE PLAN THEME: Encourage enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the special qualities of the area.**

We believe that we must ensure that everyone who comes to the Park can fully appreciate, understand and enjoy its special natural and cultural heritage and its recreational opportunities. In particular this must be a place where people from the more populous areas can come and enjoy the mountains, forests, rivers, lochs and wildlife. That 39% of the Park is designated for its natural heritage interest is an indication of the national and international importance of the area. For a sustainable future it is essential that visitors, local businesses and local residents alike understand and respect those special qualities which underpin much of the local economy, management of recreation, the quality of the tourism experience, and decisions on planning and development control.

To deliver this theme we will focus on:

**Balance:** The CNPA's statutory purpose is to take a collective and coordinated approach to delivering the four statutory aims of the National Park. We will in conjunction with partner organisations develop effective decision-making frameworks for addressing perceived conflicts between conservation and social/economic development.

**Information:** We will ensure an integrated approach to providing orientation, information and interpretation about the National Park to visitors. Information is provided by a range of partners (tourist boards, individual attractions, local authorities, SNH, etc) in a variety of forms (websites, leaflets, newsletters and articles, etc) and covering various requirements (maps, where to eat, where to stay, what is on, etc). The CNPA will provide a lead in a coordinated approach to ensure that interpretation is effective and helpful to visitors, and conveys accurate and consistent messages about the National Park. We will put in place arrangements for measuring understanding and appreciation by establishing an early baseline, and subsequent measurement at intervals.

**National Park brand:** We aim to develop a brand and enable and manage its use by businesses (for example, for quality assured food produced within the Park).



**Action for 2004/05**

|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|--|
| 29 | <i>Balance</i><br>Complete research project to develop structured process for decision making in dealing with s.9 principle (conflict). | Feb 05      | SPPM        | <b><i>Delayed, in hand.</i></b> This work has yet to be started and is now scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 05-06. |
| 30 | Generation of better evidence base for decision making on CORC at Glenmore, including work on impact of disturbance on Capercaillie.    | Dec 04      | VSR&<br>NRG | <b><i>Completed</i></b> Report circulated January 2005.  |
|    | <i>Information</i><br>See actions under Theme 1   |             |             |  |
|    | Brand Development<br>See actions under Theme 4  |             |             |  |

**CORPORATE PLAN THEME: Develop clear cohesive strategies for stewardship of the natural resources of the National Park.**

We believe that we must have structured and focused strategies for the stewardship of the natural resources of the Park, coupled with effective visitor management systems. This will ensure that this wonderful landscape can be enjoyed by everyone and yet at the same time be managed in a way that provides for good local food production, timber production, traditional field sports where appropriate, and protects and enhances a diversity of key species and their habitats. Key to this will be the appropriate balance of regulation, incentive and best practice to deliver public expectations.

**Objectives:**

To deliver this theme we will be focusing on the following over the next 3 years:

**Land management schemes.** We will be working with the Scottish Executive and our partners and land managers in the Park to ensure that land management support schemes are developed which are integrated and appropriate to the needs and aims of the National Park.

As part of this, we will be taking a lead in developing a shared understanding of the “**public goods**” which the public sector will purchase from land managers, and incentive schemes that may be developed to achieve the management of farmed as well as non-farmed land in ways that will help deliver these.

We will work with partners to develop an effective mechanism for integrating effective **land and water** management in the context of river basin management planning within the Park.

We will aim to find ways of ensuring **streamlined administration**, providing assistance with access to schemes by working with partner organisations which already offer land management incentive schemes.

We will help develop **best practice guidance** on sustainable natural resource stewardship by initiating research projects.

We will develop **planning policies** which support the conservation and enhancement of the natural heritage, including minimising the use of energy, water and other resources and reduce production of waste.

**Biodiversity** - we will help to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the National Park

**Action for 2004/05**

|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|--|
| 31 | <i>Land Management Schemes</i><br>Manage the Cairngorms Moorland project.   | On gng      | SPPM        | <b>On track.</b> Mid-term review is underway and now due for completion in April 05.   |
| 32 | Park as an LMC region – advocacy and presentation at national LMC working group   | Feb 05      | NRG         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Advocacy with SEERAD started.   |
| 33 | Project plan with other agencies for deer certification scheme relevant to delivery of Park aims.   | Nov 04      | NRG         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Funding secured for extension to end 2005. Preparing plans for further extension                                    |
| 34 | Land Based Businesses Project: Encourage land based businesses to embrace training  | On gng      | NRG         | <b>On track.</b> Benefits to be taken forward through Park Plan  |
| 35 | Complete and develop Forest of Spey project to support forestry in the National Park – final report and recommendations for future work.                                    | Oct 04      | NRG         | <b>Delayed.</b> Developing contract in April 05 to consider options for continuation   |
| 36 | Develop project plan for project to encourage responsible Agriculture waste disposal.   | Dec 04      | NRG         | <b>Delayed</b> to financial year 05/06   |
| 37 | Project plan for project to encourage estates to engage with stakeholders and communities.  | Sep 04      | NRG         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> started, to continue into 05/06.  |
| 38 | Identification of mechanisms to ensure nature conservation designations benefit wildlife and land managers.   | Nov 04      | NRG         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Close liaison with SNH on NNR review; agreement to develop an overarching framework and individual unit development |
| 39 | <i>Public Goods</i><br>Report on scope for defining public benefits delivered by land managers, and strategy for realignment of schemes based on this shared understanding. | Feb 05      | NRG         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Public consultation undertaken in Feb and Mar 05  |
| 40 | <i>Streamlined Administration</i><br>Identification of current schemes, and develop pilot scheme for  | Sep 05      | NRG         | <b>Delayed:</b> To follow on from 40   |

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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>   |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|---|
|    | delivering LMCs   |             |             |   |
| 41 | <i>Best Practice</i><br>Report on scope for further guidance on best practice.      | Feb 05      | NRG         | <b>Delayed.</b> No progress due to staff changes.<br>To be developed in 05/06   |
| 42 | <i>Biodiversity</i><br>LBAP - Develop partner delivery plans, identifying projects. | On gng      | NRG         | <b>On track</b><br>Range of projects being developed:<br><i>Highland Aspen</i> Group's nursery, field trip, aspen database and research work started;<br><i>Fresh Water Pearl Mussel</i> introduction;<br><i>Water Vole</i> conservation work looking at current levels of mink control.<br><i>Biodiversity Planning guidance</i> note under way.<br>Partner Delivery Plans, Communication Plan and website being developed as well as support provided to Glenlivet Estate for wildlife hides and Aberdeenshire Rangers volunteer training events. |

**CORPORATE PLAN THEME: Encourage and support balanced thriving stable communities in the Park.**

We want to ensure vibrant, balanced and stable communities throughout the National Park. This must be a Park where young people can see a good future for themselves, where they can find work, training, affordable housing, and where they wish to and are able to bring up their families. We want to encourage and enable businesses and local communities to build a thriving local economy which has the natural and cultural heritage at its heart, and which as a result is sustainable both environmentally and commercially – businesses will not destroy the fabric which underpins their activities, and businesses which thrive locally will result in more money being spent in local garages, restaurants, shops, etc, which in turn helps to create thriving communities. And in order to thrive, businesses need a skilled workforce, who in turn need affordable houses to live in.

**Objectives:**

To deliver this theme we will focus on:

**Housing** - We are, and will continue, working with partners to implement the Cairngorms Housing Strategy. We will also develop and pilot a scheme(s) for providing affordable housing through housing investment and ownership based on as yet undefined residency criteria (i.e. measures in addition to the existing Cairngorms Housing Strategy and focused on promoting private investment in and ownership of houses within the CNP by local people.) A Housing Development Working group has been set up to take this work forward.

**Capacity building in Communities** - A successful National Park will be one in which communities (local communities as well as communities of interest) are able to play an active and effective role working with and advising the CNPA and other agencies. The CNPA aims to help communities develop the capacity to be effective partners and consultees on a range of important issues such as the National Park Plan and local plan. Effective use of electronic communications (possibly including wider availability of Broadband), training in its use, and effective systems of making the right information available in readily accessible forms, will be areas the CNPA will focus on.

**Business**- the CNPA aims, in conjunction with the enterprise networks, to help create a business environment that can sustain quality employment and enable businesses to expand and develop while protecting the natural and cultural heritage. It will work with business to create career opportunities, linked to the Park's aims and to this end aims to develop and pilot a Park-oriented apprenticeship scheme(s).

***Tourism*** – the Cairngorms National Park is a large area with tremendous tourism potential. The CNPA aims to establish, working with Tourist Boards and local businesses, a co-ordinated Park-wide approach to sustainable tourism through the preparation and implementation of a sustainable tourism strategy including a marketing strategy and brand for the whole Park, based on the special qualities and attractions of the area and the establishment of a hallmark of quality.

***Planning and development Control*** – The CNPA will call in and determine those planning applications which are of general significance to the Park’s aims, with a view to ensuring a consistent approach to sustainable development, and to good design. Decisions will be based initially on the development plans inherited from the 4 local authorities, but over the next 3 years a local plan for the National Park will be prepared.

***Cultural heritage*** – the CNPA aims to develop and implement a strategy for encouraging participation in and raising awareness of the area’s rich cultural heritage.

***LEADER+ programme*** - The overall aim of the LEADER + programme in Scotland is to “pilot and communicate innovative approaches to rural development that will promote the sustainable economic, environmental and social development of Scotland’s rural communities”. The Cairngorms programme is focusing on “helping the local communities make best use of natural and cultural resources”. Approximately £200,000 is available each year to support local projects through these funds. The programme in the National Park runs to 2005.

**Actions for 2004/05**

|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|--|
| 43 | <i>Housing</i><br>Cairngorms Housing needs assessment drafted.  | Mar 05      | ESD         | <b><i>Delayed, in hand:</i></b> Heriot Watt University study, draft due in mid-April for discussion within the Cairngorms Housing Strategy Implementation Group, with final report in May.   |
| 44 | Audit of potential mechanisms for delivering affordable Home ownership within Park                                  | Aug 04      | ESD         | <b><i>Completed.</i></b> Will now inform revision of Cairngorms Housing Strategy and Park Plan/Local Plan development.   |
| 45 | Response to SW Q&A III consultation, and press case for improved infrastructure in Park.                            | Oct 04      | ESD         | <b><i>Completed</i></b>  |
| 46 | <i>Capacity Building in Communities</i><br>Support ACCC in implementing Local Plan consultation.                    | Jun-Dec     | PDC         | <b><i>Completed</i></b> consultation process.  |
| 47 | Develop Community Development policy and issues paper for input to NP Plan  | Dec 04      | ESD         | <b><i>Completed.</i></b> Strategic objectives to the Board in April 2005. Issues papers to be further refined in line with Park Plan timetable.  |
| 48 | Develop series of community development projects (funding committed) to deliver social & economic development aims. | Sep-Oct 04  | ESD         | <b><i>Completed.</i></b> Support approved for Glen Esk Roadman project, Adult Learning and Conservation in Deeside project, CRAGG and Deeside River Festival. Part-funding approved for continuation of Boat of Garten and Carrbridge community worker posts. Community Investment Programme being developed for 2005/06 implementation. |
| 49 | <i>Business</i><br>Commission feasibility study for Park apprenticeship scheme.                                     | Jan 05      | ESD         | <b><i>Delayed.</i></b> Vocational training workshop held   |

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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|--|
| 50 | Economic development strategy for input to NP Plan  | Dec 04      | ESD         | with key partners and businesses on 23 March. Pilot project likely to go ahead in 2005.<br><br><b>Completed</b> - Strategic objectives presented to the Board in April 2005. Issues papers to be further refined in line with Park Plan timetable. |
| 51 | Develop series of early action economic development projects to deliver economic development aims.                                      | Sep-Oct 04  | ESD         | <b>Completed.</b> Funding agreed for Park wide seminars to encourage women to take up employment/learning opportunities. Discussions with Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce over future development plans.  |
| 52 | <i>Tourism</i><br>Ensure coordinated and integrated approach to tourism involving industry and agencies, via Tourism Development Group. | On gng      | ESD         | Meetings with Ministers and with VS <b>completed</b> , to define CNPA's role following review of tourism agencies.   |
| 53 | Cairngorms Tourism Marketing Strategy and action plan completed.  | Jun 04      | ESD         | <b>Completed.</b>  |
| 54 | Brand developed   | Feb 05      | COM         | <b>Completed</b> –Launch in March. First meeting of Brand Management Committee 31 March.   |
| 55 | Sustainable Tourism Strategy and action plan completed.   | Jan 05      | ESD         | <b>Completed.</b> Amendments made to reflect Board's comments at March meeting.  |
| 56 | Application for European charter submitted  | Feb 05      | ESD         | <b>Completed.</b> Application submitted in March.  |
| 57 | Food marketing - complete research on producer capacity and branding opportunities.   | Jan 05      | NRG         | <b>Delayed, in hand</b> - Contract let, report due early Dec.  |
| 58 | Visitor Survey – see under Park for All   |             |             |  |



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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>   | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>   |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|---|
| 59 | <i>Planning and Development Control</i><br>Make sound decisions, based on sound advice, able to withstand challenge on appeal. | On gng      | PDC         | <b>On track</b> -Review of performance underway to allow us to take stock, review of “call in” & “commenting” complete – will report to Committee in due course.  |
| 60 | Applications processed timeously.  | On gng      | PDC         | <b>In hand:</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> DC Officer started 21/3/05 & will help improve determination rate.  |
| 61 | Set benchmarks for processing CNPA applications within set timescales.   | Mar 05      | PDC         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> continuing to review delivery & will set benchmarks ASAP. Issue of Scottish Executive requiring us to perform as other LPAs.   |
| 62 | Enforcement: statement on enforcement policy approved.   | Oct 04      | PDC         | <b>Complete.</b> Approved by Committee 8 Oct 04   |
| 63 | CNPA able to monitor compliance with own determinations and take enforcement action as necessary.                              | On gng      | PDC         | <b>On track:</b> Met 4 LAs Jan 05 to discuss enforcement and agreed to work to Oct 04 Enf Statement.  |
| 64 | Review delivery of planning function and committee arrangements  | Oct 04      | PDC         | <b>Complete:</b> Discussed; for time being the existing system will prevail. A report on some revisions to Standing Orders will be brought to Committee ASAP  |
| 65 | <i>Cultural Heritage</i><br>Cultural heritage policy and issues paper for Input to Park plan                                   | Dec 04      | ESD         | <b>Complete.</b> Strategic objectives presented to the Board in April 2005. Issues papers to be further refined in line with Park Plan timetable.   |
| 66 | Scheme of early action projects developed.   | Dec 04      | ESD         | <b>Complete.</b> Funding approved for redevelopment of the Retreat Heritage Centre in Glen Esk, Feis Spe, Strathmashie Community Heritage Project, a ski museum feasibility study at Cairngorm Mountain and |

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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>   | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|--|
| 67 | Interim Gaelic language policy developed   | Jun 04      | ESD         | DANNSA. Dr Seamus Grant is developing content for a Gaelic place names leaflet to be produced in March.<br><b>Complete</b> |
| 68 | <i>LEADER+</i><br>Manage the Cairngorms Leader + programme   | On gng      | SPPM        | <b>On track.</b> We have successfully bid for an additional £318,000 from the Scottish Executive.                          |
| 69 | <i>Small Grants scheme</i><br>Deliver grants scheme (total value £100k) to help communities mark their inclusion in the CNP. | Mar 05      | SPPM        | <b>Complete.</b> All projects are now complete and paid.   |

## CORPORATE PLAN THEME: Integration – the National Park Plan

The CNPA's statutory purpose is to take a collective and coordinated approach to delivering the four statutory aims of the National Park. The four aims cannot be considered in isolation, as they are all inextricably linked one with another. The major vehicle for delivering this integrated approach will be the National Park Plan, which the CNPA must prepare, setting out "its policy for managing the National Park and coordinating the exercise of the CNPA's function and the function of other public bodies and office holders so far as they affect the National Park, with a view to accomplishing the CNPA's statutory purpose." The National Park Plan must be approved by Scottish Ministers, and all public bodies will be required to have regard to it in exercising their functions (insofar as they affect the National Park).

We will be working closely with public, private and voluntary sector organisations to put together a National Park Plan which sets out a strategy for delivering a number of key objectives for the National Park – these will be objectives which have been agreed by a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, and which will be delivered not just by the National Park Authority, but by a range of other organisations. The document will represent a partnership agreement for the National Park. In preparing the National Park Plan, we will be looking to develop effective ways of consulting others and seeking constructive input; it will also be looking to develop effective indicators and means of monitoring progress with an integrated delivery of the aims of the Park over the subsequent years.

### Objectives:

To deliver this theme we will focus on:

***Prepare a National Park Plan*** – we aim to present a draft National Park Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the National Parks (Scotland) Act, to Scottish Ministers in April 2005.

***Preparing a Cairngorms National Park Local Plan*** – The CNPA now has the statutory responsibility for local plan(s) in the National Park. Four local plans currently cover the National Park, and the CNPA will produce a new local plan for the Park providing consistency across the area and helping to deliver the 4 aims of the National Park. It will be a major tool for delivering the National Park Plan, and will flesh out the strategic framework provided by the Park plan.

**Actions for 2004/05**

|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>   | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|--|
| 70 | <i>National Park Plan</i><br>State of the Park report completed.                                     | Jan 05      | SPPM        | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Final draft text expected end of April. We are content with the standard of work now coming forward.  |
| 71 | Public Funding Streams research completed.   | Jan 05      | SPPM        | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> This work is now being completed.   |
| 72 | Advisory Panel on Joined Up Government in place  | May 04      | SPPM        | <b>Completed.</b> First meeting May 04. Second meeting 6 June 06   |
| 73 | Present vision papers to the Board   | Jan 05      | SPPM        | <b>Completed.</b> Presented to Board 8 April 05.   |
| 74 | <i>Local Plan</i><br>Consultation (pre-draft plan) completed, engaging successfully with communities | Dec 04      | PDC         | <b>Completed.</b> 12000 households had community profiles/questionnaires, >13% response rate. 40+ community meetings of varying types during Nov/Dec. Consultation report to Planning Committee on 8 April.                                      |
| 75 | Substantial progress towards first draft of Plan.  | April 05    | PDC         | <b>Complete.</b> Taking stock of consultation results and intensive drafting of local plan is taking place Jan – April 05.   |
| 76 | Suite of 7 interim planning policies in place  | On gng      | PDC         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Houses in Countryside & Design delayed owing to local plan consultation, work has recommenced but local plan drafting taking priority. Other interim policies have been out to consultation, results reported to Board; |

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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b>       | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>   |
|----|---|-------------------|-------------|---|
| 77 | Presentation of CNP perspective to Aberdeenshire Local Plan Inquiry.              | Nov 04-<br>Mar 05 | PDC         | final versions to be brought back to Cttee<br><br><b>Complete.</b> CNPA perspective put to Reporters at hearing in Ballater Nov 04. Request made that no decisions should be taken that will prejudice CNP local plan. Inquiry concluded, awaiting outcome of Reporters' deliberations. |
| 78 | <i>Core Path Plan</i><br>Collation of community aspirations for core paths in CNP | Dec 04            | VSR         | <b>Delayed – in hand.</b> Relevant information arising out of Local Plan consultation has been collated.  |

## CORPORATE PLAN THEME: Develop an enabling organisation that is trusted and respected

The issues that face the Cairngorms National Park are complex. Finding solutions where there are several competing interests requires an organisation that has the ability to take an overview; bases its conclusions on sound evidence and analysis; is even-handed and is competent. This requires the organisation to have very able, experienced and well qualified staff, but importantly, staff who are able to engage effectively, and if necessarily robustly, with all parties to an issue.

As a public body, the CNPA must also be mindful of the need to be open and transparent in its decision making processes, and to account for use of public funds.

### Objectives:

To deliver this theme we will focus on:

**Recruitment** – we will identify priorities for the organisation and recruit able staff to take these forward. Recruitment will be on the basis of competition to ensure high quality staff.

**Organisational structure**- we will establish arrangements which create and maintain a cohesive organisation which recognises and rewards good performance, and which provides for staff development. In particular, we will put in place a bespoke pay & grading system; an annual staff appraisal system; training and development plans; encourage secondments and loans between the CNPA and other organisations (private, public and voluntary sector).

**Culture** – we will work to create an organisation which values its staff and Members and their contributions to the National Park; which has a clear understanding and recognition of its “customers” (i.e. who the organisation is there to serve); and is outward facing in everything it does.

**Partnership Working** – we will work closely with partners, in the public, private and voluntary sectors, to deliver the aims of the Park and the National Park Plan. We will clarify with partners our role as an enabling organisation, not duplicating or substituting for the work of others, but coordinating and facilitating activities of others in ways which bring added value, making things happen which otherwise would not have done, and helping to find solutions in cases of conflict. The overriding aim will be to benefit the National Park and meet its aims.

***Communication-*** we will establish efficient communication systems within and without CNPA involving the use of electronic communications where possible, an informative and accessible website (with good linkages), and a newsletter to all Park residents. Effective communications are also important for staff and Members, operating across such a large Park area, and in view of the constraints imposed by bad weather in the winter. All staff and members will have access to e-mail, the intranet, and a video conference link between the CNPA offices.

***Openness and Accessibility*** – we will ensure the organisation is accessible to the public and to other organisations who wish to engage with us. This will include ensuring that formal board meetings and committee meetings are publicised and open to the public; that board papers and other information are readily accessible (through a variety of means), and that the CNPA has an appropriate presence at different locations in the Park.

***Operational Effectiveness and efficiency*** – we will ensure arrangements are in place (principally through the establishment of Committees), to enable the Board to have a level of oversight of the operation of the organisation compatible with their taking responsibility for the organisation. We will also ensure that effective internal control systems are in place and are used, to provide accountability and efficient use of resources. We will establish an effective ***internal greening policy*** within the CNPA.

***Training*** – we will ensure a continuous programme of training for board members and staff is implemented.

***Perception*** – we will aim to be justly seen as a trusted and respected organisation, and will establish systems for assessing and monitoring how we are perceived.

**Actions for 2004/05**

|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>   | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|--|
| 79 | <i>Staff Recruitment</i><br>Continue assessment of needs, and recruitment of staff to bring numbers up to around 50.   | Mar 05      | CS          | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Further posts due for 04/05 to be filled in May. Slight delay due to reconsideration of longer-term budget issues and corporate plan discussion at Board in Feb. PDC Officer and Visitor Services Officer took up post in March 05. |
| 80 | <i>Organisational Structure</i><br>Pay and grading system in place.  | Aug 04      | CS          | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> System in place; process of fitting in existing staff now near completion. All posts assessed and staff placed. Process of appeals ongoing  |
| 81 | Annual appraisal/ Performance review system in place   | Mar 05      | CS          | <b>Completed</b> System in place. Staff training in March. Roll-out process in April 05  |
| 82 | <i>Culture of Outward facing</i><br>Opinion poll on perceptions within the Park  | Dec 04      | COM         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Contract let in December.   |
| 83 | Communications strategy in place   | Jun 04      | COM         | <b>Completed</b>   |
| 84 | Complete programme of visits to Park by key local and national media, and profile raising events; Series of authored articles to raise public understanding. | Mar 05      | COM         | <b>Delayed, in hand.</b> Visits undertaken by Press Officer.   |
| 85 | Establish clear set of core messages about the Park  | Jul 04      | COM         | <b>Completed.</b>  |
| 86 | Regular flow of press coverage   | On gng      | COM         | <b>On track</b>  |
| 87 | Complete website development   | Oct 04      | COM         | <b>Complete/in hand:</b> Next phase went live in November, further development being planned.  |
| 88 | Install ISDN interview facility at Grantown office   | Nov 04      | COM         | <b>Delayed, in hand:</b> Equipment received. Complete April 05.  |
| 89 | Develop photographic library   | Jan 05      | COM         | <b>Delayed, In hand:</b> Communications Officer building this up.  |



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|    | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|--|
|    | <i>Openness and Accessibility</i>   |             |             |  |
| 90 | Publish accessible summary of key CNPA documents (Corporate plan and annual report)               | Sep 04      | COM         | <b>Delayed, in hand</b> (due to re-think). This will now be published in May.  |
| 91 | Production of 3 editions of newsletter "Parklife" to distribution to all households in Park.      | On gng      | COM         | <b>Complete.</b>   |
| 92 | Submit scheme as required under Freedom of Information Act  | Aug 04      | CS          | <b>Complete.</b> Scheme submitted. Follow with staff training. FOI Guidance also issued in December 04 to all staff and Board. Follow with staff training.             |
|    | <i>Internal Control Systems</i>   |             |             |  |
| 93 | Agree work plan with internal auditor for reviewing current systems and identifying improvements. | Oct 04      | CS          | <b>Completed</b> Jan 05. Initial schedule to be completed by May 05. First two draft reports to Audit Committee 24 March 05.   |
| 94 | Put in place efficient and effective financial control system for project expenditure.            | Jul 04      | CS/SPP      | <b>Complete.</b> Keep under review   |
|    | <i>Operational Effectiveness and Efficiency</i>   |             |             |  |
| 95 | Complete installation of admin systems - IT, filing, guidance, video conferencing.                | Jan 05      | CS          | <b>Complete.</b> Audio conferencing arrangements in use. . Keep Video conf. under review. Filing systems in hand.  |
| 96 | Corporate and operational plan – complete for 05/06   | Nov 04      | CS/CE       | <b>Complete.</b> Corporate Plan agreed by Board Feb 05 ;Operational Plan to Board for info April 05. Basis for staff appraisal/target setting for 05/06 (see point 82) |
| 97 | Put in place new Corporate planning process with targets and performance indicators.              | Feb 05      | CS/CE       | <b>Complete.</b> New approach developed for 05/08 Plan; keep under review for next Corporate Plan.   |
|    | <i>Training</i>   |             |             |  |
| 98 | Hold two staff away days  | Nov 04      | CS/CE       | <b>Completed.</b> (April and Nov.)   |
| 99 | Media training for all  | Nov 04      | COM         | <b>Complete.</b>   |
| 10 | Complete training plans; implement training for Groups, individuals and organisation as a whole.  | Mar 05      | CS/CE       | <b>Complete.</b>   |

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|     | <b>Actions/outcome</b>  | <b>When</b> | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Progress</b>  |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------|--|
| 101 | <i>Perception as trusted and respected organisation</i><br>Develop methods of measuring this objective. | Mar 05      | COM         | <b><i>Delayed, in hand.</i></b> This has been rolled into the opinion polling project (action 83). |
| 102 | <i>Calendar</i><br>Produce Park calendar following photographic and poetry competition.                 | Sep 04      | SPPM        | <b><i>Complete.</i></b> Calendars were delivered in Sept 04 and circulated in Nov and Dec 04.      |
| 103 | Produce travelling exhibition based on winning poems and photos.  | Oct 04      | SPPM        | <b><i>Complete.</i></b> Exhibition is now touring a series of local venues.                        |