

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION/(PROJECT PROPOSAL)

1. Title

Cairngorms Visitor Survey 2014-15

2. Expenditure Category

Operational Plan	x	Code		Procurement	x
Programme:				Grant	
Core or Project spend		Code		Capital	

Is this spend to be funded from an existing budget line, existing line with additional funds or is it a totally new spend?	£	Existing budget	
	£ 50,000	Additional budget	
	£	New budget	

3. Description

- Brief overview of project/activity including cost summary
- Specific elements for which support is sought (if not whole project/activity)

In 2003/04, CNPA commissioned a year-long, Park-wide visitor survey, which informed the initial State of the Park report and played an important role in policy development, informing work such as the Sustainable Tourism Strategy and the Outdoor Access Strategy. The survey was repeated in 2009/10, using the same methodology and largely the same questions.

Another repeat of the survey is scheduled to take place in 2014/15. Again the questions should remain largely the same to ensure consistency of data, but there may be the potential for some flexibility in the methodology. LLTNPA will also carry out their survey at the same time and although there will be variations in methodology between the two surveys, it may be possible to tender the work jointly.

Full costs will become clear after the survey has been tendered and methodology agreed but it is estimated that costs will be in the region of £50,000.

4. Rationale and Strategic Fit

- Why is the Park Authority considering investing staff and/ or financial resources in this project?
- Objectives/intended beneficiaries
- Evidence of need and demand
- Why is the Park Authority considering investing
- Fit with National Park Plan/Corporate Plan/other relevant strategies
- Linkages to other activities/projects
- What contribution may be made to improving KPI's?

The survey is our key piece of visitor research. The main objectives of the work are:

- To give detailed information about visitor behaviour, motivation and expenditure for use in monitoring progress against the National Park Partnership Plan and other strategies, notably the Sustainable Tourism Strategy.
- To allow comparison with the previous surveys to identify trends.
- To enable the local tourism sector to make informed decisions about business development.

5. Option Analysis

- Are there other ways in which the above objectives could be achieved?
- If so, why is this the preferred option?

It would not be possible to meet the objectives without commissioning some form of primary research. The previous surveys have consisted of 2500 face-to-face interviews spread throughout the year and geographically throughout the Park and this clearly remains an option.

However it may be that there could be some flexibility in the methodology. For example, in LLTNPA's last survey an initial subset of questions was asked face-to-face with a follow-up of further detailed questions by email.

The tender process will ask potential contractors to quote for both options and a cost / benefit analysis of both approaches will be considered before awarding a final contract.

6. Risk Assessment

- Strategic, Organisational Risks: Does the project assist in managing or reducing any of the strategic risks identified by the Audit Committee or Management Team? Please reference the Strategic Risk Register and specify which risks are addressed through the project and how these risks are addressed.
- Project Risks: Are there risks to the CNPA in funding this project/activity?
- Are there risks in the project/activity not being delivered to required timescale/quality?
- Comment on the likelihood of such risks occurring, their potential impact, and (where appropriate) any action that would be taken to mitigate the risks.

The risks to the CNPA in funding this project relate largely to the competence of the contractor awarded the work. A full tendering process will assess the skills and experience of the contractors. Payment for the work shall be scheduled such that final payment will be due only after successful completion of the project.

7. Costs and Funding

- Detail the financial costs of the project/activity
- Detail the sources of funding
- Justification also needs to be given if the CNPA is the major funder
- Detail any non-monetary costs to the CNPA (such as Member or staff input)

Until tender documents are received, and methodology confirmed, it is not possible to give detailed costs, but based on the previous surveys, we estimate costs to be around £50,000 inc VAT.

In terms of timescale, there is likely to be some flexibility in the payment schedule, with costs potentially split between three financial years - 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.

The initial survey in 2003/04 attracted some partner funding, but the 2009/10 survey didn't and was 100% funded by CNPA. Key partners, such as VisitScotland, Enterprise Companies and Local Authorities will again be approached for small contributions, but these are not guaranteed.

Input from CNPA staff will be required, particularly in advance of the survey to manage the tender process and agree details of the work with the successful contractor. Once the survey is up and running, staff input should be minimal.

8. Funding conditions

- Detail the project specific conditions that need to be included in any contract for services or grant offer letter in order that CNPA obtains the intended outcomes and Value for Money
- In the case of grant offers, our Financial Memorandum requires that SEERAD agree these conditions in advance of the grant offer being made

N/a

9. Deliverables/ Impact Assessment including Equalities

- Could the project have any discriminatory or negative effects on particular groups?
- Have opportunities been taken to promote equality within the project design?
- Does the project fall within one of the Park Authorities priority areas for considering equality impacts?
- What end products/outputs will be delivered?
- How will success be measured?
- How will the project be monitored and what will be the feedback to the CNPA?

The project output will be a survey report detailing the key visitor statistics for the Cairngorms and comparison with the previous surveys to identify key trends. Success will be achieved by the successful submission of the reports in 2015. CNPA is the lead partner on the project and will be involved in the project at all stages.

There are no equalities issues. The survey will be carried out by professional researchers according to the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.

10. Value for Money

- In view of the costs, do the deliverables appear to offer value for money? (consider cost of comparable projects, where available).

The costs are likely to be similar to the previous two surveys, perhaps slightly less if we can agree changes to the methodology. A full tender process will determine the best value contractors for the project.

11. Exit or Continuation Arrangements (where applicable)

- If this is not a discrete, time-limited, project or piece of work, what are the exit/continuation arrangements for when CNPA support ceases?

The survey is a discrete project. However it will be necessary to gather data on an ongoing basis as part of Park Partnership Plan monitoring. It is anticipated that this will continue at 5-yearly intervals.

12. Additionality

- Does this work/project substitute for or duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others?
- What would be the effects of the CNPA not supporting the project? Would it proceed without CNPA support?

A variety of other relevant research is carried out, by CNPA and partners, but none that provides the sort of statistically significant repeat data that would be produced by the visitor survey. Other research, such as the DREAMtrip model produces data that complements the visitor survey but does not replace it.

If CNPA did not support the project it would not go ahead.

13. Stakeholder Support

- Have the organisations and/or communities that would have an interest in this work/project been involved, and are they supportive?
- If supporter are also not funders an explanation may be required.

Partner organisations are supportive of the project, but may be unlikely to be in a position to contribute significant funds due to budgetary constraints.

14. Recommendation

It is recommended that CNPA finance & delivery committee agree the design of the project and allocate up to £50 000 to carry out this piece of work.

Name: Heather Trench Signature:  Date: 25 /10/13

15. Decision to Approve or Reject

Group Director

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Director of Corporate Services

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Chief Executive

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Finance Committee

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Board

Not applicable – below approval limits		
Name:	Signature:	Date:

Scottish Government

Not applicable – below approval limits		
Name:	Signature:	Date: