CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: MANAGING FOR VISITORS IN 2021

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Purpose:

I. To provide Board members with an overview of the partnership work undertaken on the management for visitors in the Cairngorms National Park during 2021, the feedback received from local partners at the end of the main visitor season and to promote discussion about plans for 2022.

Recommendations

- 2. That the Board:
 - a) Note the wide-ranging, partnership work which has been undertaken across the National Park to encourage visitors to respect, protect and enjoy the Cairngorms;
 - b) Note the feedback received from local partners; and
 - c) Discuss the proposals for managing for visitors in 2022, all of which are subject to the confirmation of CNPA budget.

Summary

3. This paper summarises the range of work undertaken during 2021 to encourage visitors to respect, protect and enjoy the Cairngorms. The work of the family of Cairngorms rangers is outlined, along with the partnership work on communications and on planning for improved visitor infrastructure. The feedback received from partners at the end of the main visitor season is summarised and the priorities for work to be undertaken in 2022 are set out.

An overview of partnership activity

- 4. In response to the additional pressures on the Park arising from Covid 19, CNPA set up several new partnership groups in Spring 2020 to address the new challenges and to complement existing groups:
 - a) Managing for Visitors Group: This was the main operational group for the management for visitors and involved the principal land managers from public, private and third sector, local authorities, NatureScot and emergency services. The group generally met every two weeks and was chaired by CNPA CEO or

- Director and oversaw the development of the visitor management plans described below.
- b) Cairngorms Tourism Response Group: a sub-group of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership comprising CNPA, Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP), VisitAberdeenshire, Visit MoraySpeyside, VisitScotland, local authorities and Highlands and Island Enterprise. The Group was chaired by CNPA Board member, Janet Hunter and focussed largely on issues associated with businesses, marketing and the overall management of tourism in the destination.
- c) **Communications Group:** An officer group to agree the focus of communication with visitors with CBP, VisitAberdeen, VisitMoraySpeyside, Forestry and Land Scotland and Cairngorms Connect.
- 5. The Cairngorms National Park was identified by Scottish Government as one of six hotspot areas in Scotland which led to CNPA staff participation in the National Visitor Management Steering Group and direct staff involvement in the three sub-groups on Communication, Enforcement and Infrastructure the latter was chaired by CEOs of Cairngorms and Loch Lomond and Trossachs NPA). This national work also involved participation in emergency planning exercises; routine reporting on status on a two-weekly basis; participation in two national visitor management summits; and presentations about our work at national and international events organised by Scottish Land and Estates, the Outdoor Recreation Network and Europarc.
- 6. During the year CNPA and CBP hosted virtual meetings to update and engage with elected members and community leaders involving local authority Councillors, Community Council Chairs and interested residents.

Plans for Managing for Visitors

7. During the last year, plans for the key visitor areas of the National Park were produced. These plans identify the key work areas that need to be undertaken to encourage safe, responsible and enjoyable access to the Cairngorms and were regularly discussed at partnership meetings. The Plans cover the Western Cairngorms, the Deeside area and the Angus Glen and are available on CNPA website at:

Managing for Visitors - Cairngorms National Park Authority

Communications and Visitor messaging

8. A considerable amount of work was undertaken by CNPA, the Cairngorms Business Partnership and others on communications for visitors and a summary is provided at **Annex 1.**

Ranger Services

9. Building on our experience of increased visitor pressures in 2020, CNPA undertook a number of significant measures to strengthen the presence of rangers in the Park.

- Scottish Government funding was secured to employ, train and manage seasonal rangers again in 2021 but also employ a further four, full-time CNPA rangers. Annex 2 contains a summary of the key visitor engagement work undertaken by the CNPA rangers.
- 11. CNPA also secured additional funding to train and employ four Kickstart Youth Placement opportunities for trainee rangers offering a start in this career for young adults aged 18 24 who are on Universal Credit. **Annex 3** summaries this programme of work.
- 12. During the period CNPA increased by 10% the grant aid offered to six partner ranger services (generally privately managed estates and charitable trusts with significant visitor pressure) to further support partners in managing for visitors.
- 13. A number of land managers (including Forestry and Land Scotland, National Trust for Scotland, RSPB Loch Garten and Balmoral Estates) employed additional rangers/visitor staff this year with welcome additional support from the NatureScot Better Places Green Recovery Fund. The National Park had nearly twice as many rangers on the ground to meet visitors this summer compared with 2019.
- 14. CNPA, Forestry and Land Scotland and Highland Council funded Police Scotland to provide dedicated staff cover to support the rangers and stewards in and around the Glenmore Forest Park on Friday and Saturday evenings during the school summer holiday. Their remit was, with the rangers, to encourage responsible access and enforce if only if required. This work was especially welcomed by local residents.
- 15. CNPA has continued to support the Cairngorms Volunteer Rangers (38 trained volunteers) during 'lockdown' with members returning to volunteering when they felt 'safe'. Through the Green Recovery Fund we facilitated seven community groups to purchase litter-picking equipment as a focus for volunteer activity and to look after the Park.
- 16. The family of Cairngorms Rangers (14 ranger services, including CNPA) are in regular operational contact with each other, communicating and sharing experiences, and challenges, via mobile phone groups as well as meeting regularly (see Annex 3).
- 17. The Park has also been a focus for national networking events in recent months the Scottish Countryside Ranger Association and the UK National Parks Education Network both hosted their annual national gatherings in the Cairngorms in November.

Visitor Infrastructure

18. Since September 2020 a significant number of key countryside sites have benefitted from infrastructure investment to help improve the visitor experience. The CNPA

budget made specific allowance for Visitor Infrastructure Improvement Programme and a Strategic Infrastructure Development Plan is in preparation.

- 19. Improvements in and around **Deeside** included:
 - a) Upgrade and expansion of Linn of Dee car park National Trust for Scotland (NTS) with CNPA support
 - b) Upgrade and expansion Linn of Quoich car park NTS with CNPA support
 - c) Loch Muick car park expansion (autumn 2021)
 - d) Cambus O May bridge repaired and open Aberdeenshire Council
 - e) Dinnet a new car park west of village is planned (Spring 2022) Dinnet Estate
- 20. Aberdeenshire Council issued traffic orders in summer of 2021 so that when they reached capacity, the minor country roads to Loch Muick and Linn of Dee could be temporarily closed. Staff and residents and key business retain necessary access.
- 21. Several variable message, electronic road-signs have been installed in Deeside. Further partnership work on coordination of messages on these signs is required, particularly at weekends.
- 22. Improvements in Angus and Glen Shee included:
 - a) Upgrade to Glen Shee local information centre (Cairngorms Green Recovery Fund)
 - b) Glen Shee public toilets to be upgraded by Aberdeenshire Council funded by Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (winter 2021)
- 23. Improvements in **West of the Park** included:
 - a) Loch an Eilean car park upgraded & enlarged 2021, with toilet improvements in 2022 Rothiemurchus Estate with CNPA support
 - b) Loch Garten visitor centre upgraded including car park improvements 2021, with further improvements including all abilities toilet in 2022– RSPB
 - c) Plans are in place to improve car parking near Beinn a Ghlo in Perth and Kinross to follow on from the Mountains the People project which significantly improved mountain paths (Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland)
 - d) Mountain paths have been maintained and improved and sections of the Speyside way improved (OATS) –
 - e) Plans are in place for further path improvements in and around Carrbridge and on sections of the Speyside Way.
- 24. Improvements to Cairngorm and Glenmore area:
 - a) New roadside path linking visitor centre & campsite to beach and traffic speed reduction measures – funded through the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) with CNPA support
 - b) Beach Car park improved & expanded FLS with CNPA support
 - c) Beach Toilets upgraded FLS with CNPA support
 - d) Speed limit in Glenmore to be reduced 30 mph & double yellow lines installed along village road Highland Council.

- e) Variable message electronic road sign funded by CNPA and managed by FLS installed on the approach road to Glenmore
- f) Highland Council, with CNPA, support to improve loch-side parking (winter/spring 2021/22)
- g) Highland Council, with CNPA support, are developing proposals for a replacement public toilet in Glenmore
- h) CairnGorm Mountain, with CNPA support, has installed camper van site at Ciste car Park
- i) Cairngorm Mountain and HIE are working to repair the funicular and investing significantly to deliver Master-plan which was approved in June 2021.
- j) Plans are in place to develop new visitor and vehicle counters in the area using sensors and technology based on the "Internet of Things"

End of Season Review

25. At the end of the main visitor season, feedback was requested from partners on any lessons learned and suggestions for operational improvements for the year ahead. The feedback from rangers is summarised in **Annex 4** and from members of the Managing for Visitors Group and Community Councils in **Annex 5**.

Priorities for 2022/23

- 26. The consultation about the National Park Partnership Plan is ongoing until 17 December and the Plan will, once approved by Ministers, set out the strategic priorities for tourism and visitor management within the Park in the medium to long term. Based on the feedback received to date, and recognising that the CNPA budget still has to be approved, the priorities for 2022/23 are likely to be:
 - a) Keeping our plans relevant and dynamic: The Plans for Managing for Visitors require to be updated as work is completed. The new Tourism Action Plan and the new Outdoor Access Strategy also require to be renewed in the near future. As the Heritage Horizons project develops momentum, a number of strands of work, especially around active travel, will become relevant to this theme.
 - b) Partnership groups: We will work to rationalise the number of partnership groups that meet to manage this area of work and make sure they continue to be effective as circumstances change. The Managing for Visitors Group will continue to meet monthly over winter and every two weeks over the main visitor season with an emphasis on operational coordination and communication with visitors. The Cairngorms Tourism Response Group probably requires to meet less frequently, perhaps once between each full meeting on the Tourism Partnership. Communication issues should be on every agenda. The Local Outdoor Access Forum will be fully involved in planning and managing all this work.
 - c) **Infrastructure planning and investment:** Considerable further work is required to develop our strategic plan for tourism/visitor infrastructure and the allocation of funds to see the infrastructure well-maintained and priority projects

delivered. Delivery of such projects is complex, often requiring a combination of funding streams and a number of different consents and agreements. There are seven over-lapping areas that require further investment:

- i. Quality and accessibility of toilets (both capital and revenue)
- ii. Camper van waste disposal
- iii. Quality and general accessibility of camper van sites
- iv. Quality and accessibility of easy-to-use, budget campsites
- v. Path development and maintenance to promote active travel and discourage car use
- vi. Traffic management and car-parking at key hotspots
- vii. Public transport link to the Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 projects
- d) Ranger services: The collective work of the 14 individual ranger employers has been very widely appreciated by many visitors and local residents; and the Sitebased rangers appreciated being able to call on additional support when required. We will consolidate the approach with a blend of Area and Site-based services, complemented by seasonal rangers in the main visitor season. This approach was generally found to be highly flexible and mutually supportive. CNPA will continue to offer discretionary grant-aid to ranger employers when required to foster common and high standards in the profession. Further work is required with NatureScot and others on the development of common standards of reporting (e.g. litter, dogs not under close control, etc.) so that trends can be identified and comparisons made between areas. There is some concern that the special funding measures that was available for staff in the last two seasons may not be available in future years. If resources allow, funding of young trainee, apprentice rangers should be encouraged alongside the seasonal ranger team. Continued improvements to communication with land managers and visitors are required about the role and work of rangers in the Park and on internal communications within the wider ranger family.
- e) **Common messaging:** Further work is required both in the Park and nationally on a clear and consistent approach to communicating the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and particularly in the areas of responsible wild and roadside camping and fires. The need for communications with visitors to be positive and consistent, whatever land they are on, is clear; providing functional (what's open?) and inspirational (why to visit?) information in ways that also encourage responsible behaviour. There is also a need to promote areas of the National Park that have capacity to take more visitors during busy periods.
- f) Electronic signage and other technology: The management of the electronic signage, especially on Deeside, requires to be improved if it is to be effective. The signs are generally managed by other bodies; CNPA will clarify the management of all signs before the start of the season and update the communication protocols. New traffic sensors will be installed in the Cairngorm and Glenmore area and we will work with partners on development of new digital approaches to collection, analysis and use of visitor data.

Next Steps

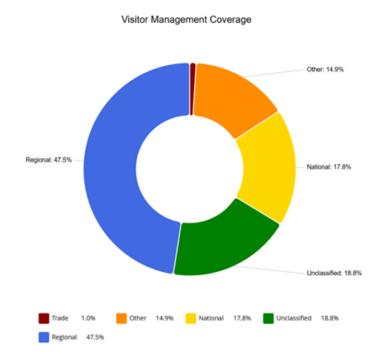
27. CNPA will receive an indication of budget settlement later in December and detailed plans will be confirmed. The Managing for Visitors Group and Tourism Response Group will meet over winter as described above.

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December 2021

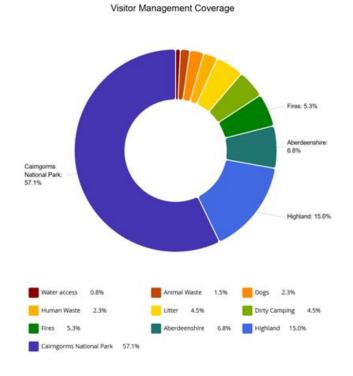
Annex 1: Summary of CNPA communications activity relevant to Managing for Visitors

- I. We collaborated with VisitScotland and partners on a coordinated national approach to visitor management, underneath the overall #RespectProtectEnjoy banner. The national campaign reached 83% of Scottish adults on at least one occasion, with 57% seeing activity three or more times. According to VisitScotland's research, 73% of all Scots agreed that the campaign motivated people to be more responsible, with just 6% disagreeing.
- 2. We facilitated a two-day photography session in the Cairngorms National Park to develop a suite of partner assets for use on social media, signage and publications. From paddle boarding to responsible dog walking and the dangers of wildfires, over 50 different resources were created and shared with all VisitScotland partners. CNPA alone reached over 85,000 people using these materials.
- 3. Our partnership with VisitScotland allowed us to trial and roll out a number of test activities, including digital advertising vans located in high footfall locations (main road in Aviemore and Pitlochry town centre) reinforcing responsible behaviour messaging, e.g. no littering, wildfires, dogs on leads etc and providing a warm welcome to the area.
- 4. We convened a Cairngorms-specific comms group under the #CairngormsTogether umbrella, with members including CBP, VisitAberdeenshire, Forestry and Land Scotland and Cairngorms Connect. This helped us disseminate national messaging seamlessly amongst partners, and escalate any issues being experienced by partners to the national steering group. This was further supported by a dedicated ranger comms WhatsApp group, which ensured emerging issues (e.g. car parks being full, roads closed etc) were flagged to a Park-wide audience within minutes.
- 5. Between March and September, we shared 237 posts across social media, with a reach of 950,905. 33,944 people engaged directly with our posts, with Facebook and Instagram being particularly successful in engaging our target audiences. The post that reached and engaged the most people was a Managing for Visitors infographic summarising all the activity taking place across the Park. This reached over 30,000 people on Facebook alone.
- 6. Amongst the collaborative activities, we worked with Zero Waste Scotland on an <u>antilitter campaign</u>, which reached over 2.8m people across social media. The iconic imagery, coupled with a more conversational tone and less preachy message, was a big hit with audiences, with this post alone attracting over 600 likes.
- 7. The CNP website was updated with a range of Managing for Visitors content throughout the period. This included sharing updated SOAC materials on wild camping, responsible dog ownership, wildfires etc, as well as the RNLI's 'Float to Live' campaign following the tragic incidents on Loch Lomond over the summer period. The site worked in concert with CBP's VisitCairngorms resource, with the main Covid-19 planning page and status website for businesses and attractions particularly effective.

- 8. Ten press releases were issued over the period, covering a range of topics including infrastructure investment, ranger recruitment, responsible dog ownership, the dangers of wildfires etc. These releases plus a wide variety of reactive press statements and interviews with key CNP personnel were covered by the BBC, STV, P&J, Scotsman, Herald, Daily Record and all our local weekly papers. We also issued three web-only news items to support social media and produced five Park Talks or blogs featuring managing for visitors messaging.
- 9. Regional vs national media coverage split:



10. Breakdown of keywords in media coverage:



Annex 2: Summary of Visitor Engagement by CNPA Rangers

Cairngorms National Park Authority Ranger Service: Report Data 2021									
Month	No. Patrols	No. of people engaged with (1)	No. tents	No. of overnight campervans	No. of dogs on a lead (or under very close control) encountered	No. of dogs off the lead (or not under close control)	No. of live fires/BBQs extinguished	No. of old fire/BBQ remains cleared	Bags of litter collected (2)
April	221	1356	40	133	496	188	20	124	151
May	217	1773	239	209	525	77	42	112	103.75
June	200	2050	396	305	558	80	32	149	60.5
July	288	3008	775	293	894	132	31	143	108.5
Aug	332	2527	314	335	937	103	16	123	90.75
Sept	191	1079	45	194	517	41	3	60	36.75
Oct	156	722	23	116	499	25	1	43	29.75
Total	1,605	12,515	1,832	1,585	4,426	646	145	754	581

Notes:

- I. People spoken with, sharing information
- 2. Black bin bags of litter collected (to the nearest 0.25 of a bag)

Annex 3: Summary of the Kickstart Trainee Rangers Scheme

Recruitment

I. Following advertisement and promotion on social media, applicants were required to apply through their local Dept. of Work and Pensions coach. The interview panel consisted of three members of staff. The interview questions were broad and refrained from asking about experience to reflect the level of the post. Four Kickstart rangers were appointed in the Cairngorms NP.

Preparing for the Placements

2. To ensure that the programme was a success there was a significant amount of preparatory work developed prior to the placements starting. The work done was in partnership by the HR department and the Ranger Team. The teams consulted and agreed skills that would be important for the Kick-starters to learn. The Trainees were asked to complete a log at the end of each patrol, and a self-reflection online questionnaire.

Mentoring

3. To ensure that the Kickstart Rangers were fully supported throughout their time with CNPA they were matched with a ranger mentor who helped them assimilate into the team. They were line-managed by the Outdoor Learning and Engagement Manager. The Trainee Rangers also had meetings and email communication with the HR Assistant. This structure enabled the Trainees to have a range of support in their team and in the wider organisation.

Training and Development

- 4. As part of the Kickstart scheme CNPA committed to offering training for the Kickstart Trainee Rangers. The Trainee Rangers have all participated in the following training:
 - a) Outdoor Emergency First Aid (2 Days)
 - b) Safe and Sound Conflict Training
 - c) CV Writing Skills
 - d) Public Speaking Skills
 - e) Microsoft Outlook 2016 Essentials
 - f) Organisational Skills
 - g) Interview Preparation and Mock Interviews (Provided by the HR team and Ranger Team)

Successes

- 5. There have been many successes reported throughout the Scheme:
 - a) Experience Due to the nature of the scheme previous work experience may have been limited. The scheme has been able to offer the Trainees new experiences which will be helpful for future applications and interviews, benefitting them when applying to more specialised roles or further training programmes.

- b) Work Skills The Trainees were able to develop their understanding of work skills, such as; using outlook and furthering their professional skills, e.g. organisational skills, time keeping and discussing work issues. This will benefit them in future roles as they will understand the expectations placed on employees in a professional work/corporate environment.
- c) **Confidence** Throughout the programme with carefully planned training and mentorship all the Trainees have increased confidence levels when it comes to interacting with the general public and presenting to colleagues.
- d) Ranger support The Seasonal Ranger team who mentored the Trainee Rangers, have developed their own skills in management and training whilst at the same time providing valuable support for the trainees
- e) **Final evaluation** All of the team met with the CNPA Director at the end of the project to be awarded relevant certificates and tell of their experiences on the scheme, with strong indications that the scheme had been truly life-changing.
- f) Training, employment and progression Three of the team completed the training. Following application and interview in August, one of the Kickstart rangers was appointed to the post of Seasonal Ranger, replacing a member of the team who had left to take up a permanent post.

Annex 4: End of Season Review – Feedback from CNPA Seasonal Rangers and Partner Ranger Services

Summary of CNPA Seasonal Ranger feedback

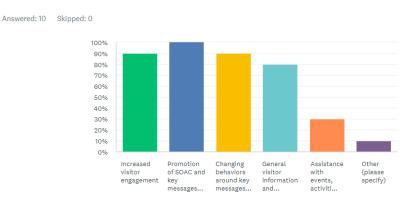
- Partnership working in terms of communication and relationships: 90% excellent,
 Importance of these relationships for effective working and delivery: 92% excellent
- Visitor engagement and messaging:

Electronic road signs poor
 Face to face communication excellent
 Social media excellent

- Ranger rotas need improvement to ensure efficient and effective delivery of ranger service outcomes.
- Visitor infrastructure provision:
 - Car parking was the biggest issue across the National Park throughout the season.
 - o Lack of campsites, formal and informal continues to be an issue.
 - A big improvement was identified with the production of the campervan leaflet and website resource.
 - o Provision of public toilets also an issue in several areas across the Park.

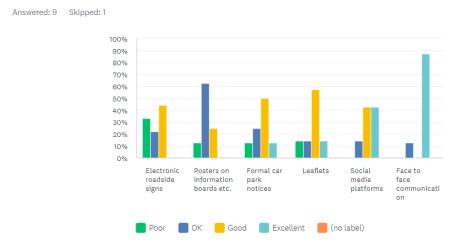
Summary of partner ranger service feedback

- Partnership working communications partners rated the communications between CNPA rangers and themselves as excellent, with the WhatsApp groups proving valuable to complement the face-to-face communication.
- Partnership working outcomes what was achieved?



How did the family of rangers feel like they worked together?
 85% Excellent

• Effectiveness of method used for messaging delivery:



- Visitor infrastructure provision:
 - Car parks more provision required, overflow facilities worked well where in place.
 - Campsites formal and informal more required
 - o Toilets more public toilets required, some areas still without provision.

Annex 5: End of Season Review – Feedback from the Managing for Visitors Group Partners

Q1. In 2022 'season' how frequently should the Managing for Visitors Group meet?

Consensus (two thirds of responses) that meetings should be every **two weeks** in the 2022 season.

Community Councils wished to meet together to discuss visitor management issues at start and at end of the main visitor season.

Q2. What collective "managing for visitors" work should this group focus on in 2022?

Community Councils highlighted that the main challenges to address were managing visitor numbers, car parking, littering and a general sense that communities were looking scruffy, perhaps due to reduced local authority attention.

Most respondents considered that the focus of the meetings should be operational and action orientated:-

- 1. Collaborative working sharing information/intelligence
 - a) Identifying busy areas
 - b) Identifying & promoting quieter areas with capacity
 - c) Identifying visitor behaviour change +ve and -ve
 - d) Identifying & mitigating -ve impacts on communities and nature
 - e) Identifying & managing trends 'paddle boarding'
 - f) Identifying & supporting gaps in visitor management ranger coverage
 - g) Sharing good practice what worked well
- 2. Consistent positive messaging
 - a) Consistently promoting SOAC
 - b) Agreeing how SOAC is promoted on contentious issues: fires, camping, dogs etc
 - c) Agreeing key 'welcome' messages for visitors
 - d) Consistent messaging should be 'face to face' (rangers+), social media, print and signage
- 3. Agreeing & collecting consistent visitor data that allows change and any regional variation to be monitored

But also have a longer term input into:

- 4. Strategic role in shaping how we develop infrastructure and communication to sustainably manage for visitors going forward
- 5. Strategic role in encouraging visitors to reduce CO2 emissions

Q3. Messaging for Visitors #CairngormsTogether: What elements of the collective messaging for visitors to the CNP worked well & what needs improved?

Consensus appears to be that #CairngormsTogether and collective messaging worked well with clear opportunities to improve in certain areas:

- I. More information on audiences and best type of communication required feedback on the ground suggest that many visitors did not engage with web, social media or leaflets. How do we reach the 'hard to reach' groups?
- Staff on the ground, and particularly rangers, were very well appreciated, communicated well and very positively improved visitor behaviour. Some land managers requested further clarity about the role and communication with CNPA rangers.
- 3. Positive feedback on messaging on social media, blogs and mainstream media but again concerns about not reaching the 'hard to reach audience'
- 4. Variable message electronic roads signs were seen as being potentially very useful but also raised significant concerns and frustration in Deeside about keeping them up to date. There were some requests for more signs.
- 5. Continued and better promotion of public toilets required and where campervan waste can be disposed of.
- 6. CBP Campervan leaflet highlighted as useful, particularly to support 'face to face' communication.
- 7. Consistent approach across the NP is required on messaging (web, social, face to face) on SOAC and responsible access and specifically for camping & 'wild' fires.
- 8. Clarity of understanding with F&RS and Police Scotland on irresponsible behaviour that is likely to be in breach of the law, rather than SOAC, and role of these partners managing such behaviour.

Q4. Visitor Infrastructure: What longer-term improvements to visitor infrastructure should be developed? Who are the key partners for this work?

Two areas were identified as requiring signification multi-partner approach to improve access and infrastructure: **Muir of Dinnet NNR** and **Cairngorm/Glenmore**

The following infrastructure was highlighting across the NP as requiring improvement or installation:

1. Better maintenance of promoted paths and signs – with specific concerns about increased wear and tear by increased use of electric bikes

- 2. Better promotion of key paths leaflets, web, apps, signs
- 3. Improved Public Toilets; quantity, quality and longer opening
- 4. More campervan waste disposal sites
- 5. More budget/seasonal camp sites and campervan sites
- 6. Better promotion of active travel options linked with electric bike charging
- 7. Electric car charging at rural visitor sites
- 8. Improved public transport

Q5. What is the key message would you like us to get across to national partners (e.g. Scottish Government and VisitScotland)?

Consensus that nationally we need clarity on promoting the Scottish Outdoor Access Code going forward with a key focus on general behaviour associated with:-

- I. Camping
- 2. Fires
- 3. Litter
- 4. Human Waste

With agreement and use of positive, consistent messaging both within NP but also by national partners; NatureScot and VisitScotland.

Several responses requested that NatureScot need to review and amend SOAC advice, with specific focus on wild camping, road-side camping and lighting fires, all based on experience of irresponsible behaviour encountered over last two years.