CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

Title: Responsible Promotion of Recreation

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Purpose This paper updates the Forum on the progress of the guidance on

responsible promotion of recreational opportunities

Advice Sought The Forum is asked to:

a) Consider whether the proposed changes address the issues arising from the previous consultation

b) Provide further comment on the tone and content of the guidance.

Background

- 1. At the Forum meeting on 18 August 2009 the Forum considered a paper presenting a draft policy on responsible promotion of recreational opportunities within the National Park. The Forum were presented with the feedback from the targeted stakeholder consultation, which demonstrated that there was a wide range of perspectives on the issues and that further work would be required to reach a consensus.
- 2. The Forum was asked to:
 - a) Note the feedback from the consultation exercise;
 - b) Consider how effectively the draft policy met the concerns raised by land managers and others; and
 - c) Consider and advise on proposals for further engagement.

The Forum's View

- 3. The Forum advised that the CNPA should pilot guidance on this matter that would be useful for SNH and the National Access Forum to roll out nationally. They expressed a concern that too strongly worded guidance might be a backward step for access rights; that there should be a section on the legal context and that it should not provide opportunities for a land manager to prevent or restrict responsible access. Further consideration should be given to the tone of the document and how best to communicate with the target audiences.
- 4. Overall the Forum supported the proposal that further engagement with interested groups would help develop greater buy-in and asked for further input prior to the final approval of the document.

Recent Developments

- 5. Subsequent to the August 2009 Forum meeting there was a hiatus in the further development of this work due to staff reductions between October and March of this year. Notwithstanding this, in September 2009, CNPA staff met with representatives of the Activity Providers' Group of the Aviemore and Cairngorms Destination Management Organisation to discuss their concerns and the background to the work. The outcome of the meeting was positive and supportive. CNPA agreed to listen to any further views and to make revisions to the guidance.
- 6. Some further contributions on the issue were also received.

Proposed Changes

- 7. This guidance has been drawn up in the recognition that these days, promotional information can be wide ranging, mobile, rapidly evolving and difficult to control and that the best strategy is to give opportunity for promoters and land managers to engage positively in presenting information to the public.
- 8. The presentation of the document has been changed from "policy" to "guidance" and at this stage, it will not feature as a policy adjunct to the Outdoor Access Strategy as, for example, the Organising an Outdoor Access Event policy. There is potential for this to change if it is flagged up as a significant issue at the review of the Strategy in 2012.
- 9. The revised guidance is attached at **Appendix 1**. It has been redrafted with the emphasis on the following:
 - Drawing attention to the variety in the scale of promotion and anticipated audiences and clarifies that this guidance is predominantly directed at <u>active</u> promotion of activities, routes and places as opposed to the more casual use of chat forums, social networking sites and blogs, etc.
 - Drawing attention to the special qualities and environmental context of the National Park
 - Referencing the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and Para 3.63 which is specifically about promotion
 - Looking to the future in describing what good promotion of recreational opportunity looks like
 - Expanding the sections on responsibilities of promoters ("information providers"), land managers and the CNPA and provides more direction to information provided by representative or national governing bodies
 - Achieving a more positive tone to the guidance
- 10. For the ease of comparison, the original draft policy is attached as Appendix 2

The Next Steps

11. In parallel to the discussion with the LOAF it is proposed to take this guidance back to the main stakeholders who expressed concern at the original concept, and endeavour to develop further support. The guidance will be presented to the CNP Board for approval in July, along with proposals for raising awareness and distribution of the guidance over the summer.

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