

---

# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

---

## FOR INFORMATION

**Title: CEO REPORT AND CONVENER UPDATE**

**Prepared by: GRANT MOIR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Purpose:**

1. To highlight to Board Members the main strategic areas of work that are being directed by Management Team. These are areas where significant staff resources are being directed to deliver with partners the aspirations of the National Park Partnership Plan.

**Conservation:**

1. **Cairngorms Nature:** The Biodiversity Challenge Fund and Green Recovery Fund included riparian tree planting schemes, aspen habitat creation, freshwater pearl mussel translocation, pine hoverfly habitat creation and the purchase of new rush topper for loan to farmers and crofters managing habitat for farmland waders. Contracts for supply and services totalled a combined value of approximately £140,000. Third party projects supported by the CNPA include the Cairngorms Rare Plants project and the Rare Invertebrates in the Cairngorm project. These employ local project staff and work with volunteers and estates on managing areas for species such as one flower wintergreen and dark bordered beauty moth.

The mid-term review of Cairngorms Nature Action Plan is scheduled for May 2021. Work to date on delivery actions and an assessment of progress towards targets will be captured in an on-line report, promoted through a short video showcasing the work of the wide range of land managers and partners and discussed at a Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend event.

2. **Cairngorms Capercaillie Project:** Habitat improvement work is progressing and work to identify the genetic diversity of the Capercaillie population in the Park is underway. Historical and European genetic samples have been gathered as part of this work.

Local mountain bikers have begun to identify ways to help the mountain biking community improve conditions for Capercaillie. This work is based on a survey by the project which found that almost all riders feel responsible for the environment they ride in and are willing to change behaviours to help protect the environment. The Carrbridge Capercaillie Group are making progress delivering the Carrbridge Capercaillie Conservation Strategy. The CBP is continuing to collate ideas from the

business community about ways in which the project can help more businesses to promote responsible enjoyment in the Park. And a qualitative research brief has been published to enable a greater understanding of visitors to Glenmore, Abernethy and Rothiemurchus. The brief has been developed with FLS, RSPB and Rothiemurchus Estate. The findings will be shared in September and used to identify ways to enable high quality sustainable visitor experiences and thriving Capercaillie areas.

3. **Woodland Creation:** We have very nearly reached our 5,000ha woodland creation target with a year left of the 2017-2022 reporting period. We are aware of quite a few woodland creation schemes currently shaping up, and have fed significantly into early discussions of several of these so far. At least seven estates are proposing large, predominantly native woodland schemes of 500 ha or more. Furthermore, over the course of the 2020/21 year the Cairngorms National Park Woodland Challenge Fund has so far assisted six native woodland creation projects amounting to well over 200 ha across seven properties with grants totalling £13,038.80.
4. **Peatland Restoration:** Scottish Government have agreed in principle to our 3-year, £10m funding proposal to bring over 2,700 hectares of peatland under restoration management. Recruitment for a new team is underway with Stephen Corcoran appointed as the Peatland Programme Manager in March while Daisy Whytock joined, Emma Stewart, as a Peatland Project Officer in January.

Restoration work on the peatland sites on Balmoral and Wildland Estates was suspended in December due to heavy snow, and machines were taken off the hill. Unfortunately, none of the projects had quite finished and these might have to be carried over to complete this summer. Project staff are preparing new projects for this summer and finalising the financial procedures for grant aiding land managers directly from April.

5. **Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership:** The 4 year programme of 20 major projects is coming to an end but the legacy is assured. CNPA are holding funds for management and maintenance for the next 5 years and a legacy board is in place to oversee future developments. Board members will have received a final thank you email with links to the [TGLP website](#) now in the hands of the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Business Association. A [celebration film](#) has been produced alongside [many other films](#) promoting the area. Marketing materials are in the final edit stage but will be available very soon. Covid has of course been problematic but the recent snow has also caused delays. We expect to get the remaining interpretation signs and way-markers installed in the next few weeks, and there are still about 25,000 trees to be planted by the end of April. It's difficult to summarise just how much has been done over the last 4 years, but in summary:
  - a) £3.6million invested in the area
  - b) Discovery Centre refurbished and offices created
  - c) Blairfindy Castle stabilised and open
  - d) Scalan Mills preserved
  - e) Speyside Way Spur restored with newly surfaced paths
  - f) Tomintoul and Glenlivet – Cairngorms Dark Sky Park launched
  - g) Dark sky friendly lighting installed
  - h) Online Digital archive of local history created

- i) Habitats for wading birds managed by farmers
- j) Bird-hide built
- k) 112 cultural heritage sites recorded
- l) Community Cultural Heritage Booklet published
- m) Barriers to spawning salmon opened up
- n) Innovative and ground-breaking green-engineering flood protection installed
- o) 80 Events celebrating our heritage held
- p) 58 Training & skills courses held
- q) Oral history recorded
- r) New woodlands created
- s) Natural Heritage projects grant aided
- t) Local Education resources created
- u) New Interpretation displays designed and manufactured
- v) School films created and shown
- w) Fishing promoted and made more accessible
- x) Landscape heritage & song workshops & events held
- y) New Tomintoul & Glenlivet marketing resources
- z) Community Storage Facility created
- aa) New [website](#) created
- bb) [Promotional videos](#) produced

For more details on all the projects please visit the TGLP [projects page](#).

### Visitor Experience:

6. **Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum:** The Forum met on 24<sup>th</sup> February to discuss; Scottish Outdoor Access Code messaging along with Tread Lightly in the Park campaign materials, access casework, and the Heritage Horizons application. Members acknowledged the huge amount of work done in 2020 to address the impacts of increased visitors post lockdown and that for many hotspots there was significant pressures including campfires. Members support a much stronger access message in **Tread lightly in the Park** to ensure consistency of advice around the Park and to highlight that it is very difficult to have a campfire responsibly anywhere in the Park. **The Scottish Outdoor Access Code** clearly determines that fires are not safe in most of Cairngorms; ***‘Never light an open fire during prolonged dry periods or in areas such as forests, woods, farmland or on peaty ground or near to buildings or in cultural heritage sites where damage can be easily caused.’*** Members were also very supportive of the active travel elements of the **Heritage Horizons** project, and greater integration between delivery on the health and wellbeing agenda and the net zero carbon agenda.
7. **Speyside Way:** In partnership with the Newtonmore Community an official Long Distance Route branded stone is now installed at a start/finish point in the centre of Newtonmore next to a stunning new shinty stick seat and associated interpretation. The route has been remapped and interpretation panels developed to install in villages along the route, and new signage is now in place from Kingussie to Tromie Bridge; all in preparation for a potential formal opening in summer of 2021 post-election. While the route is fully useable there are several sections within the National Park that require upgrade and improvement.

8. **Cairngorms Rangers:** CNPA has appointed eight seasonal rangers to start work mid-March to safely welcome visitors to the National Park as Covid 19 restrictions ease. CNPA met with ranger partners in early March to agreed how best to communicate and work together in the coming year. The Scottish Government funding to enhance the CNPA Ranger Service is covered in the Budget Paper.
9. **Volunteering & Health Walks:** Since the start of 2021 the 38 volunteer rangers and 14 Health Walk Groups (supported by Paths for All) have all be 'on hold'. We are regularly communicating with both groups, sharing stories and planning how to safely reopen in 2021 as Scottish Government guidance allows.
10. **Local Information Centres:** Visitor interpretation is being developed for; Glenshee Pottery (successful Green Recovery Fund applicant), Glenlivet Mountain Bike Centre, Grantown Museum, Laggan Wolftrax, and the new Braemar tourism group centre with the aim of having this installed for 're-opening'.
11. **Education and Inclusion:** Take up of **John Muir Award** recommenced following 'Lockdown' with 789 awards in 2020 contrasting with a usual 3,000 per year. However, an impressive backlog of 3,584 people are currently registered to undertake the award in and around the Cairngorms. The CNPA, LL&TNPA and Nature Scotland partnership is supporting **Backbone** in developing two new projects; a symposium engaging with BAME communities in the outdoors in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign, and a new, one year, and version of the Community Leadership Programme. **The Cairngorms Youth Action Team** virtually participated in Europarc conference and are inputting to the Heritage Horizons lottery bid. The CYAT have also produced two films and are participating in the Scottish Rural Parliament. The '**Neighbourhood Residencies Project**' in partnership with Bothy Project has been beset by Covid difficulties but the three residents have been chosen to spend time in Inshriach Bothy and this should be going ahead in the next few weeks, restrictions allowing.
12. **Information and Interpretation:** Main activities have focussed on developing interpretation for Speyside Way, Local Information Centres and supporting the work of Badenoch Great Place Scheme and Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership. CNPA supported visitor information leaflets are being reprinted ready for 2021 'reopening' including; Welcome, Explore for a Day, Gaelic Place Names and tear off Map Pad.

### **Rural Development:**

13. **Local Development Plan 2021:** Scottish Ministers have confirmed that CNPA can now adopt the Plan, subject to a change that highlights the detailed A9 dualling proposals on the Transport Scotland website. There are no significant policy changes. The CNPA Board will be asked to adopt the Plan on 26 March. A programme of work is planned to notify partners and undertake training to ensure delivery of the Plan.

14. **Planning Casework:** Applications have been approved for a significant new bridge at Glen Gairn, a new zip wire to diversify activity at the Glenshee ski centre and conversion of farm buildings to visitor facilities near Kingussie. Windfarm consultation responses have been submitted for Berryburn and updates provided for Glen Clova Track where enforcement activity is ongoing.
15. **Youth engagement in Planning:** The Cairngorms Youth Action Group have been undertaking a project using the game Minecraft, using a National Park landscape model, developed by Dan Harris, Planning Manager. The group have been enjoying the exercise and the project has been picked up very significantly by national and local media, also generating much interest from others who want to use it. The Youth Action Group will attend a Planning Committee meeting in future to share their experience. Consideration is being given to how to make other uses of the Cairngorms landscape that has been developed in Minecraft for other Park-related engagement work.
16. **Community-led Housing Delivery:** The Tomintoul Community Housing Project has made significant progress – the old school has now been completely demolished and a planning application and was called in by the CNPA in late February. Braemar’s community housing project will make a planning application early in March. Discussions are under way with Laggan and other communities about further plans for community-led housing delivery.
17. **Economic Action Plan:** The business support programme, led by Growbiz, is now well established and is currently developing its one to one new mentoring programme. The Cairngorms Women’s Business Network has now held several meetings and feedback has been positive. Growbiz are also working to re-energize the Creative Cairngorms network, financed through the Green Recovery Fund. The Smart Village project is developing with groups in Grantown, Braemar and Ballater. Work is under way considering a green jobs project with NatureScot, circular economy initiatives with Zero Waste Scotland, training and skills projects related to peatland conservation and reviewing approaches to community wealth building. CBP continue to take very useful work on behalf of their members and are making significant funding application to HIE’s Destination Development fund. Next meeting of the Economic Steering Group is in mid-March.
18. **Tourism Action Plan:** Cairngorms Tourism Partnership met in November and January to review progress with implementation of the Tourism Action Plan and is the Tourism Action Plan is subject to a separate paper at the March meeting of the Board.
19. **A9 Dualling project:** Transport Scotland has published the design details for the Tomatin to Moy section to the north of the National Park. Transport Scotland have also resolved all the outstanding objections to the Crubenmore to Kincaig section so there will not be an Inquiry on that section. Transport Scotland continue to lead on the planning for a non-motorised user route, linking Aviemore and Carrbridge and due to for delivery alongside the construction of that section, after 2024.

20. **Badenoch Great Place Project:** Following a series of successful Community and Business Engagement events in January, the BGPP is now in the final stages of developing its public facing outputs (App, website, leaflets and maps) that will be used to promote the new visitor itineraries and launch “Badenoch: The Storylands” as a destination within the Cairngorms National Park. The App is currently undergoing its Beta testing and should go live in late Spring. Content, including storytelling by Hamish Napier, music composition and imagery, continues to be developed. Interpretation for the Badenoch section of the Speyside Way is being finalised and should be in place by end April. A Badenoch archive is being set up through Am Baile and skills development training is being organised with local schools (Covid restrictions allowing). Planning is now underway for a 2 week online Heritage Festival in September which will end in a final project celebratory event. A mid-term report, “The Story so Far”, available on [www.BadenochStorylands.com](http://www.BadenochStorylands.com) was released in January and summaries activity to date.
21. **Green Recovery Fund:** In total, 13 projects were funded and some are now complete while the others continue to make good progress. One project, the completion of expanded car park for Munro access near Dalwhinnie, has had some technical difficulties and the funding agreement has been continued into 2021. Plans are being made for a further Green Recovery Fund in 2021.
22. **Cairngorms Business Barometer Quarter 4 (Oct to December 2020):** This study is undertaken by CBP members (around 100 members filled in last survey) and is funded by CNPA. This survey has been running for more than 13 years and CBP commented on results as follows. The Quarter was very challenging for the visitor economy in the Cairngorms. The tier system meant that most businesses were allowed to trade, so could not access grant funding, even though core markets of the central belt and the rest of the UK were not allowed to travel here. This was reflected in 88% of businesses reporting a decrease in turnover for the quarter, compared to the historic average of 40%. The importance of the National Park brand in attracting first time visitors has grown significantly with 72% of businesses stating that the Park had a high level of influence compared to the historic average of 54%. These results perhaps reflect people's desire to find space in the countryside when they were allowed to travel. Given the trading conditions in Q4, it is not surprising to see short and medium term confidence decline again, whilst confidence in the longer term held firm. The topical questions clearly demonstrate the very real and significant challenges many businesses face, many still fall through gaps in funding support. 53% of businesses stated they are likely to reduce or further reduce staff numbers in the coming months. The full Business Barometer results are available at: <https://str.com/cairngorms-national-park-business-barometer>.

### **Stakeholder Engagement:**

23. The CEO has attended a range of groups over the past 3 months including COHI Senior Officers Group, NPP Net Zero with Nature Steering Group, Environment and Economy Leaders Group, NPPP Stakeholders Group, ENGO Visitor Management Group, HOIP Infrastructure Group, Climate Ready Aberdeenshire, Cairngorms Economic Steering Group, Cairngorms Tourism Partnership & Cairngorms Equalities Forum.

24. The CEO is a member of the national Visitor Management Steering Group and Chairs with Gordon Watson from LLTTNPA the Infrastructure and Investment Sub-Group. This has met multiple times. Locally a series of meetings have been held with partners on visitor management preparations. This included a residents meeting, Local Authority Councillor meeting and Community Council meeting all held on 1<sup>st</sup> March.
25. Meetings have also been held with SLE, Badaguish, Palladium, Highland Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Perthshire Wild Connections Partnership, NatureScot, Scottish Government, NPUK, Brewdog and with multiple partners as the development of the Heritage Horizons bid progressed.

### **Communications:**

26. **Active Cairngorms – Easter managing for visitors comms:** Following the First Minister’s announcement of a phased approach to easing lockdown restrictions, we have been working with partners at a local and national level to coordinate our approach to visitor comms. We have fed into two national campaigns – led by VisitScotland and NatureScot – that will set the overall framework for Easter; have chaired a specific group on comms for motorhomes and campervans; and have fed into other groups on wildfires, littering and SOAC. Our plans will be guided by a combination of this Scotland-wide framework, lessons learnt from last year including the #CairngormsTogether framework, and feedback from key stakeholders. We are working closely with colleagues in CBP, VisitAberdeenshire, FLS etc to develop a suite of resources that can be used by all partners to ensure consistency of messaging, including digitised community path guides, traffic light system for attractions / businesses that are open, simple SOAC messaging, and guides to some of the less busy parts of the Park that still have capacity to welcome larger numbers of visitors.
27. **Cairngorms Nature – BIG Weekend plans:** Preparations are underway for the Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend, May 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>. Building on the success of last year’s on-line event and the increased appetite for enjoying nature and recognition of its importance to health and wellbeing, this year’s programme, also on-line, will focus primarily on the new-to-nature audience and the increased reach we saw in this sector from last year. We are planning a whole host of activities, videos, blogs and competitions, and are also hoping to launch 'at home' packs to engage young families with the weekend. These will be a mixture of physical packs, including things like a magnifying bug box and sustainably made pencils, and downloadable/printable content, which will link back to activities on the CNBW website. We are talking to partners including NatureScot about ways to more effectively spread the word about the festival through their networks, and are also exploring ways of deepening the impact of BIG Weekend attendance year-round, particularly for those ‘new to nature’ audiences.
28. **Make it Yours:** In the absence of the usual in-person sessions with visitor-facing staff across the Park, we are developing a video training resource c. 10 mins in length, designed to provide bitesize information for businesses and their employees. Our aim is that, once lockdown measures are eased, the video will provide visitor-facing

staff with information about the National Park and help them understand a bit more about what visitors are looking for from their visit (based on visitor survey data etc).

29. **Corporate communications:** We continue to reinforce Scottish Government Covid-19 health and safety messaging across all our channels, alongside key messages around responsible visitor behaviour and challenges posed by heavy snowfall. In addition, we have had success with a number of proactive news stories over the past few months, including the announcement of the seasonal ranger team in January (which featured in the Press and Journal, Courier, Daily Record, Scottish Field and Strathspey Herald), and the development of a Minecraft version of the Park to engage young people in the planning system. This latter story was featured on the BBC website, BBC Scotland News, Newsround, and is now being picked up by print news outlets including the Daily Mail.
30. **Website and social media:** Over the course of the last 12 months our social media following has grown by 19% to 48,159, whilst user engagement across all platforms (including video views) has increased by 98% to 717,446. All told, our social activity reached nearly 7.5m impressions over the course of 2020, an increase of 15%. A full breakdown of statistics will be provided in the comms update to board in June. On the website side of things, we are about to roll out a major upgrade to the homepage of cairngorms.co.uk and add additional functionality to a number of sub-pages. We are also planning a website accessibility audit over the coming months, in line with recommendations from our Equalities Advisory Panel. Overall traffic to the website increased by 11% in 2020 to 243,107 unique users.

### Organisational Development:

31. **Business Continuity Planning (BCP):** The BCP team continues to meet regularly to plan around the next stages of the SG roadmap. Staff access to the building is currently limited to business critical reasons, which are approved and logged by the Business Continuity Team. Access is currently strictly restricted to key services only with no access to the public. We also monitor staff attendance at site visits/external meetings, which have to be on the basis that they approved at Head of Service level as being business critical, and have implemented robust risk assessments and lone working systems to ensure staff safety and wellbeing. With the latest guidance that we are only likely to move out of Tier 4 at the end of April, all current guidance will remain at least until then. We are however starting to consider a return to the office, and have drop in session scheduled to engage with staff on early conversations in this regard. We have also conducted a “lessons learnt” survey of how business continuity went over the last year, and will seek to address any emerging themes as we progress to the next stages of business continuity planning.
32. **Office Extension Project:** Plans to upgrade the meeting and social space in the old building remain on hold, as depending on guidance from Scottish Government regarding the opening of non-essential offices, we may temporarily require this space for office space, to facilitate more staff being in the office whilst still adhering to social distancing. In the meantime, the old building was fully repainted over the winter, and the kitchen and social space in that side of the office was revamped significantly.



33. **Staffing update:** Since November, staffing updates are as follows:
- a) The Cairngorm Capercaillie Project team is now fully resourced, with the following appointments having been made since November:
    - i. **Naomi Kaye** was appointed to the CCP Project Administrator post (0.6 fte).
    - ii. **Jocasta Mann** was appointed to the CCP Communications Officer post (0.8 fte).
    - iii. **Elsbeth Grant** was appointed to the CCP Project Officer post (1 fte)
  - b) **Oliver Davies** joined the Authority in January as Head of Communications, replacing Françoise van Buuren.
  - c) **Daisy Whytock** joined our Peatland team in January as a peatland Action Project Officer
  - d) **Robbie Calvert (Planning Officer – DM) and Andrew Teece (Planning Officer – Forward Planning)** both left in December. We are currently recruiting a Planning Officer to replace Robbie. Andrew's fixed term contract came to an end and the Forward Planning team is fully resourced with Katie Crerar's return from maternity leave.
34. **Youth Employment:**
- a) **Internships:** In addition to **Katherine Willing** who recently joined as HR Intern, we have extended Bruce MacDonald's contract to support the Communications team as a Comms Intern. Bruce had been working as Gaelic Visitor Research Intern.
  - b) **Apprenticeships:** In addition to **Luke Diggins** who joined as IT Apprentice, we recently signed up with Inclusion Scotland who will be supporting the recruitment and management of an Admin Intern.
  - c) We are still working in partnership with UHI and Kingussie High School to support **Damian Paluga** complete a Foundation Apprentice – this involves a work placement for a youngster still at school, working for the organisation one day/week during term time. The placement will help Damian achieve his SVQ qualification in business administration.
  - d) We have successfully bid as part of the UK NPA network to host 6 Kickstart placements. These are posts aimed at young people who are on Universal Credit. The aim of the project is to give the young employment, whilst at the same time coaching them on employability skills to support their full transition into the workplace.
35. **Shared Services:** Continued work to provide HR support the Scottish Land Commission has included the development of new policies, the development, staff consultation and pay remits.
36. **Organisational Development:** The consultation on the staff restructure closed on 26<sup>th</sup> February and the new structure will be implemented from April 2021. We had six applicants for the Voluntary Exit scheme for staff – four applicants were approved for VES, all applications having been scored on the basis of payback period; fit to organizational structure plan and cost/benefit analysis. In terms of broader organisational development, we will be upgrading our IT infrastructure to SWAN (Scottish Wide Area Network) increasing our network bandwidth by a factor of 10,

enhancing staff access to systems while working remotely and also moving into an established, managed and secure network.

37. **LEADER/CAIRNGORMS TRUST:** The Cairngorms Trust is nearing completion of the current LEADER Programme and received the final version of an independent evaluation report, undertaken by EKOS, at its Board meeting in February. The Executive Summary of the evaluation is attached as an Annex to this paper.
38. The report highlights a strong partnership between the Cairngorms Trust acting as the LEADER Local Action Group and the Cairngorms NPA as a key contributor to the success of the programme, while finding that overall the key aims and aspirations of the 'LEADER approach' to community-led local development have been achieved. Despite well-known concerns about the administrative burden of LEADER nationally, the primary research found that every grant recipient identified at least one benefit for them as an organisation from taking part in LEADER, such as developing or strengthening relationships and partnerships or increasing their understanding of their community. The report has also recognised the value of the support provided by the LEADER staff team, employed and managed by the Authority as Accountable Body, in assisting applicants and interested groups with the process.
39. The research notes that "the CLAG became a registered charity (a SCIO) in 2016. The new set-up has allowed the CLAG to diversify its approach to community-led local development, running a small grants scheme and fundraising campaigns. This represents a more strategic and adaptable approach and, in particular, will help continue its legacy post-Brexit. Working towards charitable objectives has also helped create additional community and social benefits". The Cairngorms Trust and the Authority aim to further develop their working partnership over the coming years and potential development in this area will be covered in a paper to a forthcoming Board meeting.
40. **Cairngorms Trust: charity activities and voluntary giving:** The Trust continues to support the delivery of the Green Recovery Grants programme for 2020/21 and completing its separate community grant campaigns and grant schemes with over £20,000 of charity funding awarded to projects. The impact of the COVID pandemic has set back the charity's plans for the ongoing development and roll out of the voluntary giving scheme considerably. Despite this, the level of voluntary donations to date in 2020/21 of £4,700 is already higher than the prior year total of £3,400, giving positive underlying signs of the potential for this work to realise higher levels of charitable contributions to support community, conservation and infrastructure projects in the future.

**Grant Moir**  
**March 2021**

## Board Convener Report – For Information

1. During the past quarter I have met with a representative of Azets, our internal auditor, to discuss our work on corporate governance. The internal audit report was considered by the Audit & Risk Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 to discuss its findings. I'm pleased to report that significant progress is being made on a number of pieces of on-going governance work including on: the new framework agreement with Scottish Government; the internal scheme of delegation; new committee terms of reference; and a report on proposals to make the Board more effective. This work continues to be supported by the Deputy Convener, CEO and Director of Corporate Services and I'm grateful for their significant work in this area. We hope to bring a final version of these to the Board in late spring following further discussions in the coming months.
2. The Chief Executive and I, along with the CBP Chair and CEO, met with Ben Macpherson MSP, the new Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment. We discussed the COVID-19 situation in the Cairngorm National Park including the concerns of businesses and the need to support our communities with the expected influx of staycation visitors in the summer through a ranger provision. We also highlighted the positive work the National Park and our partners are already doing in relation to green recovery and the significant grants that were awarded last summer to support this.
3. Finally, I attended a virtual meeting of community councils hosted jointly by CNPA and CBP, chaired by Janet Hunter as Chair of the Cairngorm Tourism Partnership. Our CEO outlined our plans to support communities with visitor management over the summer and there was an engaging discussion about many of the issues experienced last year. My thanks to Janet for her continued support of our tourism economy over this difficult period.

**Xander McDade**  
**Board Convener**

### External Engagements (28<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021)

In addition to scheduled Board meetings and internal meetings, I have attended the following external engagements in my capacity as Convener of the Board since our last Board meeting.

Date	Engagement	Venue
4/12	Corporate Governance Internal Audit Meeting	VC
13/1	Meeting with Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Environment regarding Green Recovery and Visitor Management	VC
1/3	Community Council Drop in Sessions hosted by CBP and CNPA	VC