

# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK: 2020 DELIVERING THE NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY DRAFT TOURISM ACTION PLAN



## Introduction

Tourism Scotland 2020 – A Strategy for Leadership & Growth (TS2020) was launched by the Scottish Tourism Alliance in summer 2012. Led by industry and supported by the public sector, this strategy is based on an in-depth understanding of market opportunities matched to Scotland’s capabilities and provides a common agenda for the industry and supporting organisations. The strategy targets those markets that offer Scotland the greatest growth potential and promises to collaborate within and across Scotland’s tourism assets to develop the authentic experiences today’s visitors seek, delivered to the consistently high quality they expect.



## Delivering at a Regional and Local Level

### Vision

The Cairngorms National Park is a renowned world-class destination, based on an exceptional visitor experience, well-conserved natural resources and a diverse cultural heritage, supporting a thriving economy that delivers year-round jobs and prosperity across the area.

This document sets out how the Cairngorms National Park can contribute to delivery of the national strategy at a regional level. It draws on, and does not replace, the existing policy context for tourism. The National Park Partnership Plan, Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2011-16, and Economic Development & Diversification Strategy have shaped priorities for delivery of tourism in the National Park. This Tourism Action Plan brings these priorities

together in the context of TS2020. Other regional plans and strategies also cover parts of the National Park such as the Highland Tourism Action Plan which overlaps the area.

### Principle

The status of the Cairngorms as a National Park provides a powerful opportunity for developing & promoting its tourism proposition but one that is matched by a responsibility deliver an exceptional experience to visitors and give high priority to caring for the environment.

**National Park + Opportunity = Responsibility**

As the UK’s largest National Park, the Cairngorms has the potential to contribute significantly to Scotland’s visitor economy, particularly through activity and nature tourism. We must be sure, however, that excessive visitor pressure does not undermine the very qualities that draw people to this special area and this is underlined by the vision and key principle of the Cairngorms Sustainable Tourism Strategy (above).

## Where We are Now

The visitor economy makes a substantial contribution to the Cairngorms National Park generating significant visitor expenditure and supporting a substantial number of local jobs.

### The Cairngorms National Park Visitor Economy

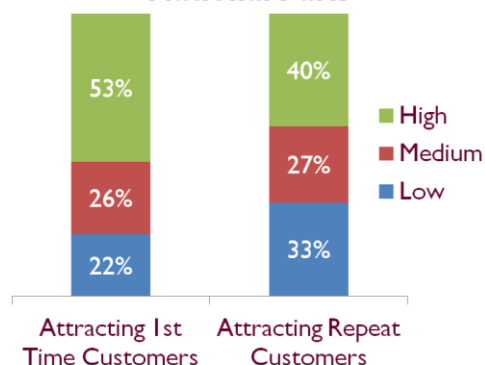
1.5 million Visitors each year

43% of people employed in tourism

30% of the economy (GVA) generated by tourism

SOURCE: CNP Visitor Survey 2009-10. CNP Economic Health Report 2010 & 2014

### Influence of Cairngorms National Park



SOURCE: CBP Business Barometer 2014

## Opportunities for Growth

The National Strategy identifies three key markets for the greatest potential for growth; 'Home Turf' (UK), 'Near Neighbours' (Scandinavia, Germany, France, Spain, Ireland, Netherlands, and Italy), and our 'Distant Cousins' (USA, Australia and Canada). There is also recognition of the emerging 'BRICs' markets (Brazil, Russia, India, and China).

Around ¾ of visitors to the Cairngorms are from the UK and domestic markets are seen as the priority for growth. The Cairngorms National Park Marketing Framework 2010-13 highlights 3 priority markets in particular based on VisitScotland's market segmentation. It should also be recognised, though, that the words 'National Park' have value as an international brand and will be of value in attracting certain overseas markets.

**Cairngorms National Park:**  
*Priority UK Markets\**  
(\*VisitScotland Segmentation)

- Affluent Active Devotees
- Affluent Southern Explorers
- Younger Domestic Explorers

## TS2020 Theme: Turning Assets into Experiences

The National Strategy recognises that key to our growth ambitions will be in turning Scotland's tourism assets into more rounded, added value experiences that today's visitors want.

**Scotland: Key Tourism Assets for Growth (TS2020)**

- Nature, heritage and activities
- Business Tourism
- Destination towns and cities
- Events and Festivals


**Connecting visitors to our cultural heritage**

Events such as the Food & Fiddle fortnight which celebrates local produce and traditional Scottish music, help to connect visitors to our living cultural heritage.



The Cairngorms National Park has many assets – outstanding landscapes, iconic wildlife, a strong outdoor activity sector, a great network of paths and vibrant cultural heritage to name but a few.

**Long Distance Routes**



Future development of new assets in the Speyside Way extension, and the Deeside Way will offer opportunities to package food, transport and accommodation for those experiencing the routes.

Increasingly customers are looking for an authentic experience that connects them to the unique and distinctive elements of a destination. There are opportunities to develop and package experiences around the existing assets, tying in a variety of touch points along the customer journey – accommodation, food, transport and activities.

## TS2020 Theme: Improving the Customer Journey

At all stages of the customer journey we need to make it easy for the visitor to connect with the destination, whether that's providing inspiration pre-arrival or ensuring a consistently high standard of product and service during the visit.

The provision of accurate, easily-accessed visitor information is vital. Improved digital connectivity is important, but, helpful, enthusiastic staff with broad product knowledge are key to providing a human touch and a great customer experience.

**Path Signage & Leaflets**

Community path leaflets have been produced for most of the villages in the National Park providing information about local walks and things to see.



Design and style guidelines have also been produced for path directional signage. This encourages good quality, clear directional signage in a consistent style throughout the National Park.

**Digital Connectivity**

Customers are increasingly using mobile devices to 'look' and 'book'. The Cairngorms Business Partnership developed an App and adapted their website to ensure compatibility with mobile devices. They also provide information and training to local businesses to help them maximise their online presence.

A Cairngorms Digital Communications Group has also been established to identify options and solutions for improving digital connectivity in the National Park.

## TS2020 Theme: Building our Capabilities

We want to see a strong local tourism industry working collaboratively to maximise economic benefits and ensure the best possible experience for the visitor. Skills development, joint marketing, visitor feedback and sustainability are all areas that we can work on together. Destination marketing organisations, community tourism groups, and individual businesses can all play a part, supported by public agencies.

### Make it Yours

'Make it Yours' is a programme designed to help visitor facing staff in the National Park learn more about the area, its cultural heritage, nature, special places, local stories, and people. By improving product knowledge it is hoped to inspire staff and visitors alike, enhancing the customer experience.

## Measuring Success

The Cairngorms Tourism Partnership will monitor delivery against key priorities. Key measurement tools include a comprehensive 5-yearly visitor survey and DREAMtrip data which measures the volume and value of tourism to the Cairngorms National Park.

### Collaborative Marketing

A Cairngorms National Park Marketing Framework and Brand & Marketing Guidelines were produced in 2010 to ensure a consistency of message when using the Park Brand regardless of who is delivering the work. The framework and guidelines are due to be refreshed and a 3 year marketing plan produced to encourage improved collaborative promotion of the destination.

## Delivery & Implementation

The Cairngorms Tourism Partnership will be responsible for oversight of delivery of Tourism Scotland 2020 at a local level and will include tourism groups, key businesses and public sector organisations. It will refine priorities and develop associated actions for delivery in line with TS2020 and informed by existing policy as per the table below

DRAFT: Priorities*	Actions (tbc)
<p><b>1. TS2020 Theme: Building our capabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a strong public and private sector tourism delivery partnership to ensure collaborative delivery, support, and growth in the sector</li> <li>Collaborative Destination branding, brand development and marketing linking tourism operators, groups, CNPA, and VisitScotland campaigns</li> <li>Business support, networking, and skills development</li> <li>Customer feedback and 'Make it Yours' programme</li> <li>Support businesses and visitors to improve environmental performance and reduce their impact</li> </ul>	<p>to be agreed with Cairngorms Tourism Partnership</p>
<p><b>2. TS2020 Theme: Turning our assets into experiences:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and package experiences around existing assets, accommodation, food &amp; drink, travel, activities &amp; attractions                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Cycling</li> <li>→ Long Distance Routes (<i>Deeside Way and Speyside Way</i>)</li> <li>→ Cultural Tourism</li> <li>→ Business Tourism</li> <li>→ Wildlife &amp; Adventure Tourism (<i>inc. Outdoor activities</i>)</li> <li>→ Events &amp; Festivals</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>to be agreed with Cairngorms Tourism Partnership</p>
<p><b>3. TS2020 Theme: Improving the Customer Journey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide high quality, inspiring visitor information online, in publications and at key sites</li> <li>Improve booking and promotion for public transport and provision of active travel opportunities</li> <li>Improve the quality and range of visitor accommodation</li> <li>Improve the promotion and availability of local produce</li> <li>Improve digital and mobile connectivity and support businesses to embrace new technologies and opportunities</li> <li>Area specific plans to ensure a collaborative approach to improving visitor experience in key areas</li> </ul>	<p>to be agreed with Cairngorms Tourism Partnership</p>

\*Developed from existing Cairngorms Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Economic Development & Diversification Strategy

# Delivering TS2020 in the Cairngorms National Park – Summary



The Cairngorms National Park is a renowned world-class destination, based on an exceptional visitor experience, well-conserved natural resources and a diverse cultural heritage, supporting a thriving tourism economy that delivers year round jobs and prosperity across the area.

## National Park = Opportunity + Responsibility

That the status of the Cairngorms as a National Park provides a powerful opportunity for developing and promoting its tourism proposition but one that is matched by a responsibility to deliver an exceptional experience to visitors and give high priority to caring for the environment.

- To increase the value of tourism to deliver and maintain a source of livelihood and economic prosperity for local communities (through increased visitor numbers, spend, length of stay, and year-round tourism)
- To provide a fulfilling & rewarding experience for visitors, contributing to their health & wellbeing
- To maintain & help enhance the conservation and richness of the area's natural & cultural heritage

## GROWTH MARKETS

*Affluent Active Devotees*

*Affluent Southern Explorers*

*Younger Domestic Explorers*

## CURRENT INHIBITORS & THREATS

Climate change: reliability of snow

Infrastructure issues: transport and telecommunications

Visitor accommodation: quantity & quality

Historically a divided area: need to present a coherent destination

## CURRENT STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

Increasing awareness of NP status and benefits

Outstanding scenery, variety and scale of landscapes

Exceptional range of outdoor activities

Adventure, Cultural, and Wildlife Tourism

### POLICY CONTEXT

- Tourism Scotland 2020
- National Park Partnership Plan
- CNP Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2011 – 16
- CNP Economic Development & Diversification Strategy

### EVIDENCE BASE

- DREAM
- Cairngorms Visitor Survey
- Business Barometer
- Economic & Social Health of the Park Report

## TURNING OUR ASSETS INTO EXPERIENCES

### NATURE, HERITAGE & ACTIVITIES

- Cycling
- Wildlife & Adventure Tourism (inc. *Outdoor Activities*)
- Long Distance Routes (*Deeside & Speyside Way*)
- Cultural Tourism

### BUSINESS TOURISM

- Conference venues
- Corporate outings
- VisitScotland Conference BID fund
- VisitScotland Ambassador Programme

### DESTINATION

- Developing a 'Sense of Place' through:
  - Collaborative Brand marketing & development
  - High quality Visitor information & infrastructure

### EVENTS & FESTIVALS

- 'What's On' and online events calendar
- Outdoor events guidance
- National 'theme' years
- Cairngorms Nature
- Growing and improving events

## IMPROVING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY – PUTTING THE CUSTOMER AT THE HEART

### INFORMATION

- Digital visitor information & publications
- *Sharing the Stories*
- VIC development
- Information boards
- Path signage & leaflets

### TRANSPORT

- Cycling infrastructure
- Improve booking & promotion of public transport
- Scenic routes
- Active Cairngorms

### ACCOMMODATION

- Improvements to range & quality
- Encourage packaging of accommodation, activities & attractions
- Encourage investment in Historic buildings

### FOOD & DRINK

- Collaborative marketing
- Food & drink trails
- Local food directories
- Farmers Markets

### DIGITAL

- App and High speed Broadband rollout
- Improving Mobile 2G/3G/4G coverage
- Innovation to maximise opportunities

## BUILDING OUR CAPABILITIES – TOURISM IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

### SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- Business environmental performance & operational efficiency
- Visitor management & environmental impact
- Link with communities

### MARKETING

- Collaborative destination marketing & 3-year plan
- Link to VS theme years
- Brand Development

### QUALITY, LABOUR & SKILLS

- Annual Business Conference
- Networking and training events
- *Make it Yours*: product knowledge & awareness
- Gather & share visitor feedback

## LEADERSHIP & COLLABORATION

Delivery guided by Cairngorms Tourism Partnership, in close collaboration with Cairngorms Business Partnership, Visit Royal Deeside, neighbouring area tourism partnerships and community & sectoral tourism associations

Cairngorms National Park

VISION

KEY PRINCIPLE

AIMS

MARKETS

FOUNDATIONS

STRATEGIC ACTION FRAMEWORK

CAPABILITY