
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT
PROGRAMME 2015

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Engagement

Purpose

To gain board members approval on the proposed Communications and Engagement Programme for 2015/16 to support the delivery of the Communications and Engagement Strategy approved in January 2012.

Recommendation

- 1. Board Members approve the proposed Communications and Engagement Programme for 2015/16. Final budgets will be approved as part of the operational plan proposals for 2015/16 at the March Board meeting.**

Strategic Context

- 2. In January 2012 a Communications and Engagement Strategy was approved by the Board which set out clear aims, themes, target audiences and an approach for implementation. Following the success of the Year of Natural Scotland and the Cairngorms National Park's 10th Anniversary campaign in 2013, it was agreed we would focus on three campaigns during 2014. This programme of work has been guided by the Communications and Engagement board group chaired by Brian Wood and consisting of Gregor Hutcheon, Angela Douglas and Gregor Rimell.**

Campaign	Audience	Messages	Outcome
Make it Yours	Local business, communities and rangers	The Park delivers high quality, sustainable experiences that build customer loyalty	Business/communities promote the Park, deliver a better visitor/customer experience and benefit from the Park brand
Cairngorms Nature	Young people and families in Scotland and residents	An outstanding place for Nature <i>on your door step</i>	More visitors who engage with Cairngorms nature
Active Cairngorms	Young people and families in Scotland, residents, sports/cycling enthusiasts	CNP is a great place for cycling for people of all abilities	Visitors/residents are more active/cycle in the Park

3. At this stage in the year, progress made suggests that a continued focus on these three campaigns during 2015/16 would help build momentum towards achieving the desired outcomes. In addition, we will deliver our corporate communications which includes digital communications services, traditional media relations, a stakeholder engagement and events programme and corporate publications. (see Annex I for a report on progress to date)

C&E Programme Proposals

Campaigns

‘Cairngorms National Park – ‘Make it Yours’ Campaign

4. The *‘Make It Yours’* campaign will run over the Autumn/Winter period with CNPA focusing on visitor facing staff at identified locations and the CBP focusing on businesses in the Park. In addition, the development of the Park brand will provide support materials, advice and information including an online communications toolkit. We also expect to have branded merchandise available for sale on a trial basis in spring 2015 to help raise the profile of the Park and build an emotional connection.

‘Cairngorms Nature’ Campaign

5. *‘Cairngorms Nature’* is a year round campaign which aims to raise the profile of the Park as an outstanding place for nature. An increase in feature articles and broadcast programmes as well as the Cairngorms Nature [Facebook](#) and [twitter](#) accounts are raising awareness of the Park’s wildlife and landscapes with social media attracting over 1000 followers many of whom (57%) are actively engaged. The Park-wide Nature Festival held in May involved more than 50 events and 700 people and all partners who organised an event and replied to our feedback survey are keen to be involved in 2015. During the Autumn/Spring events will be held in the cities that surround the Park to inspire people to visit and enjoy Nature– on their doorstep. During 2015/16 we will build on these achievements and work with; SNH by linking more closely to the Scotland Nature Festival, VisitScotland to support the Year of Food and Drink; estates, RSPB and NTS to promote conservation volunteering opportunities. The Cairngorms Nature Festival will take place on 16 and 17 May 2015 focusing on four themes: family activities, Cairngorms Nature ‘specialist’ events, Food and Drink events and opportunities for people to get actively involved through volunteering. We also plan to have a stronger presence at four locations: Ballater, Tomintoul, Aviemore and Blair Atholl subject to gaining support from our partners.

‘Active Cairngorms’ Campaign

6. Active Cairngorms is a media campaign which focuses on cycling by supporting Bike Festivals across the Park and linking in with National Parks Week. A [Facebook](#) and [twitter](#) account was launched last month and the profile of the Park as a good place to be active and for active travel will also be raised through the ‘Active Cairngorms’ strategy consultation exercise expected to be launched in January 2015. During 2015/16 we will focus on providing more information on the best places to cycle in the Park, build up our social media profile to maximise our reach with our target audiences and provide opportunities for people to share their experiences. We will also apply for corporate sponsorship funding to support local community projects which encourage healthy lifestyles by being more active.

Corporate Communications

Digital Communications

7. Digital Communications is an increasingly important tool for all our operations. Consequently, we are reviewing our website to make it more user-led, more inspiring, easier to engage with the Park and more accessible on mobile devices. Improvements on the existing site have also been made particularly in relation to our planning advice services. Digital tools have been introduced to support the three campaigns including an online business toolkit and increased use of social media which will help us target our communications and broaden our reach more cost effectively. The refreshed website is expected to go live by March 2015 with our ongoing costs being reduced to £20,000 per annum.

Media Relations

8. Proactive media plans aim to present a strong and consistent message about the Park as an outstanding place for nature and recreation. A number of broadcast programme producers have been contacted and filming has taken place looking at Cairngorms Nature activities as well as wildlife tourism opportunities in the Park. Feature articles are also being placed in specialist magazines including NGO member newsletters. In support of our planning services we will promote the design awards to be held in 2016, successful planning applications and the impact this has had on the economy and local communities and manage media enquiries relating to more controversial topics.

Stakeholder Engagement and Events

9. Our stakeholder engagement activity identifies delivery partners, key influencers and local residents and businesses to ensure they are kept informed of the work of the Park. An engagement programme managed by the Management Team builds positive working relationships to support the delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan and establish advocates for the Park and its work. During 2015/16 we will work with our constituency and list MSPs, the Minister for the Environment and Climate Change, the Minister for Local Government and Planning as well as opposition spokespeople to encourage them to visit the Park, get a better understanding of our work and provide their support in addressing particular issues. An MSP opinion survey will be carried out towards the end of this year to identify the level of awareness, favourability and advocacy they have for the Park and Park Authority. In addition, an events programme along with regular updates will ensure all interested parties are kept well informed and are able to get engaged with the work in the Park.

Corporate Publications

10. Our annual report and accounts 2013/14 and an annual National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) progress report have been finalised and a NPPP Strategy Group meeting hosted by the Minister is scheduled for November. A progress report on our Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared and submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig and will be published on our website. During 2015 we will launch the Local Development Plan and Active Cairngorms Strategy for public consultation.

Monitoring and Reporting

11. To monitor what impact this programme of work is delivering we will use a number

of key indicators and produce a report on an annual basis for Board and staff:

- a) Scotland's People and Nature Survey and Visitor Survey results
- b) Local Business survey via the Business Barometer
- c) MSP survey
- d) Media, website and social media statistics
- e) Campaign specific indicators (e.g. number of people volunteering)

Implications

Financial and Staffing Implications

12. Final budgets for this programme of work will be part of the Operational Plan 2015/16 which will be agreed at the March Board. The total spend on campaigns vs corporate communications is expected to be split on a 60%:40% basis. This work will be led by the Communications and Engagement Team and delivered by all members of CNPA staff and board with support from our partners.

Presentational Implications

13. The programme focuses on promoting the Park as an outstanding place for nature and recreation - cycling in particular. There is a risk we may be criticised for neglecting other special qualities of the Park. To mitigate this risk we will work with VisitScotland and local DMOs to ensure marketing activities include promotion of the cultural and ancestral heritage, food and drink and other activities such as winter sports, walking and golf.

Implications for Stakeholders

14. The success of this programme of work is dependent on gaining support from key partners, local businesses and communities. It aims to raise the profile of the Park with potential visitors, residents and key influencers as an outstanding place for nature and recreation. Our corporate communications work will promote the Park Authority and its contribution towards delivering Scottish Government outcomes.

Supporting Information

15. A progress report on the first 5 months (April – August) of the year has been prepared (see Annex I) and a final evaluation report will be prepared at the end of the financial year for the March Board meeting.

Next Steps

16. If approved we will:
 - a) Work with key partners to identify ways they can support these campaigns;
 - b) Prepare detailed action plans for each campaign;
 - c) Prepare a detailed stakeholder engagement and events programme;
 - d) Review our website and digital communications strategy and implement recommendations;
 - e) Provide ongoing support for CNPA corporate activities particularly our planning services;
 - f) Prepare an annual report on progress for the March 2015 Board meeting.

Francoise van Buuren
29 August 2014