

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

1. Title

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| COAT HLF 'Scotland's National Parks: The People and the Mountains' Project |
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2. Expenditure Category

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|-----------------------|---|------|-------|-------------|---|
| Operational Plan | x | Code | 75200 | Project | √ |
| (goal description) | | | | Grant | |
| Core or Project spend | | Code | | Consultancy | |

| | | | |
|--|----------|-------------------|---|
| Is this spend to be funded from an existing budget line, existing line with additional funds or is it a totally new spend? | £150,000 | Existing budget | √ |
| | £ | Additional budget | |
| | £ | New budget | |

3. Description

- Brief overview of project/activity including cost summary
- Specific elements for which support is sought (if not whole project/activity)

The Scotland's National Parks: The People and the Mountains Project will bring together both National Park Authorities along with the key public bodies, the private sector, charities and the people of Scotland to meet the challenge of protecting the Mountains of Scotland's National Parks. The project will upgrade 124.5km of eroded paths, train young people into employment and work with schools and volunteers to preserve Scotland's Mountains.

The overall expenditure for delivering the project is £6,124,927 of which £275,000 is being sought from CNPA, which amounts to 4.5% of overall costs.

4. Rationale and Strategic Fit

- Objectives/intended beneficiaries
- Evidence of need and demand
- Fit with National Park Plan/Corporate Plan/other relevant strategies

The objectives of this project is to develop a partnership project to protect the mountains in Scotland's National Parks, through training, volunteering, educational and promotional work to actively engage the people of Scotland in caring for their upland landscapes and habitats.

Over 1.5 million people visit the Cairngorms National Park annually generating over £210 million in visitor revenue (STEAM, 2012). A large proportion come to enjoy the mountains themselves or through enjoying the spectacular views and scenery throughout the area.

A survey undertaken in 1998 by SNH over a 12 month period showed that 81% of mountain users either agreed or strongly agreed that there is evidence of serious localized damage as a result of visitor numbers.

This project brings together the key stakeholders with an interest in natural heritage, economic development and tourism in one concerted project to work towards the shared goal of sustainable tourism in Scotland's National Parks.

This project will contribute directly to the three Cairngorms National Park long term outcomes:

- **Long term outcome 1:** *A sustainable economy supporting thriving business and communities.* Improved mountain paths will increase the economic benefits of outdoor access through increased tourist numbers and spend. It will also accredit younger people with the skills necessary to take up employment.
- **Long term outcome 2:** *A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced* by creating robust surfaced paths that take pressure off the surrounding vegetation.
- **Long term outcome 3:** *People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences* through coordinated education, volunteering and visitor education programmes. The upgraded paths will help to promote active lifestyles and empower communities to take an active lead in monitoring and maintaining their path networks.

There are three specific policies contained in the current Outdoor Access Strategy which this project will help deliver and these are:

- Investment in upland path repair and maintenance will be prioritised on the basis of periodic Park-wide surveys, drawn on both field surveys and stakeholder inputs.
- Investment in both lowland upland path repairs will be undertaken and will follow best practice standards utilizing high quality specification and design (using local materials where appropriate to the site) appropriate to the local circumstances and the planned level and form of use.
- Upland path repair and maintenance should strive to retain the wild qualities of the area by ensuring the paths have a less formal character the further the path is from roads or places of habitation.

The project will also contribute to the Scottish Governments Physical Activity Action Plan and contribute to the three main themes of the revised CNPA access strategy, Active Cairngorms: Active Places, Active Management and Active Promotion.

5. Option Analysis

- Are there other ways in which the above objectives could be achieved?
- If so, why is this, the preferred option?

The success of COATs previous HLF Mountain Heritage Project provides a benchmark for delivery. The project will also bring significant civil benefits by involving disadvantaged groups, developing skills amongst volunteers, as well as creating and sustaining jobs in rural communities. The proposed method will also provide COAT with a strong negotiating position in relation to potential contractors as they will be letting contracts for a significant amount of path works.

The alternative to this approach is to revert to the method that has been used most extensively to date. This has relied largely on repairs being done on a path by path basis within single land ownerships. This has delivered small-scale localized improvements but has failed to address priorities within the National Park. This method could still be used but lacks co-ordination, prioritization and fails to achieve economies of scale in relation to project managing a suite of repairs.

For these reasons a single, large scale project is viewed as the most effective and efficient means of delivering work on the ground.

6. Risk Assessment

- Are there risks to the CNPA in funding this project/activity?
- Are there risks in the project/activity not being delivered to required timescale/quality?
- Comment on the likelihood of such risks occurring, their potential impact, and (where appropriate) any action that would be taken to mitigate the risks.

The Scotland's National Parks: The People and the Mountains Project is for a five year period, starting next year, and therefore the final four years go beyond the approved business plan and CNPA's Corporate Plan. The risk is viewed as moderate but manageable as the annual commitment of £55,000 accounts for just 4.2% of COATs current operational plan budget of £1.3 million.

Project delivery risk is low. COAT has built up a wealth of experience over the years in the field of upland path work, including the Cairngorms Mountain Heritage Project – a 4 year £2.1m project currently running in the Highland part of the Cairngorms National Park.

Staff turnover in a small organisation is a potential risk with a consequential impact on delivery. As part of the HLF bid, COAT will employ a dedicated project officer which will help mitigate this risk by providing additional cover in the event of either the Manager or Senior Access Project Officer leaving their posts

7. Costs and Funding

- Detail the financial costs of the project/activity
- Detail the sources of funding
- Justification also needs to be given if the CNPA is the major funder
- Detail any non-monetary costs to the CNPA (such as Member or staff input)

The overall cost of the Project is £6,124,927 and the funding sources are shown in the table below.

COAT Scotland's People and The Mountains Project 2015-2020

Income

| Income | yr 1 | yr 2 | yr 3 | yr 4 | yr 5 | Total |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Loch Lomond and Trossachs NPA | £105,000 | £105,000 | £105,000 | £105,000 | £105,000 | £525,000 |
| Cairngorms NPA | £55,000 | £55,000 | £55,000 | £55,000 | £55,000 | £275,000 |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | £40,000 | £40,000 | £40,000 | £40,000 | £40,000 | £200,000 |
| Forestry Commission | £105,000 | £105,000 | £105,000 | £105,000 | £105,000 | £525,000 |
| SMT | £5,000 | £5,000 | £5,000 | £5,000 | £5,000 | £25,000 |
| IN Kind Partner Contribution (FCS/LLTNPA/CNPA/SNH) | £48,550 | £48,550 | £48,550 | £48,550 | £48,550 | £242,750 |
| <i>Staff Time on Activity Plan, Site Supervision, Coordination</i> | | | | | | |
| COAT (Cash) | £60,000 | £70,000 | £84,983 | £82,194 | £75,000 | £372,177 |
| COAT (Volunteer – In kind) | £22,000 | £22,000 | £22,000 | £22,000 | £22,000 | £110,000 |
| COAT (Increased Contribution to Maintenance 2020-2025) | | | | | £130,000 | £130,000 |
| Total COAT Contribution | £82,000 | £92,000 | £106,983 | £104,194 | £227,000 | £612,177 |
| Charitable Trusts | £45,000 | £45,000 | £50,000 | £60,000 | £60,000 | £260,000 |
| Private Sector/Donations | £40,000 | £40,000 | £40,000 | £40,000 | £40,000 | £200,000 |
| Heritage Lottery Fund | £652,000 | £652,000 | £652,000 | £652,000 | £652,000 | £3,260,000 |
| Total Income | <u>£1,177,550</u> | <u>£1,187,550</u> | <u>£1,207,533</u> | <u>£1,214,744</u> | <u>£1,337,550</u> | <u>£6,124,927</u> |

CNPA's contribution to this project amounts to 4.5% of the overall costs. The management of CNPA's contribution towards the works of COAT is currently done through a member of staff having a place on the COAT Management Group. This will continue through the life of this project. In addition, CNPA has two Directors who sit on COATs' Board.

8. Funding conditions

- Detail the project specific conditions that need to be included in any contract for services or grant offer letter in order that CNPA obtains the intended outcomes and Value for Money
- In the case of grant offers, our Financial Memorandum requires that SEERAD agree these conditions in advance of the grant offer being made

Project updates and costs will be required to be supplied for each COAT Management Group meeting.

In addition, once full partner support has been secured it will be possible to determine the necessary conditions to meet cash flow obligations. It is however likely that the majority of in-year grant will be required in quarter 1 with the balance paid in quarter 4.

9. Deliverables/ Impact Assessment

- What end products/outputs will be delivered?
- How will success be measured?
- How will the project be monitored and what will be the feedback to the CNPA?

The Project will carry out a suite of integrated Programmes with the overarching objective of involving the people of Scotland in the enhancement and protection of the wild and special qualities of the mountains within Scotland's National Parks.

The Upland Path Programme — The capital infrastructure element of the project will upgrade, enhance and repair a suite of prioritised routes in both of Scotland's National Parks using both intensive and light touch path repair techniques. The routes will be priorities from a list of paths generated through extensive consultation with key stakeholders in a series of workshops. These will include some of the worst path erosion problems in Scotland, including Beinn A Ghlo

The Training Programme will run vocational 6 month training courses in the South Loch Lomond and Cairngorms areas to accredit younger people with the skills necessary to take up employment opportunities generated through the project and elsewhere. The programme will look to train 48 people during the project

The Conservation Volunteer Programme will recruit, train, guide and support volunteers from the major centres of population at Glasgow, Stirling, Perth, Inverness and Aberdeen to carry out weekend practical conservation tasks supporting the mountain path programme, including basic construction work, maintenance and habitat management

The Adopt A Path Programme will recruit, train, guide and support volunteers in monitoring paths across both National Parks. This will engage users directly in providing the many sets of eyes across the area to feedback information on condition. This will directly influence the aftercare of the mountains through feeding back information on emerging damage before it becomes a major problem, effectively providing a 'stitch in time'.

The Education Programme will coordinate education opportunities to involve schools, colleges and universities in the care, monitoring and management of the upland paths in both National Parks. There are great educational opportunities in studying the reasons behind erosion, the interaction between habitat, people and climate, changing patterns of recreation and the challenges in managing these in Scotland's National Parks.

The Visitor Information Programme will liaise and coordinate with visitor management services to ensure the visitors and the wider public is made aware of the responsibilities and implications of managing the upland path resource in both National Parks. This will be through provision of information for events, guided walks, visitor infrastructure, web and social media.

Monitoring of works through construction will be done by the project officer and overseen by COAT manager. On-going monitoring after project completion will be done through the maintenance programme that will be put in place to ensure the capital investment is protected. This too will be undertaken by COAT.

10. Value for Money

- In view of the costs, do the deliverables appear to offer value for money? (consider cost of comparable projects, where available).

Delivery through an established Trust provides an efficient mechanism to deliver a broad programme of works. Delivering such works on a project by project basis would require considerably more staff time and would prove harder to ensure a consistent, high quality output.

The CNPA contribution to the overall programme is 4.5% of total budget. This represents very good leverage for the CNPA contribution.

The programme of works provides good value for money by delivery being undertaken through a single organisation with a recognised pedigree for delivering high quality work timeously.

11. Exit or Continuation Arrangements (where applicable)

- If this is not a discrete, time-limited, project or piece of work, what are the exit/continuation arrangements for when CNPA support ceases?

This is a discrete five year offer of funding.

12. Additionality

- Does this work/project substitute for or duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others?
- What would be the effects of the CNPA not supporting the project? Would it proceed without CNPA support?

The proposed work programme does not duplicate or impinge on other projects. CNPA's contribution is essential to allow the full programme of works to be delivered within the Cairngorms National Park. Without it, the programme would have to be curtailed and it is unlikely that other funders would be willing to support at the level projected if CNPA did not contribute to this key area of work. At best the scale of works would be seriously diminished and some aspects would not be able to go ahead.

13. Stakeholder Support


- Have the organisations and/or communities that would have an interest in this work/project been involved, and are they supportive?
- If supporter are also not funders an explanation may be required.

The Project has undergone extensive consultation and exploration prior to Stage 1 application.

1. The project was scoped with key partners including CNPA, LL&TNP, FCS and SNH.
2. Paths and activities were identified in both National Parks and taken to 2 workshops, one in each National Park to identify what Activities should be developed and which paths should be surveyed. Consultees included Glen Tanar Trust, Scottish Mountaineering Trust, Invercauld Estate, Balmoral Estate, Community Groups, The National Trust for Scotland and Atholl Estate.
3. A draft activity plan was worked up on the basis of the consultation and circulated to all stakeholders. There was overwhelming support to include Training, Volunteering, Schools/Education and wider public engagement in the initiative.
4. The paths for repair and upgrade were prioritized by stakeholders.

14. Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant be offered from CNPA amounting to £275,000 which will be £55,000 per annum in each of the following financial years: 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20.

Name: David Clyne Signature:  _____ Date: 27/11/2014

15. Decision to Approve or Reject

Head of Group

| | | |
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| Name: | Signature: | Date: |
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Chief Executive

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| Name: | Signature: | Date: |
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Management Team

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| Name: | Signature: | Date: |
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Finance Committee

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| Name: | Signature: | Date: |
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Board

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| Not applicable – below approval limits | | |
| Name: | Signature: | Date: |

SEERAD

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| Not applicable – below approval limits | | |
| Name: | Signature: | Date: |