

The State of the Park Review 2011

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Contents

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Introduction

This is the Cairngorms National Park's State of the Park Review. It is snapshot of information about the Cairngorms National Park in 2011. It is not an authoritative statement about all things to do with the National Park but a selection of some of the most important and significant bits of information.

The land of the National Park has take millions of years to evolve. Humans have been here about 7000 years and have become the managers of most of the land. Changes to the National Park tend to take place slowly. That applies to many of the natural processes that make the Park special such as the establishment and evolution of habitats, as well as the ones that that are driven by policy and people such as providing affordable housing.

Purpose and Content

The State of the Park Review is intended to help set the context for developing the next National Park Plan from 2012-2017. It is organised around the four aims of the National Park:



For each aim a set of four key 'health' indicators have been selected to help illustrate changes in the Park and give a sense of how it is changing. Most are based on existing data sources and are comparable with national data. Some are less well developed and will be refined in the future.

Each of the four sections under the aims of the park also has: some facts and figures relevant to the aim; an outline of the key changes and trends since 2006; a section that highlights the most notable policy or action changes; and some conclusions about the overall state of the Park.

Drivers of Change

- **Climate Change**

Climate change has already had direct effects on the species and habitats of the Park, particularly those that are already rare or threatened and is likely to continue to do so. For example, the temperature of some of the Park's streams and rivers has risen in the past century so that only a small further increase in temperature could mean that salmon spawning is no longer successful. The effects of climate change are also felt directly by

humans in more frequent extreme weather events such as flooding, but can also contribute to landslides, droughts and wildfires.

- **Economic Change**

The economy of the Park is diverse, but also same some important sectors that are fragile or vulnerable to change. The agriculture, forestry and land management sectors are all heavily reliant on outside sources of income – either through subsidy and grant or through other private income. Changes to those income streams can significantly affect the viability of businesses and numbers of people employed. The National Park is also distinctive because of a heavy reliance on tourism. Whilst the Park is likely to continue to have many natural assets that make it an attractive place to visit, other factors such as transport costs or wider economic downturns have a knock –on effect on disposable income and tourist spend. The price of oil is rising and is predicted to continue to rise. This has effects on the costs of living in a National Park, both in the direct costs of goods and services, and in the additional transport costs of remoter rural areas.

- **Social Change**

The population of the National Park, like that of Scotland, is getting older. This presents challenges in the types of services available and ways they are delivered, but also to ways that communities interact. Although younger adults are needed to do many jobs, the trend for wealth to consolidated in the middle aged and older population means that those on lower wages find it more difficult to live and work in the Park.

- **Policy Change**

The most significant policy changes of the recent past and for the future are related to Government’s resolve to tackle climate change. This means that in addition to oil costs rising, people’s behavior and ways of living will be changed by legislation. This already has a direct effect on the ways that new buildings are constructed to minimize energy use, but will also affect things like the costs of transport or ways we work. It is likely that public subsidy for farming, forestry and land management in the Park may also become more focused on maintaining the land’s ability to store carbon than the production of food or timber.

The National Park: 8 Years of History

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Learning from the development and implementation of the National Park Plan 2007-2012

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More Information

National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2000/10/introduction>

Cairngorms National Park Designation Order 2003:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2003/1/contents/made>

The Cairngorms National Park Designation Order Modifications 2010:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2010/348/contents/made>

Participation and Governance in Spatial Planning – evaluating the process of developing and implementing the Cairngorms National Park Plan:
<http://www.programme3.net/rural/rural38governanceSpacialPlanning.php>

Governance Assessment of Terrestrial Protected Areas – A Framework and Three Case Studies. Michael Lockwood, University of Tasmania, 2009.
<http://www.geog.utas.edu.au/geography/nrmgovernance/Documents/Lockwood%202009.pdf>

Summary of the State of the Park

Table I. Summary of National Park Health Indicators

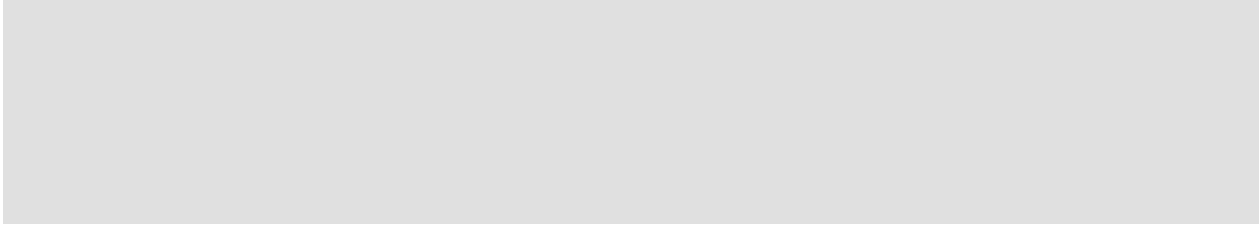
1. Conserve and enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage	↔	Nature Conservation The condition of the features of designated nature conservation sites in the Park
	⊙	Landscape Maintaining the sense of wildness in the Park
	↔	Built Heritage The condition of Listed Buildings in the Park
	↑	Social Culture The number of community projects that celebrate local history, culture or traditions in the Park
2. Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources	⊙	Land managed for public benefit The land area funded for public benefits under rural development contracts of the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP)
	↓	Value of agriculture and forestry The Gross Value Added (GVA) of agriculture and forestry in the Park
	↔	Renewable Energy Generation The amount of electricity generated from renewable sources
	⊙	Reduction in Carbon Emissions An indicator that reflects how carbon is managed in the Park and how emissions of carbon are reduced.
3. Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Special Qualities	↔	Awareness of the Park's Special Qualities The numbers of people who identify the special qualities of the Park in the Cairngorms Visitor Survey
	⊙	Awareness of the National Park Brand An indicator based on national awareness of the Park Brand is to be developed
	↔	Visitor Numbers to the Park Composite visitor numbers to ten of the Park's visitor attractions, spread across the Park.
	↑	The Condition of Core Paths The proportion of core paths that are assessed as 'fit for purpose'
4. Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Park's Communities	↑	Population Profile Retention of numbers of young adults and children within the population.
	↑	Rural Deprivation A measure of access to services such as shops and healthcare facilities.
	↑	Value of the CNP Based on an estimate for the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the Park
	↑	Community Activity The numbers of communities who undertake local community action planning.

Key

↑ Improvement ↓ Worsening ↔ No Change ⊙ Data not yet available

For detail on the different indicators and why they are used, please go to www.cairngorms.co.uk/nationalparkplan/reports

TEXT TO BE ADDED



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AIM I. Conserve & Enhance the Natural & Cultural Heritage of the Park

Health Indicators

Nature Conservation The condition of the features of designated nature conservation sites in the Park	↔	% of features in favourable condition: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>2005</td> <td>2009</td> <td>2010</td> </tr> <tr> <td>78%</td> <td>74%</td> <td>78%</td> </tr> </table>	2005	2009	2010	78%	74%	78%
2005	2009	2010						
78%	74%	78%						
Scottish Natural Heritage monitors the condition of the features of designated sites (the species and habitats that are most important to them). The assessment looks at whether the features are in 'favourable' condition. More information on the condition of designated sites is available from SNHi: http://www.snh.org.uk/snhi/								
Landscape Maintaining the sense of wildness in the Park	●	Data not yet available						
The Cairngorms National Park Authority and Scottish Natural Heritage have developed a systematic and objective way of measuring different qualities of wildness across the Park. This will inform the development of a future indicator.								
Built Heritage The condition of Listed Buildings in the Park	↔	Three 'A' listed Buildings at Risk in 2010						
The Scottish Civic Trust manages a Buildings at Risk Register across Scotland. The condition of 'A' Listed Buildings is a national indicator. The Buildings at Risk Register is still being developed and information added. In the longer term it may be used to monitor a wider range of listed buildings. Information on the Buildings at Risk Register is available here: http://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/BAR/Default.aspx								
Social Culture The number of community projects that celebrate local history, culture or traditions in the Park	↑	25 Community Heritage Projects being developed in 2010						
The Cairngorms Community Heritage Project has provided a focus and impetus for community heritage projects to be developed. Its initial target was to support the development of 6 projects but by October 2010, 25 projects were being supported. A more comprehensive indicator of longer term activity will be developed through the project.								

Key

 Improvement
  Worsening
  No Change
  Data not yet available

For detail on the different indicators and why they are used, please go to www.cairngorms.co.uk/nationalparkplan/reports

Facts and Figures

- 48% of the area of the Park is designated as being of European importance for nature conservation, up from 25% in 2007. This is mostly because of new areas of upland being designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for Golden Eagle. A large part of the Perth & Kinross Council area that became part of the National Park in 2010 is also covered by the new Golden Eagle SPA.
- 51% of the area of the Park is designated for nature conservation in 2011, up from 39% in 2007. Again, this is because of new SPA designations for Golden Eagle.
- The Park is still home to 25% of the UK's rare and threatened species.

- The Park has the most important area in the UK for Capercaillie. The woodlands of Strathspey, with around two thirds of the Scottish Capercaillie population between them, are the only places where the numbers of Capercaillie have increased.
- The first Cairngorms Cultural Heritage Conference, held in 2010 had more than 80 delegates from communities in the Park and organisations across Scotland.

The Main Changes since 2006

- More is known about what people enjoy about the National Park and how they experience its landscapes.
- Deer management has become more inclusive, involving a wider range of interests. An increasing number of landholdings are now managed with conservation as a primary objective and more deer management is now designed to improve the condition of designated nature conservation sites.
- The Cairngorms Community Heritage Project has helped support and provide a focus for a range of community heritage projects across the Park. This resource did not exist previously but has helped identify the scale of interest in the cultural heritage of the Park.

Highlights of Policy & Action

The Cairngorms Deer Framework has enshrined inclusive deer management in the Cairngorms and recognises the need for a patchwork of deer densities across the Park to meet different management objectives.

The Cairngorms Water Vole Project, has sought to maintain the Cairngorms as a stronghold for Water Vole by controlling American mink an invasive species that has become their main predator. It is now part of the largest species control project in the world.

The Cairngorms Rare Plants Project has been established to find the best sites for the four rarest (and endangered) plants in the Park, and to make sure those sites are managed to conserve and improve the future for those species. The four plants are: Twinflower, Intermediate Wintergreen, Lesser Butterfly Orchid and Small Cow-wheat.

The Cairngorms Wildcat Project has been established to secure the future of one of Scotland's most elusive species in the Park. The Scottish wildcat is close to extinction, but the project is raising awareness of how it can be helped through practical management.

The Strathspey Wetlands and Waders project has been used to help land managers bid for fund to manage land for wading birds. Strathspey is one of the most important places in the mainland UK for breeding waders such as Lapwing, Curlew, Oystercatcher, Redshank and Snipe, but has seen a significant decline in numbers of all species.

The Cairngorms Community Heritage Project is intended to support communities to develop and implement projects to understand, conserve, promote and enjoy their local cultural heritage. The project runs for two years to August 2011 is also being used to find out more

about cultural heritage in the Park. The project demonstrates the wealth of interest and enthusiasm for local history, traditions and stories amongst the communities of the Park.

More Information

Records of species and habitats: <http://www.nesbrec.org.uk/>

The European Environmental Change Network (with monitoring sites in the Cairngorms National Park): <http://www.ecn.ac.uk>

Follow birds of prey in the National Park using satellite: <http://www.raptortrack.org/>

Built Heritage information on PASTMAP: <http://jura.rcahms.gov.uk/PASTMAP/start.jsp>

Historical information and resources: <http://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/>

Useful publications:

SNH Commissioned Report No.291: *Public Perceptions of Wild Places and Landscapes in Scotland* (2008)

SNH Commissioned Report No.348: *The Geomorphological Heritage of the Cairngorm Mountains* (2010)

SNH Commissioned Report No.375: *The Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park* (2010)





Historic Scotland Leaflet *The Cairngorms National Park's Architectural Heritage*(2008?)

Conclusions on the State of the Park

TEXT TO BE ADDED

AIM 2. Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources of the Park

Health Indicators

Land managed for public benefit The land area funded for public benefits under rural development contracts of the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP)		Data not yet available
The Scotland Rural Development Programme is a programme of economic, environmental and social measure intended to help rural Scotland. It is worth £1.5 billion between 2007 and 2013. Much of the funding is provided for the delivery of public benefits from land. More information about the SRDP is available at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP		
Value of agriculture and forestry The Gross Value Added (GVA) of agriculture and forestry in the Park		£44 million in 2006, or about 11% of the total value of the Park in 2006. The value of agriculture and forestry fluctuates but has generally been downward.
An estimation of the value of the Park and the different sectors of its economy. More information about the GVA and characteristics of different sectors is provided in the report: 'The Economic and Social Health of the Cairngorms National Park' (2010) from the CNPA website: http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority/publications/		
Renewable Energy Generation The amount of electricity generated from renewable sources		This is an estimate based on an assumption that no existing renewable energy generation has been decommissioned and on the increasing use of woodfuel for domestic heating.
An indicator that reflects the amount of electricity that is generated from renewable sources with the Park.		
Reduction in Carbon Emissions An indicator that reflects how carbon is managed in the Park and how emissions of carbon are reduced.		Data not yet available
The Cairngorms National Park is a remote rural area that depends on oil-based energy for most fuel, and contains significant carbon stores in the peat of moorland and wetland and in its soils. An indicator that shows changes in carbon emissions will be developed through 2011/2012.		

Key

 Improvement
  Worsening
  No Change
  Data not yet available

For detail on the different indicators and why they are used, please go to www.cairngorms.co.uk/nationalparkplan/reports

Facts and Figures

- 40% of the area of the Park is moorland, mostly managed for grouse shooting.
- Moorland and peatland store carbon that if released to the atmosphere, could be converted to greenhouse gases and contribute to global climate change.
- 20% of the area of the Park is woodland. About half of that woodland is managed for timber production, and half is managed to maintained rare and threatened woodland

habitats and species. Many areas of woodland are also managed for recreation and enjoyment by the public.

- 11% of the wealth created in the National Park area is from agriculture and forestry
- The Cairngorms are important as a source of fresh water for a large part of Scotland. The Park has significant stretches of Scotland major rivers: the Dee and Don that run through Aberdeenshire to Aberdeen; and the Spey that runs through Highland and Moray to Spey Bay. Water from the Park also feeds the Esks and Isla in Angus, and the Garry that enters the river Tay in Perthshire.

The Main Changes since 2006

- Woodland cover in the National Park is probably increasing. Plans for native woodland planting and natural regeneration have been implemented in some places and are being planned for others. This could amount to an increase of 1-2% of the Park's area since 2006.
- Public policy (and associated grants and subsidies) have continued to emphasise the importance of 'public benefits' from the management of land. These can be related to food or materials but also to management for nature conservation, recreation and latterly, preventing and adapting to climate change. The management of carbon (to minimise the amount that is moved to the atmosphere) is becoming a stronger driver of public policy and support.

Highlights of Policy & Action

Integrated catchment management planning that brings together all interests to plan for the long term health and productivity of river catchments. The River Dee catchment management partnership is successfully implementing a plan that deals with water and habitat quality, flood management of interests and land managers. A similar partnership operates on the river South Esk in Angus and is being established for the river Spey.

Woodfuel is a lower carbon alternative to oil, gas and coal, and a natural resource of the Park. The website www.lowcarboncairngorms.org has been developed to promote woodfuel as a lower carbon and cheaper fuel source. It provides advice and information and is backed up by a woodfuel action plan that links the chain of producers, suppliers and customers.

The Cairngorms Food for Life Development Plan draws together food producers, suppliers consumers, public agencies to:

- Increase food production and consumption across the Park by strengthening and developing the viability of primary food producers and food processors, developing supply chains and markets for local produce
- Reduce the carbon footprint of the Park by reducing food miles, resource use and food waste throughout the supply chain;
- Strengthen and develop the viability of the tourism industry across the Park;

- Develop stronger links between the food and drink, tourism, retail and land management sectors, health agencies and communities (including education) through food and drink;

More Information

Forestry Commission Scotland Map Viewer – information about Scotland’s trees and forests:
<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-857DT5>

Cairngorms wood fuel: www.lowcarboncairngorms.org

River Dee Catchment Management Partnership: <http://www.theriverdee.org/>

River South Esk Catchment Management Plan:
<http://www.angusahead.com/LiveAngus/Projects/River-South-Esk-Catchment.asp>

Useful publications:

From <http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority/publications/>

- The Forests of the Cairngorms- Cairngorms National Park Forest and Woodland Framework (2008)
- Climate Change and Scottish Agriculture: Framers Guide to reducing Greenhouse Gases from Farms (2008)
- Cairngorms Food For Life Development Plan (2010)
- The Economic and Social Health of the Cairngorms National Park (2010)

Conclusions on the State of the Park

TEXT TO BE ADDED

AIM 3. Promote Understanding and Enjoyment (including recreation) of the Special Qualities of the Park.

Health Indicators

<p>Awareness of the Park's Special Qualities The numbers of people who identify the special qualities of the Park in the Cairngorms Visitor Survey</p>	↔	<p>Fewer respondents to the 2010 visitor survey identified the special qualities as what they liked most about the Park than in 2004, yet more people said they visited because the area was a National Park.</p>				
<p>The question: <i>What do you like most about the Cairngorms National Park?</i> was an open one in both visitor surveys. In 2010, fewer people identified things like views and scenery than in 2004. However, more people understood that the area was National Park and came to it because it was a National Park. It is possible that people now associate the Park more generally with the special qualities and opportunities to appreciate them.</p>						
<p>Awareness of the National Park Brand An indicator based on national awareness of the Park Brand is to be developed</p>	●	<p>Data not yet available</p>				
<p>The National Park Brand was developed to be associated with the special qualities of the Park and to provide a recognised visual identity. Research into how effective it has been and how to increase awareness will provide an indicator of awareness.</p>						
<p>Visitor Numbers to the Park Composite visitor numbers to ten of the Park's visitor attractions, spread across the Park.</p>	↔	<p>The visitor numbers show a rise of 2% between 2006 and 2009:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1149 911 1455 974"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2006</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2009</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">795000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">811000</td> </tr> </table>	2006	2009	795000	811000
2006	2009					
795000	811000					
<p>The composite Visitor numbers are taken from the Moffat Centre Visitor Attraction Monitor available here: http://www.moffatcentre.com/ourpublications/visitorattractionreports/ Other visitor trend information shows a reduction in visitors – particularly those using tourist information centres. The ten attractions used for the indicator are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landmark Forest Centre • Cairngorm Mountain (excluding skiers) • Glenmore Forest Park Centre • Highland Wildlife Park • Highland Folk Museum • Balmoral Estates • Loch Muick & Lochnagar Reserve • Blair Castle • Glenlivet distillery • Corrie Fee NNR 						
<p>The Condition of Core Paths The proportion of core paths that are assessed as 'fit for purpose'</p>	↑	<p>During 2010, the the proportion of paths assessed as 'fit for purpose' has risen from 39% to 43%, and a target of 70% for 2012 has been set.</p>				
<p>The Core Path Network is the main promoted network of paths in the Park and provides an easy way for people to enjoy the special qualities of the Park. The 'fit for purpose' criteria is based on the construction, signage, obstructions, location and suitability for different users.</p>						

Key

↑	↓	↔	●
Improvement	Worsening	No Change	Data not yet available

For detail on the different indicators and why they are used, please go to www.cairngorms.co.uk/nationalparkplan/reports

Facts and Figures

- Approximately 1.4 million people visit the Park each year.

- The Park contains 55 Munros (Mountains over 3000 feet high), some of Scotland's most popular and easily accessible winter climbing venues, as well as many famous rock climbing crags.
- The Park has three of Scotland's five ski resorts and one of Scotland's main mountain biking centres at Laggan Wolftrax
- The John Muir Award is an environmental award scheme focused on wild places. It encourages awareness and responsibility for the natural environment, in a spirit of fun, adventure and exploration. More than 10,000 John Muir awards have been awarded in the Park since 2004 and 9000 have been awarded in the past five years.
- There's a network of 932km (579 miles) of Core Paths in the National Park as well as many other paths and tracks that are promoted. The river Spey in the Park is currently Scotland's only river that is identified as a core path (for canoeists and kayakers).

The Main Changes since 2006

- The Cairngorms National Park has been established as a destination for visitors and the National Park Brand has been used to establish and reinforce the Park's identity. Visitor information in the Park and about the Park presents a more coherent message about the Park and the opportunities across it.
- Visitor numbers to the Park may have dropped slightly since 2006. This is a similar trend to other parts of Scotland. However, it is matched anecdotally with continued increases in the numbers of visitors who come for informal recreation opportunities such as walking and cycling – and who therefore don't always stay at hotels or visit attractions.
- Information about Outdoor Access opportunities as well as the number of routes suited to a wide range of possible users has improved. Outdoor recreation continues to grow in popularity and the health benefits of walking in particular are being promoted actively through public health policy.
- Opportunities for outdoor learning in the Park are being promoted in nearby schools as well as through Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence.

Highlights of Policy & Action

The identification of core paths across the Park – providing greater certainty about promoted outdoor access routes.

The Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust evolved to deliver path improvements and new paths across the National Park.

Substantial investment in new and upgraded off-road access routes such as the Old Logging Way that links Aviemore to Glenmore and the Deeside Way that links Ballater to Aboyne as well as many other local routes.

The development of more coherent visitor information within the Park – consistent leaflet styles and content, the use of panoramic maps and use of the National Park Brand.

Businesses, organised through the Cairngorms Business Partnership, establishing a customer-oriented website with more coherent visitor information at www.visitcairngorms.com/home

Increased use of the Park for outdoor learning through formal education and the Curriculum for Excellence, and through the John Muir Award.

More Information

The main visitor information web site for the Park: <http://visitcairngorms.com/home>

Educational resources to support higher education: <http://www.cairngormslearningzone.co.uk/>

The John Muir Award: <http://www.jmt.org/jmaward-home.asp>

The Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust: <http://www.cairngormsoutdooraccess.org.uk/>

Useful publications:

From <http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority/publications/>

- The Cairngorms National Park Visitor Survey 2009/10
- Guidance for Organised Outdoor Access Events in the Cairngorms National Park (2009)
- Sharing the Stories of the Cairngorms National Park – A Guide to Interpreting the Area's Distinct Character and Coherent Identity (2009)
- Getting Into Scotland's National Parks and National Nature Reserves – a Resource Pack

Conclusions on the State of the Park

TEXT TO BE ADDED

AIM 4. Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Park's Communities

Health Indicators

Population Profile Retention of numbers of young adults and children within the population.	↑	The numbers of young adults and children have remained relatively stable and are projected to remain stable or increase based on recent trends.
This indicator is based on the population profile of the Park. The population is generally getting older – the indicator is based on the numbers of younger adults and children in the Park, with an assumption that stability or and increase an increase in their numbers is an improvement.		
Rural Deprivation A measure of access to services such as shops and healthcare facilities.	↑	15 out of 22 areas improved between 2006 and 2009.
Access to services is a good indicator of pressure for remote rural areas such as the Park. Although more than half the Park is in the 10% worst areas of Scotland for access to services, there has been improvement in 15 out of the 22 datazones that cover the Park since 2006. More information on rural deprivation can be found here: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD		
Value of the CNP Based on an estimate for the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the Park	↑	It has grown since 2003 and was estimated at £399 million in 2006, or about 0.43% of Scotland's GVA that year.
An estimation of the value of the Park and the different sectors of its economy. More information about the GVA and characteristics of different sectors is provided in the report: 'The Economic and Social Health of the Cairngorms National Park' (2010) from the CNPA website: http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority/publications/		
Community Activity The numbers of communities who undertake local community action planning.	↑	All the communities in the National Park have undertaken or are going to undertake community needs assessments and develop community action plans.
Local community action planning is one way that communities can most effectively address local issues and plan for the future. It can improve the ways that services are delivered, help improve local infrastructure and give communities great influence over how they change in the future.		

Key

↑ Improvement ↓ Worsening ↔ No Change ● Data not yet available

For detail on the different indicators and why they are used, please go to www.cairngorms.co.uk/nationalparkplan/reports

Facts and Figures

- Unlike many other rural parts of Scotland, the population of the Park has grown. The population is currently around 17,500.
- The growth in population has been due to new people moving to the Park. Many young people leave the Park after school age, but the Park is different from most other parts of rural Scotland because young adults and adults with young children have chosen to move here over the past 5-6years. This has meant that the numbers of young adults and children have stayed about the same.

- Average incomes in the Park are about 75% of the average, but the average house price is about 130% of the Scottish average. This makes the Park one of the most difficult places in Scotland for working people to buy homes.
- unemployment levels in the Park have risen since the start of 2008 (during the national recession) to around 2% of the working age population. Since the Park was established, unemployment levels have been around half the Scottish average.
- The number of jobs in the Park has increased by about 1000 since the Park was established.
- About 1800 people commute from the Park to other places (mainly Inverness and Aberdeen) for work, but about 1500 commute to the Park for work.
- The Park's economy is more heavily based on tourism than any comparable part of Scotland. It accounts for nearly a third of the economic output of the Park.
- The Park's economy is also distinctive because of the relative importance of whisky production, the products of forestry, and agriculture and management of estates.
- Between 2006 and 2010, nearly 200 new affordable homes were built in Badenoch and Strathspey.

The Main Changes since 2006

- Prior to 2006, it was thought the population of the Park would remain the same or fall slightly and that the numbers of young people would fall steadily. In fact, migration to the Park has increased the population, and many of the people moving to the Park have been young adults and young adults with children.
- Global economic changes have registered on the economy of the Park in a slowing of the housing market, with far fewer house sales than in 2005-2007. New house building has also slowed. The effects of constrained public sector spending have yet to be realised in the Park. This could impact on availability and accessibility of services.

Highlights of Policy & Action

Businesses in the National Park recognised the potential to present a joined up face to the customers and to the public sector. The Cairngorms Business Partnership was established to provide a stronger voice for business and to help maximize the economic benefits the Park could provide.

Communities in the National Park have completed or will work on their own community needs assessments and develop their own community action plans. These help inform how communities change in the future and how services can be better delivered in local areas.

More Information

Business Information in the Park: <http://visitcairngorms.com/businessinformation>

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>

Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics: <http://www.sns.gov.uk/default.aspx>

General Register Office for Scotland: <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/>

Useful publications:

From <http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority/publications/>

- Cairngorms Food For Life Development Plan (2010)
- The Economic and Social Health of the Cairngorms National Park (2010)
- A Community Action Planning Toolkit (2008)
- Community Action Plans (2008-2010)

Conclusions on the State of the Park

TEXT TO BE ADDED