
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: CAPITALISING ON THE YEAR OF NATURAL SCOTLAND AND THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2013

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Purpose

To update the Board on communications work to support the Year of Natural Scotland, the Cairngorms National Park's 10th anniversary and the Communications and Engagement Strategy and agree a programme of activity for 2013.

Recommendations

That the Board:

- a) Notes the progress made to date and approves the proposed programme for 2013.
- b) Considers whether additional investment is appropriate to further capitalise on the opportunities 2013 offers.

Executive Summary

This paper outlines the approach the Cairngorms National Park Authority intends to adopt for its 2013 communications programme to support the Year of Natural Scotland 2013 (YNS) and to mark the Park's 10th anniversary. The two themes will be used to engage, support and encourage partners to get involved in helping to promote the Park and benefit from YNS and our 10th Anniversary. A proposed programme of events, activities and resources are recommended which aim to capitalise on YNS and the Park's 10th anniversary to build stronger partnerships and support the C&E Strategy by encouraging others to help promote the Park.

CAPITALISING ON THE YEAR OF NATURAL SCOTLAND AND THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2013 – FOR DECISION

Background

1. In 2010 the Scottish Government announced a series of themed years, building on the legacy of the Year of Homecoming in 2009. They would be year-long national programmes of activity around each theme with the objective of raising the profile of Scotland and its assets to encourage more national and international visitors. The themes have been Scottish Food and Drink (2010), Active Scotland (2011), Creative Scotland (2012) and 2013 will mark the Year of Natural Scotland. The aim of the Year of Natural Scotland is to build on previous themed years and to:
 - a) Promote Scotland's stunning natural beauty and biodiversity
 - b) Promote ways in which visitors and residents can enjoy our beautiful landscapes, wildlife and heritage responsibly.

2. Eight key themes have also been developed, seven of which closely relate to the Cairngorms National Park:
 - a) Natural landscapes
 - b) Natural built heritage
 - c) Natural larder
 - d) Sustainable tourism
 - e) Natural playground
 - f) Flora and fauna
 - g) Art in Nature
 - h) Nature in cities.

3. Year of Natural Scotland is being led by Scottish Natural Heritage and VisitScotland with both National Park Authorities as key partners along with other public, private and voluntary sector organisations. The aim is to develop a co-ordinated series of national and local events and activities that support the theme of Natural Scotland throughout 2013. The emphasis is on building and enhancing what is already happening (both by public agencies and others) and to encourage and support others to get involved through events, activities and the use of materials to highlight the variety of ways people can enjoy Scotland's natural heritage.

4. It is recognised that both National Parks are an important part of the country's natural heritage and are well placed to deliver Year of Natural Scotland aims and objectives. National Parks' events and activities will be included in the national

events calendar, with agreement to significantly raise the profile of both Parks during National Parks Week (July 29th - 4th August).

5. 25th March 2013 marks the 10th anniversary of the Cairngorms National Park. Since the Park was established in 2003 much has been achieved both by the CNPA and others and the delivery of the National Park Plans is increasingly seen as a shared responsibility to create a Park that brings people together to create a sustainable economy, is a special place for nature and somewhere for all to enjoy.
6. 2013 presents us with an opportunity, by linking in with YNS, to promote what is special about the Park, what has been achieved since 2003, what the future holds and how people can get involved. It will also present the opportunity to build a stronger collaborative approach to delivering the National Park Partnership Plan's vision and longer term outcomes.
7. In support of the Communications and Engagement Strategy, the Park's 10th anniversary will help us encourage everyone who is involved in the Park – partners, communities, visitors, business etc. – to act as 'champions' for the Park by telling their story and how it supports Year of Natural Scotland. Similar to YNS, our approach is to support and enhance what is already happening to make best use of our limited resources. The aims for our 10th anniversary activities are:
 - a) To promote what is special about the Cairngorms National Park, what it has delivered over the past decade and the opportunities that lie ahead
 - b) To encourage and support others to support/lead on 2013 events and activities and to get involved with the Cairngorms National Park (not CNPA)
 - c) To establish a legacy of partner supported events in the Park and a number of 'champions' for the Park

Policy

8. The **National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) 2012-2017** sets out a long term vision for the Park as: *"An outstanding National Park, enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together."*
9. The three long-term outcomes for the Cairngorms National Park are:
 - a) A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities
 - b) A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced
 - c) People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences

10. The **Communications and Engagement Strategy** agreed by the Board, sets out three strategic outcomes:
 - a) Increased awareness of the Park;
 - b) A sense of 'closeness' (win hearts and minds) with identified audiences;
 - c) A sense of responsibility and ownership to make a contribution to the Park
11. The proposed communications programme for 2013 will focus on inspiring people about the Park, achieving greater co-ordination when promoting the Park and establishing 'champions' for the Park by supporting them to share their stories about what is special about the Park.

Consultation

12. In developing this programme we have worked closely with Scottish Government Year of Natural Scotland partners led by Scottish Natural Heritage and VisitScotland as well as Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, ranger services, community groups and the Cairngorms Business Partnership, who all support the idea of a co-ordinated Year of Natural Scotland themed events programme for the Park to be delivered at a local and national level.

2013 Communications Programme

13. There will be no formal launch of Year of Natural Scotland within the Park. This is in line with the national steering group agreement that there would not be a marketed big launch. Instead all partners should commit to promoting and supporting YNS during 2013 through their ongoing work activities and partnerships to raise awareness of YNS and encourage others to get involved.
14. We will use our communication tools (website, social media, events, media relations and stakeholder engagement) and work with our partners to promote the range of events and support on offer for the year and link to additional events or activities. Our website will have a YNS button on the home page which will link to information and materials available to promote the Park and Year of Natural Scotland and provides support for people who want to get involved. <http://cairngorms.co.uk/the-park/year-of-natural-scotland-2013/> This will be updated throughout the year with the latest information. An e- newsletter, to promote both YNS and the Park's 10th Anniversary will also be issued on a regular basis throughout 2013 to interested partners to keep them informed of what is happening and how they can get involved.
15. Year of Natural Scotland also provides an opportunity to promote the Park at a national and international level and for partners to support or lead on that work.

16. Opportunities include:
- a) International media release: VisitScotland and the CNPA worked together on a media release to launch YNS to the North American and European market. This included a series of images from around the Park by photographer Colin Prior and featured an interview with Rebecca Morris of wilderness Scotland.
 - b) Scottish Environment Link 'Environment Week' Holyrood evening reception (20 February) to promote YNS and both National Parks
 - c) 'Big Weekends Out' initiative linked to John Muir Day – free travel routes on each weekend in April (routes are still to be confirmed by VisitScotland)
 - d) Royal Highland Show – focus on YNS and National Parks (20-23 June)
 - e) National Parks Week with a focus on activities and cycling (29 July- 4 August)
 - f) 'National Parks in the 21st Century' conference in 2014 Year of Homecoming
17. Local YNS events will have the opportunity to link to the Park's 10th Anniversary and will aim to make best use of the Park brand and encourage a more co-ordinated approach between local businesses, communities, public sector partners, rangers and land managers. Specific materials are being produced which will be launched on 25th March 2013, the Park's 10th anniversary, to inspire people about the Park and help them share their own stories and act as ambassadors for the Park. These include:
- a) 10th anniversary badge to be used alongside the Park brand
 - b) 10th anniversary section on www.cairngorms.co.uk website
 - c) Communications toolkit including use of free images of the Park
 - d) CBP campaign to help businesses promote and benefit from the Park
 - e) DVD which tells the story of 10 Park successes and how people can get involved (these can be used individually or collectively and will be available for partners to use via YouTube on our website)
 - f) 10 case studies which illustrate progress made over the last 10 years and how people can get involved and help take things forward (available as part of an information pack and via the online communications toolkit)
 - g) 'Reflections' booklet which marks the first 10 years of the Park through the eyes of senior officials and people who have been directly affected by the creation of the Park (to be launched during National Parks Week in July)
18. Local events led by the CNPA and supported by a range of partners will focus on the special qualities of the Park – particularly the natural heritage. Events include:
- a) Celebrating Nature – 18 May at Aviemore Highland Resort
 - b) Atholl Gathering – 25/26 May
 - c) Grantown Show – 8 August
 - d) Braemar Gathering – 7 September
 - e) Cultural Heritage celebration – September/October (still to be confirmed)
 - f) Schools Media project – January - September

19. CNPA Board members will play an important role in supporting these events and are encouraged to make the most of other opportunities where they are able to promote the Park as part of the YNS and to mark the Park's 10th anniversary.
20. Partners who have already committed to celebrating Year of Natural Scotland and the Park's 10th Anniversary include: Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, Cairngorms Business Partnership, Scottish Land and Estates, Association of Cairngorm Communities and ranger services. It is hoped, as the year progresses, more people will be inspired to 'celebrate' the Park during 2013 and that this creates a legacy of greater collaboration and more 'champions' for the Park.
21. A media plan has been prepared which aims to ensure the Park is featured in relevant high profile publications and broadcasts throughout the year. We have contacted all Park partner publications to agree feature articles and will target national and specialist media to secure exclusive features during 2013. BBC Scotland is a media partner for YNS and we are working with them so that the Cairngorms National Park is featured during National Parks Week.
22. Given our limited resources and the general ethos of our 'enabling' approach to working with others, the 2013 Communications Programme aims to inspire, support and co-ordinate our collective activities to promote the Cairngorms National Park as a jewel in the crown of Natural Scotland. This approach also aims to deliver a legacy of a number of longer-term outcomes including:
 - a) A communication toolkit and support materials that help people act as 'ambassadors' to tell their stories about the Park and enhance community events by making better use of the Park brand and other materials
 - b) More collaborative initiatives to promote the Park with partners, businesses and local communities to meet shared objectives (e.g. Celebrating Nature, better informed Ranger services across the Park that support each other's activities, businesses using the Park brand more prominently and working together to promote the Park, partner organisations taking ownership and acting as ambassadors for the Park such as SNH promoting the Park at NNRs across Scotland)
 - c) Possible opportunity to pilot Park branded merchandise and learn how we can best make use of merchandising in the future
 - d) Stronger contacts with national and specialist media and a strong online community leading to more people getting involved with the Park

Monitoring and Evaluation

23. The overall aim of the communications programme for 2013 is to capitalise on YNS to build stronger partnerships and support the C&E Strategy by encouraging others

to help promote the Park. It also aims to support Year of Natural Scotland and mark the 10th anniversary of the Cairngorms National Park by raising the profile of the National Park and its special qualities. Success criteria will therefore include a number of elements:

- a) Partner-led activities that promote/support the Park
- b) Media coverage especially in national and specialist publications
- c) Use of the Park Brand, communications toolkit and 10th anniversary badge
- d) Numbers following the Park twitter accounts/websites (online community)
- e) Impact of the CBP-led 'Park Aware' campaign (to be monitored by CBP)
- f) Attendance/feedback following CNPA-led events (tailored to each event)
- g) MSP and general public survey results re. impressions of CNP/National Parks
- h) Increased visitor numbers

Financial Implications

24. Much of the above programme is already underway with materials in production and event programmes agreed with our partners. The materials, events and activities can all be delivered within the available operational plan budgets for 2012/13 and 2013/14, however, delivery will depend on the support of others – in particular, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, SNH and our SEARs partners, VisitScotland and YNS partners, Cairngorms Business Partnership, the Association of Cairngorms Communities and Community Development Officers as well as the support of our own staff and Board members.

Discussion

25. Do the Board feel the above programme is appropriate in terms of use of our resources to support the agreed Communications and Engagement Strategy and Scottish Government's Year of Natural Scotland?
26. If additional activities are felt to be necessary this will mean additional resources need to be found from other areas of our operational plan. Potential options for additional activities already considered are:
 - a) Support funding package for community events – this will need significant levels of funding to make an impact and will have administrative challenges. Could be seen to duplicate the YNS Growth Fund
 - b) Production of branded merchandising – feedback and experience by Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NPA suggest the supply/distribution elements are difficult to manage however options for smaller branded merchandise that can be used to give away at events etc. could be piloted as part of our Brand Development work

- c) Provision of a CNP branded trailer for use at events and shows – re-branding of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs trailer can be achieved easily and at reasonable cost however use at events will require committed support from Board members as staff resources are extremely stretched
- d) Paid for marketing/media coverage to support YNS and National Parks Week – could fund CBP or COAT to lead on this but would require additional funding from existing budgets/programme of work to make an impact

Next Steps

- 27. CNPA Board to agree the proposed communications programme for 2013 to support YNS and the park's 10th anniversary.
- 28. CNP website to promote our support for YNS and link into National programme of events from January 2013.
- 29. 25th March promote the Park's 10th Anniversary and launch the communications toolkit, support materials and opportunities to get involved.
- 30. Monitor and evaluate success of the campaign as outlined in paragraph 23.

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