

## **INCLUSIVE CAIRNGORMS**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2012 at 11.00am  
At the Craigendarroch Hotel, Ballater**

### **Present:**

David Atkinson	Scottish Rural Churches Group
Elsbeth Grant	CNPA
Claire Ross	CNPA
Gordon Riddler	CNPA Board
Kevin Hutchens	Independent Social Worker
Anne MacLean	RNIB
Alasdair Johnston	Aberdeen City Council
Hazel McLaren	Aberdeenshire Community Planning
Hector MacDonald	SDEF
Alan Melrose	COAT
Jane Cox	COAT
Bob Bennett	Perth and Kinross Centre for Independent Living
Clifford Graham	Barnardo's Works
Alan Smith	CNPA
Jonathan Kitching	Aberdeen City Council
Dan Cottam	Grantown YMCA
Saran Cleary	Barnardo's Works

### **Apologies:**

Maggie Lawson	B&S Community Transport Company
Suresh Paul	Equal Adventure
Karen Derrick	VABS
Jim Brown	Blackrock Productions
Eric Baird	Cairngorms Ranger Services
Aileen Graham	B&S Access Panel
Morag Campbell	B&S Access Panel
Liz Scott	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Kate Christie	CNPA
Carolyn Cornfield	Caberfeidh Horizons
Shiela Fletcher	Community Transport Association
Jackie Cropper	Grand Central Savings
Gail Woodcock	Aberdeen City Council
Matt Tyrer	SCVO

### **Welcome and Introduction**

1. In the absence of the chair, EG welcomed everyone to the meeting suggesting that item 9 of the agenda should be brought forward to start the meeting.

### **Election of Chair and vice-chair**

2. EG explained that Jim Brown was stepping down as chair of Inclusive Cairngorms following his second two year term. Morag Redwood has also tendered her resignation as vice-chair following her move from SCVO.
3. Following a request for nominations for both posts, EG had received two separate nominations for Anne MacLean as chair and Eric Baird as vice chair. No further nominations were put forward.
4. Both nominees have indicated that they are agreeable to taking on these roles, so it was therefore confirmed that Anne MacLean will be chair and Eric Baird vice chair of Inclusive Cairngorms for the next two years.
5. Anne MacLean took over the chair, thanking both Jim Brown and Morag Redwood for their contributions as chair and vice chair over the last four years. **Action EG to send thanks to JB and MR.**
6. The apologies were noted, and introductions made around the table.

### **Minutes of Last Meeting**

7. Some inaccuracies were noted in the minutes of the last meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June:
  - a. Para 3 - note that the poster showed the Chief Executive **of Highland Council.**
  - b. Para 5 – should refer to Welfare **reform** (not forum)
  - c. Para 22, line 3 - should be Boat of Garten Community Council (not CNPA)
8. Subject to the above amendments, the minutes of the meeting were approved.

### **Matters arising from the Minutes**

9. Ref para 2, for forthcoming elections Anne MacLean will contact the Strathy re publicising the assistance available regarding postal ballots for visually impaired people.
10. Ref para 6, EG had circulated a note of Di Alexander's presentation.
11. Ref para 38 and poor access at Aviemore railway station, KH raised the issue of accessible public transport . AMc noted that Visitscotland are leading on an Accessible Tourism project, which aims to highlight the economic benefits of making tourism facilities accessible. However visitscotland's remit doesn't extend to railway stations, and because

funding is allocated according to footfall, it does mean that railway stations in the north including the National Park, are not a priority for upgrading. More information about the Accessible Tourism project is available from Visitscotland.

[http://www.visitscotland.org/business\\_support/advicelink/accessible\\_tourism.aspx](http://www.visitscotland.org/business_support/advicelink/accessible_tourism.aspx)

## **Presentation – Alan Melrose, Cairngorms Walking to Health project**

12. Alan gave a presentation of the Walking to Health project which is delivered by Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust. Health walks are local, safe, social, led walks delivered by local trained volunteers, aimed at local residents keen to increase their level of physical activity due to illness, surgery, stroke, coronary heart disease, etc.
13. There are currently 32 health walk groups across the National park delivering over 1200 health walks. COAT has trained and supported 60 volunteers, who support 275 walkers per week, walking 13,000+ miles, at a cost of less than £150/walker/annum.
14. Training for volunteers includes disability and inclusion issues, delivered by Sportscotland. Volunteers also receive support in the form of resources, regular meetings, expenses paid and a volunteer policy.
15. An evaluation of the project highlights the physical, mental health and community development benefits.
16. New developments in the last year include Huntly health walks working with the community dietician; Aviemore working with the Community Psychiatric nurse, Dulnain Bridge, Boat of Garten and Lumphanan. New groups are being developed this winter in Laggan and Finzean.
17. More details about the health walks can be found on the COAT website [www.cairngormsoutdooraccess.org.uk](http://www.cairngormsoutdooraccess.org.uk)
18. Scotland has a very poor health record, and health walks can help to improve this.
19. Alan thanked all the funders and partners. For the future the project is aiming for 37 health walk groups, and strengthening links with NHS to increase referrals to health walks.
20. CG noted that Barnardo's have used health walks for young people too, with social as well as health benefits.
21. KH asked about use of all abilities trails for health walks. It was noted that most paths used are well constructed or of all abilities standard.
22. It was also noted that health walks are aimed at residents and not promoted to visitors, as this might change the dynamic of the group.
23. AMc asked about training and whether this included assisting people with visual impairments. AM noted that the disability inclusion training covered the range of disabilities including visual impairments. The intention is to roll out this training to all groups across the Park.

## **CNPA Public Duties (standing item)**

### **Equality Duty**

24. EG had circulated a paper on developing equality outcomes for CNPA, which is a statutory requirement for all public bodies. The paper summarises the key points raised at the Inclusive Cairngorms workshop held in June, identifying equality gaps or opportunities to improve equality in our Corporate Plan. EG has subsequently discussed these internally, with some broad themes emerging which should help to inform the development of outcomes. These are based around communications, engagement, outdoor access and planning.
25. EG would like feedback from Inclusive Cairngorms on these suggested themes, any comments should be forwarded to EG by 17 December. Email [ElsbethGrant@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:ElsbethGrant@cairngorms.co.uk)
26. DA suggested that a glossary of acronyms would be helpful.

### **Outdoor Access**

27. An update from Adam Streeter-Smith had been circulated, and EG offered to feed back any questions or comments.
28. AJ noted the dangerous road crossings on the cycle path from Aboyne to Ballater, and the turnstiles on the Cambus O'May bridge which make it difficult to use, especially for children.
29. KH asked about accessibility of information and it was noted that CNPA has already consulted with Inclusive Cairngorms and RNIB on design and guidance for path leaflets and signage and this is used as best practice on-going.
30. JK noted that he has come across locked gates on some estate tracks while out biking.

### **Planning**

31. EG reported back on the outcome of the Tullich cemetery extension application, following comments submitted by Inclusive Cairngorms:
- a. Car parking spaces were increased to 4.
  - b. It was considered inappropriate to have surfaced paths between lairs, and as a compromise a grass reinforced mesh is to be used.
  - c. Gradient concerns were also taken account of – condition 2 refers to the stipulations on this, and the reason for the condition refers to ensuring that there is adequate accessibility for all user groups.

- d. Also, advice note no. 4 deals with comments made about possible 'No Dogs' signage and the need to ensure that it clarifies that this would not refer to assistance dogs.
32. The full planning report can be found at <http://cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority/about-us/meeting-papers/committee-papers/?meetingID=756&typeID=2>
33. Ref 31b above, it was agreed to seek further clarification regarding the use of 'grass reinforced mesh', material used, specification, etc. **Action EG to contact Planning**

### **Young People (standing item)**

34. Dan Cottam gave an update on the work of the Badenoch and Strathspey Youth Employability Focus Group, which is a partnership of agencies (including HC, Barnardo's, Skills Development Scotland, CNPA) working with schools, and transition pupils at Grantown Grammar. It provides support to pupils in setting up work placements, activity agreements, volunteering, job applications, providing career advice as well as developing social skills. Eg One such project involves 6 participants developing conservation skills at the Highland Wildlife Park. Programmes are very much tailored towards the individual. The focus group has become a good model of joint agency working, which could be transferable to other barriers such as transport. Next meeting is on 29 January.
35. Alan Smith informed the group about the Community Leadership Programme being delivered by Backbone (Pammy Johal), and seeking participants to take part in the 2013 programme. It is aimed at leaders of youth or other community groups who wish to gain experience and qualifications in outdoor leadership or environmental action. The programme is based mainly in the Cairngorms, and trainees must be over 18 years to take part, and ideally from the CNP and surrounding cities (including Aberdeen City). More details will be circulated by EG. **Action EG** (Or contact Pammy Johal direct [info@backbone.uk.net](mailto:info@backbone.uk.net))

### **Disability (standing item)**

36. It was reported that the blue badge scheme has changed following a private members bill to strengthen the enforcement of the blue badge.

### **Low Income**

37. It was noted that Annette Johnston is holding focus groups on welfare reform in Aberdeenshire, to raise awareness of the support available for people on low incomes.
38. KH highlighted a report 'Counting the Costs' published by Contact a Family which provides a comparison showing the extra costs of raising a disabled child, compared to a non-disabled child.

## **AOCB**

39. Regarding keeping the CNPA board informed about Inclusive Cairngorms, it was suggested that the meeting minutes could be circulated to the CNPA board , as well as verbal updates from Gordon Riddler. It was agreed GR would discuss this with the Board and liaise with EG on the best way to do this. **Action GR/EG**

### **Date of next meeting**

40. The date of the next meeting is on **21 March 2013 at 11.00am**, venue to be confirmed.

**Elsbeth Grant**

**10 Dec. 12**