

CORPORATE PLAN REPORTING

Conservation and Land Management	
Priority I – Support landscape-scale conservation, specifically the expansion of native and montane woodland, peatland restoration, natural flood management and Capercaillie management	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver peatland restoration and woodland expansion targets 	<p>In 2021/22 the CNPA Peatland Action programme is currently on track to deliver around 550ha of peatland restoration management across 10 sites on 7 estates by March 2022. The target is 557ha. Precise measurements are not yet available but the team is confident that the work done to date will be very close to target. The current mild winter has enabled peatland restoration to continue throughout much of January. If mild conditions continue into February then around 700ha of peatland restoration management could be achieved.</p> <p>A new entrant scheme developed on Tulchan Estate has been successful in that four new contractors have expressed interest in peatland restoration and now have the skills to work on sites where ditch blocking is the main restoration technique. There is still a shortage of contractors who can work on complex erosion sites.</p> <p>The potential programme for 2022/23 could exceed 1000ha across 18 sites on 16 estates. ScotGov have allocated sufficient capital spend to achieve this but negotiations are ongoing re the resource allocation which is largely staff costs.</p> <p>An internal audit of all controls and processes involved in the management of the Peatland Action fund will be carried out in February. This will aid management of risks associated with the Peatland Action fund and will provide advice on how best to scale up the programme in future years.</p> <p>Since the last update, 1553.5 ha of woodland creation has been approved by Scottish Forestry in the National Park. This is spread across the Highland, Aberdeenshire and Perth & Kinross local authority areas. The bulk of the hectareage is accounted for by an approved natural regeneration scheme of 1425 ha, which will be delivered by Wildland Ltd. A proposed native woodland planting scheme of 426 ha at Kinrara is currently out for consultation by Scottish Forestry.</p>

	<p>Further woodland expansion continues to progress in key areas through managing deer populations for natural regeneration. Catalysed by the increasingly buoyant carbon market, there are various woodland planting schemes currently shaping up which we have been made aware of, and these would amount to several thousand hectares of new woodland to be delivered within the next few years. As well as substantially increasing the amount of woodland cover (across all five local authority areas within the park), this and other new afforestation is likely to have significant, positive effects for forest habitat connectivity across the park, potentially benefitting a wide range of woodland species, including capercaillie.</p> <p>Uptake of the Woodland Challenge Fund in its second year (2020/21) was significantly greater than in the first year, when there were just two successful applications. In Year 2 there were seven successful applications for projects that varied in scale from 1.4 ha to 135 ha, and in grant award from £650 to £3000. In total the seven funded projects were awarded £13,688.80 and represent the creation of roughly 350 ha of new native woodland within the Cairngorms National Park. In Year 3 (2021/22), no applications have yet been received, but several are anticipated before the end of the financial year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Cairngorms Nature Strategy with wider partnership 	<p>The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan (2019 – 2024) is delivered by a wide range of partners including NGOs, land managers, academic and public sector organisations. Progress towards the three main aims of landscape-scale conservation, action for priority species and involving people is overseen by the Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group.</p> <p><u>Landscape scale conservation</u></p> <p>Mapping of aspen and riparian woodland cover and connectivity across the Park is almost complete. Work with Catchment Management Partnerships, farmers and land managers, with investment via the Nature Restoration Fund, continues to augment the existing resource through planting. Mapping of species grassland extent and condition will be completed in summer 2022 and mob grazing pilots are underway to demonstrate biodiversity gain as part of productive systems. River restoration led by Catchment Management Partnerships continues to focus on re-naturalisation through connecting rivers with floodplains and introducing woody debris. A programme of pond restoration and creation is being led by British Dragonfly Society.</p> <p><u>Priority species</u></p> <p>Species conservation continues to be driven forwards primarily through the work of dedicated projects, namely Rare</p>

	<p>Invertebrates in the Cairngorms, Cairngorms Rare Plants & Wild Connections, Wetlands and Waders Initiatives, Cairngorms Wildcat and Cairngorms Capercaillie projects. CNPA and BTO have produced sensitivity maps identifying key curlew habitat and breeding sites across the Park and CNPA is developing Park-wide Fresh Water Pearl Mussel species reinforcement strategy and a raptor conservation strategy.</p> <p><u>Involving people</u></p> <p>After two years of virtual activity, the flagship nature engagement event in the Park, Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend, is set to welcome back people to the landscapes, wildlife and land management in the Park in May 2022. Approximately 100 events run by land managers, organisations, communities and enthusiasts across the Park will be available for people to find out more about the National Park, how it’s managed and the wildlife it’s famous for.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature partners are also developing engagement pathways to support the journey from new-to-nature to active-and-engaged and specialist audiences through a range of opportunities for getting involved.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Capercaillie Framework 	<p>The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project is now half-way through its 3-year delivery phase. Good progress continues to be made against all five of the project’s Approved Purposes. Highlights include over 2,600 residents, visitors and businesses sharing their views about capercaillie conservation and ways they feel they can help; volunteers donating over 2,200 hours to the project to help deliver community-led action for the bird; and over 7,800 hectares of habitat improved for capercaillie. Minor issues have impacted the delivery of some habitat improvement work, community-led action, evaluation and genetic research, but all work remains on track to complete by the end of the project (July 2023). Full details of the project’s progress can be found on the project website https://www.cairngormscapercaillie.scot</p> <p>In addition to the work of the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project and the ongoing work of many partners, CNPA initiated discussions with key stakeholders at a senior level to investigate the desirability and feasibility of new approaches not already under consideration or being implemented, primarily around the management of protected species, translocation/ reintroduction and creating areas of minimum disturbance. A sub-group of the NatureScot Scientific Advisory Committee will publish its findings in March 2022. The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project Board will consider the implications of the findings and the opportunities for the project to contribute towards any recommendations.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure deer management is focused on delivering public interest priorities specifically the expansion of native woodlands and peatland restoration</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support population modelling and herbivore impact assessments 	<p>Nature Scot plans to count open range deer across the South Deeside and North Angus DMG and the South Grampian DMG before March 2022 if weather permits. This count will be conducted from helicopters and using digital photography. With helicopters and teams in place to count the East Grampians, CNPA will take advantage of this to fund a count across the West Grampian DMG. Up to date count data will give us an ideal starting point for developing Strategic Land Use Plans in partnership with DMGs across the Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with Deer Management Groups (DMGs) to deliver public interest priorities 	<p>The Scottish Government accepted 92 of the 99 recommendations within the Deer Working Group report. These recommendations now need to be implemented in the form of new legislation, new regulation, new incentives and a review of all the non-statutory instruments which influence deer management e.g. Best Practice Guidance. A Programme Board has been established to take forward these various work streams and CNPA is represented on that Board.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Support sustainable moorland management to deliver greater habitat diversity and good management practice</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver with estates the work programme of the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership (ECMP) 	<p>The East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership met on 8th December 2021 and discussed how grouse moor management could become more sustainable. This discussion was linked to forthcoming legislation in terms of grouse moor licensing. The potential role of ECMP as a sounding board for ideas and as a link between the grouse sector and Government was discussed. Key elements of sustainability were identified. These included bag size, market adjustment, employment, muirburn and wider habitat management.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group 	<p>The Cairngorms Uplands Advisory Group (CUAG) met on 2nd December and discussed new forestry grant scheme applying to deer management on open range. This grant would support the management required to achieve unfenced natural regeneration. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service attended CUAG and discussed the use of prescribed burning to reduce the risk of wildfires.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate raptor persecution and develop 	<p>Awaiting latest raptor persecution figures from RSPB and Police Scotland. BTO raptor tracker tag development still ongoing, in the meantime three alternative tags fitted to golden eagles in the</p>

<p>wildlife tourism project around raptors</p>	<p>Park in 2021 (one on Deeside two in Strathspey). The Partnership for Action against Wildlife crime (PAW) group, including Police Scotland, met on 29th Sept to discuss wildlife crime procedures in relation to potential raptor persecution events in the National Park. CNPA is linked in with NE Scotland golden eagle monitoring project to ensure overview and collaboration.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group is considering the actions required to further address this issue and take forward raptor conservation in CNP. This includes investigating the potential for wildlife tourism.</p>
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Visitor Experience

Priority I - Continue to ensure visitor infrastructure meets the expectations of visitors to the National Park and help deliver a sustainable tourism economy

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish Speyside Way extension, the Mountains and the People Programme and start Deeside Way extension 	<p>Speyside Way Extension – The Speyside Way extension has been constructed and is being well used. The Newtonmore ‘sculpture’ start/finish location was formally opened by Kate Forbes MSP In Aug 2021. Path signage is being installed with further improvements at Tromie and Insh. Grantown and Kincaig communities are seeking funding for improvements in their communities. Cairngorms Business Association and MoraySpeyside have secured funding to promote the route going forward. Formal opening of the route extension is being planned for Spring 2022</p> <p>Deeside Way – Braemar to Invercauld Bridge planning consent has been extended and CNPA and Aberdeenshire Council has agreed to jointly fund OATS to construct the section of new path in Spring 2022.</p> <p>Mountains & People - The 5 year project was completed in Jan 2021, delayed by Covid, but upgrading 51.8 km of mountain path in Cairngorms out of a five year target of 53 km. Further work with Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) is ongoing to agree how we best support the maintenance of these paths and the volunteers that the project trained in path maintenance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Tourism Action Plan and develop and deliver with partners a Visitor Giving scheme 	<p>Tourism Action Plan – Cairngorms Tourism Partnership (CTP) has met several times to monitor delivery of the Action Plan which underpins the Park’s status with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. CNPA led on a mid-term review of the Action Plan, which was considered by CNPA Board in March 2021. We are in discussions with Europarc about extending the current five year arrangement until 2022 so that development of the next Action Plan follows on from approval of the National Park Partnership Plan.</p>

	<p>A Tourism Emergency Response Group has met regularly, along with a Management for Visitors Group to plan and manage for Covid related work.</p> <p>Voluntary Giving – CNPA Board agreed the principles of this work June 2018 & Cairngorms Trust launched the arrangements in May 2019. The Trust is now working with a range of businesses across the Park and a Partnership Group is in place (chaired by Brian Woods with Pete Crane representing CNPA) to advise on development of the scheme and the projects to be funded.</p> <p>Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) - CNPA successfully secured funding for two projects on National Nature Reserves at Glenmore (multiuse tarmac path) and Muir of Dinnet (car parking, toilet upgrade and sewage disposal) with both projects now complete. Aberdeenshire Council has secured funding for improvements to Glenshee public toilets (Summer 2021) and CNPA has bid for Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan funding to develop detailed, approved and costed plans for improving visitor infrastructure at key visitor destinations around the National Park. Expression of Interest are also being invited for CNPA capital funding as part of the visitor infrastructure improvement programme that fits with the approved visitor management plans.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress with delivery of Cairngorm/Glenmore Strategy 	<p>Highland Council and CNPA have funded further roadside improvements from Beach Car Park along Loch Morlich with improvements ongoing into Spring 2022.</p> <p>The Cairngorm Mountain Masterplan is complete and repair work on the funicular railway is underway with opening anticipated for winter 2022/23. Cairngorm Mountain opened the campervan site at Coire Ciste and is planning improvements to visitor interpretation at the mountain.</p> <p>The greater number of visitors using of Glenmore and Cairngorm post COVID19 lockdown indicates the need for partners to review the current Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy and agree a clear partnership action plan going forward.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Increase physical activity in both residents and visitors and support delivery of Scotland’s Natural Health Service</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver Active Cairngorms with Active Aviemore and Health Walks as flagship projects 	<p>Active Aviemore – Highland Council, Hitrans, Sustrans, NHS Highland are developing an active travel link to the new Aviemore Hospital and Transport Scotland are designing a Non-Motorised User (NMU) link from Aviemore to Carrbridge with the preferred route being following ‘old A9’.. The main multi use infrastructure in Aviemore will form part of the Heritage Horizons bid.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge has secured Sustrans support for construction of an NMU link to Grantown-on-Spey. Laggan community has secured funds for stage one design, and Grantown has stage two funding for active travel design in the village.</p>

	<p>Active travel is a significant part of the Heritage Horizons Lottery Bid and will support the delivery of active travel in many more communities. Sustrans are supporting a 3 year active travel post in the National Park to take forward this work.</p> <p>16 Health Walk groups within the National Park are slowly starting to re-open Health Walks as we come out of Lockdown</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and deliver volunteering programme and specifically Volunteer Rangers 	<p>38 Volunteer Rangers have now been trained and are supporting the work of partners cross CNP as part of our ongoing project supported by Cairngorms LEADER. After being 'on hold' due to Covid the volunteers started to return to the role in May 2021. A further 9 volunteers are being trained in Spring 2022.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Create a 'Park for All' by encouraging people from all backgrounds to come and recreate, learn in or visit the National Park</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support and promote the John Muir Award and Junior Ranger programme 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Inclusive Cairngorms and partners to reduce barriers and encourage participation. 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>CNPA Equality Advisory Panel meets monthly since its inception in October 2021 and has received input to a range of CNPA programmes and is engaged in supporting the development of Equality Outcomes for the next 3 years. The CNPA supported Backbone Symposium event in June 2021 with 90 participants aimed at improving representation of BAME groups within the sector. In October some 130 engaged with outdoor activity intro event at Glenmore. Further events are being planned for 2022. Backbone are being supported to work with some 100 Syrian refugees based in and around Inverness encouraging them to visit and enjoy the National Park while learning how to repeat and share these experience with others but this work is now on hold with COVID19.</p>

Rural Development

Priority 1 - Support delivery of housing for local needs through an efficient and effective planning service

<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Local Development Plan 2020 	<p>Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 adopted by CNPA Board on 26 March 2021 and is now used to determine all planning applications in the National Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community-led housing in the National Park 	<p>5 communities are actively looking to develop community led housing projects.</p> <p>Boat of Garten – Planning permission in Principle was granted by the CNPA in 2021 for 2 affordable units through the Communities Housing Trust.</p> <p>Tomintoul – Following planning approval in May 2021, the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT) were able to secure the required funding to commence construction. Construction commenced in summer 2021 with the buildings now watertight. Expected to be complete and ready for occupancy in 2022.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge – A community working group started a project to deliver self-build house plots. The project is now being investigated in detail by the Communities Housing Trust and Seafield Estate.</p> <p>Braemar – Community took ownership of the site in 2021. Planning application to build 15 affordable houses for rent, was submitted in Sep 21 and called in by CNPA. There have been some road and drainage issues which have delayed its presentation to committee.</p> <p>Laggan – Community now looking to expand their community owned housing stock and have employed CHT to investigate potential for new units in the village</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Support communities, specifically focussing on the most fragile, to deliver their agendas for change</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude Tomintoul/Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, develop new focus area in 	<p>The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership project completed in February 2021, with the final report submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2021. The legacy projects are now underway.</p> <p>The Badenoch Great Place Project concluded in September 2021 with another hugely successful Badenoch Heritage</p>

<p>Badenoch and help deliver Great Place Scheme</p>	<p>Festival plus a closing Conference and concert. The website www.badenochstorylands.com has a final report of the project together with information and resources on the culture of the area and information collated as part of the project.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community organisations to deliver projects that help deliver NPPP 	<p>Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey (VABS) - Have continued to be at the forefront of the community recovery from COVID in Badenoch and Strathspey, supported by the CNPA's Rural Development and Communities Manager. They secured and administered over £100k of COVID support funding for area and provided significant support to a myriad of community-led groups and organisations. They are now refocusing on their core work of supporting a huge range of community groups with governance, finance and project support whilst also being a key partner in the Badenoch Great Places Project, sitting on the Board, Team and employing the Project Officer. VABS now instigating a programme to restart Community Action Planning which has been in abeyance since 2019, starting with Carrbridge in March.</p> <p>Marr Area Partnership (MAP) – Has continued to provide a vital COVID community support network on Deeside working closely with Aberdeenshire council to meet local needs including managing an Aberdeenshire Council support fund for the Marr area communities. Aberdeenshire council is withdrawing its (substantial) funding to all its area partnerships over 3 years. MAP is also dealing with the challenges of 100% turnover of staff twice in 3 years.</p> <p>Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust – Having been forced to close both its income generating businesses (hostel and Discovery Centre) in 2020, both were reopened in summer 2021 with reduced turnover. With Green Recovery Fund support they are creating a new Dark Skies exhibition to enhance offering at the Discovery Centre. They are hoping that their 12 affordable homes will be ready for occupation early this summer (8 for rent, 4 to sell). Having secured external funding they have also undertaken a feasibility study into developing a camping, campervan site.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully conclude LEADER programme and consider future funding for Community Led Local Development 	<p>The 2014 – 2021 LEADER Programme has been successfully concluded, with all projects completing in full with the exception of the inability to secure delivery of an electric minibus as part of the sustainable transport project. Monitoring and evaluation data is still being drawn together, with initial analysis showing all targets have secured a good level of activity against plans, with many targets exceeded.</p> <p>The first two projects trialling new approaches to Community Led Local Development (CLLD) have been implemented</p>

	over 2021, including a Youth Local Action Group working as a sub-group of the Cairngorms Trust and a fund for community led “Green Change” projects. The Trust and Authority or engaged in a number of working groups considering the future structure of CLLD funding in Scotland.
Priority 3 - Work closely with the business community and partners to support a sustainable Park economy	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and help deliver Economic Strategy for the Park with partners 	The CNPA approved Economic Action Plan for the National Park in December 2019 and approved a Green Recovery Plan for the National Park in response to the impacts of COVID19 on the economy in June 2020. The projects funded by the CNPA’s Green Recovery Fund of 2021 are now being delivered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure impacts of A9 dualling are understood and addressed where appropriate by the Park Authority 	Transport Scotland has now published its preferred route for the project to deliver an alternative non-motorised user route to link Aviemore and Carrbridge. A planning application for the route will be made in early 2022.

Corporate Services	
Priority 1 - Implement the Organisational Development Strategy and embed the organisational and cultural improvements to make the CNPA the best small public body in Scotland	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement, review and refresh Organisational Development Strategy as part of continual improvement work. 	<p>Staff completed the Best Companies Staff Engagement survey in October 2021. The Communications update below sets out the preliminary published results of that exercise and those are not repeated here, while we welcome the positive overall feedback received from our staff group. We are currently in the process of analysing the results, and identifying the key highlights (areas in which we are doing well and would seek to retain); and shadows (areas we are not doing as well, and would seek to change). An action plan will be developed in this regard, and this will inform the next phase of the Organisational Development Strategy – ODS4.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of enhancing our organisational approach to equalities, which will feed in to the overarching ODS4.</p> <p>With regards IT, we are in the process of implementing SWAN (Scottish Wide Area Network), and moving to Microsoft Teams. We have enhanced our remote capabilities to support the organisational move towards the hybrid</p>

	<p>working approach.</p> <p>As we emerge out of the Covid-response Business Continuity Plan and move to a more agile working environment, we will seek to evaluate how this approach is working at 3, 6 and 9 month intervals.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support effective staff consultation processes 	<p>We have quarterly Staff Consultative Forum meetings, and have recently invited staff to join the Forum. 3 existing members have returned for a second term, and two new members have joined the SCF.</p> <p>Key areas for consultation over the last 6 months have included the ways of working (office configuration and move to a hybrid working approach), as well as questions to ask staff for consideration around the Scottish Government’s Finance Pay Policy proposals that organisations consider moving to a 35 hour week. These conversations will be ongoing over the coming year as this is very much the start of considerations in this regard, and is currently being supported both through a staff survey and staff drop-in sessions</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure that the office extension, existing accommodation and ICT facilities are ‘fit for purpose’ and help to deliver the ODS</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete extension project 	<p>Extension completed on budget in August 2018, and staff have now settled well in the building. Rental for the extension has now commenced on basis of expected values.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement GIS Strategy 	<p>This work will not complete by the end of the Corporate Plan period, with delays to work during COVID restrictions. Plans are in place to take this strand of work forward in 2022/23 in partnership with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NPA.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement cyber security framework and wider IT development 	<p>Significant progress has been made over the last 18 months in this area of our work. As noted under the OD Strategy commentary, the current focus is on implementing new, robust, secure networks and taking services and records management into cloud based provision. This will not complete fully by 31 March and will continue implementation into the forward year.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Deliver ongoing service improvement, including appropriate shared service development and operation, to the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver corporate support to Scottish Land Commission (SLC), and charitable and community 	<p>The authority has agreed to SLC’s request to extent the shared service arrangements provided by Cairngorms NPA for a further two years. We continue to support their pay remit submissions and wider organisational development; staff consultation and HR advisory requirements.</p> <p>The Authority continues to play a role supporting a wide range of charitable and community organisations formally,</p>

organisations.	through membership of Boards, Committees and groups, and informally through provision of advice and grant support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accommodation and facilities support to NPPP delivery partners 	<p>During the lockdown period of the pandemic, the Authority deployed pool cars and other facilities in support of community responses to the pandemic.</p> <p>In planning around the reopening of our offices, we are conscious that many organisations are rethinking their staff deployment and office needs, as are we. We will be involved in discussions with the aim of facilitating partners and their staff continuing to play their priority roles in NPPP delivery, making flexible use of the Authority's facilities where possible.</p>

Priority 4 - Promote and support the highest standards of governance and management, including equalities actions, within the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement effective and efficient management and control systems. 	Our internal and external audit work continues to demonstrate our management and control systems are generally effective and efficient, while highlighting a number of typically low and moderate risk level recommendations for further improvement which the staff group are working to implement. Our areas of control have changed significantly over the corporate plan period, with significant externally funded programmes of activity now under management and new areas of direct staff delivery. Management and Audit and Risk Committee continue to direct internal audit work into supporting review of the highest risk areas of management and internal control.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Greening Strategy and deliver Youth Development Strategy 	<p>The Greening Group continues to meet as part of the broader Climate Change Programme Board, which focusses on both external and internal greening challenges.</p> <p>The Authority recently signed up as a Young Person's Guarantee organisation, which aligns with our Youth Development Strategy. Our IT Apprentice continues with his SVG Level 6 in IT; and in addition we have just appointed two Graduate Trainee Accountants to support the work of the finance team. We also supported an internship within the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project team. The 4 x Kickstart Trainee rangers completed their placements, with one successfully applying for one of the Seasonal Rangers posts in the 2021 season, following an unexpected vacancy. For 2022, we are seeking to support 2 more Trainee Rangers.</p>

Communications

Priority 1 - Deliver the Communication and Engagement Strategy and increase awareness, engagement and involvement with the Park

Key Work Areas	Update
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Communications & Social Media 	<p>In 2021, we reached 351,820 website sessions, a 7% increase on the 2020 figure but short of our 400k target. On social media we reached 72,300 followers across 3 Facebook pages, 1 Instagram account, 1 LinkedIn account and 5 Twitter accounts. This was an increase of 50% on the previous year. This growth can be attributed to focusing on building our Instagram and LinkedIn audiences, including reaching our end of year goal of 10,000 followers on Instagram.</p> <p>Due to major changes to the provision of analytics data from all social media channels access to audience insights has been limited, therefore we are undergoing a review of how best to analyse end of year data for each platform. One impact of this is that our reach data is limited – based on what we can access for Facebook and Twitter, this figure stands at 2.54m, but the true figure is likely to be much higher (Cairngorms News, for instance, accounted for 2.45m on Twitter alone).</p> <p>A full audit of our website was conducted in November by accessibility experts DAC (Digital Accessibility Centre). This included automated testing in line with best practice guidance (WCAG 2.1), along with an expert manual compliance audit and testing by users with a range of disabilities. The audit was complementary about a number of elements of the site; however, specific issues were flagged around third-party plugins to the site (mapping, forms etc) which do not meet the latest accessibility guidelines, pdf downloads not always being screen-reader accessible, and images needing easier to understand alternative text. We will be working through these findings with our web developers over the coming months.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns: Cairngorms Nature, Active Cairngorms & ‘Make it Yours’ 	<p>Cairngorms Nature: The Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend ‘At Home’ event ran in May and, as expected, it was a different beast entirely from the 2020 lockdown ‘10 Days’ event. Concerned that ‘digital fatigue’ may have set in we tried a new approach to engage families with the launch of CN Explorers. This was a great success, with 200 families signed up for the activity packs to engage over the weekend and 145 sign-ups for a new Explorers Club E-Zine, designed to deepen engagement throughout the rest of the year. The level of response was hugely encouraging and gives us something to build on in 2022 as we move back to a physical festival.</p> <p>Over the BIG Weekend the website received 1,622 page views from 600 users. Two events required booking and we saw 50 attending the wildcat webinar and 200 at the Scottish Environment LINK webinar. One of the areas that was markedly down was the Children’s Art competition, with around 160 entries as opposed to the usual 200-300. We suspect this was impacted by schools coming out of lockdown and being busy with other things, but will keep an eye on</p>

numbers in 2022.

We already have around 60 events being developed for the 2022 programme and are hoping the bulk of activity will be outside in person, although some of the offering will continue to be online to reach those people who are unable to attend physically. Two flagship events are being planned – a panel-based webinar which will expand on the People/Nature theme of NPPP4 and a live traditional music event. We have offered the ‘community hub’ to Grantown on Spey this year and hope to run an event in Anagach Woods to round off the weekend. A new BIG Weekend website is also being developed.

Active Cairngorms: September saw our managing for visitor’s activity slow down and attention turning to reviewing the success of the previous six months. On a national basis, the #RespectProtectEnjoy campaign reached 205m people on social media between March and September, the campaign video was viewed 584k times, and at least 83% of Scottish adults saw some form of campaign activity at least once (57% saw it 3+ times). In total, CNPA activity reached 950k people across our social media channels, and our PR activity was featured across the BBC, STV, P&J, Courier, Scotsman and various local titles. A particular success was focusing on the work of rangers across the Park, with lots of attention on the Kickstart Ranger posts, interviews with key staff and consistent SOAC messaging. We will be looking to ramp up responsible visitor messaging over the coming months, particularly around dogs on leads from mid-February.

As we found improved success running visitor management messages via our Cairngorms News channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, we continued to use these accounts over Active Cairngorms for the duration of 2021. However, with the introduction of the CNP Rangers account on Twitter this has provided us an alternative avenue to promote visitor management messages through the Rangers to complement our corporate messaging.

‘Make it Yours’ (MIY): In the absence of the usual in-person MIY sessions with visitor-facing staff across the Park, we have developed a video training resource, designed to provide bitesize information for businesses and their employees. As restrictions ease we plan to offer the face-to-face sessions again.

At the start of the Covid-19 lockdown the CNPA set up a weekly Cairngorms Tourism Emergency Response Group, chaired by Janet Hunter. Membership consists of CNPA, Cairngorms Business Partnership, VisitAberdeenshire,

	<p>MoraySpeyside, VisitScotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. In August the title of the group changed to the Cairngorms Tourism Recovery Group and meetings became less frequent. The future of this group will be discussed at the next meeting of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership on 2nd February.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver stakeholder engagement & events 	<p>Throughout the period our comms activity continued to be coordinated via a central Communications Grid, with a variety of themes covering a range of key strategic priorities for the organisation. In June we focused on Cairngorms Nature and the BIG Weekend, as well as launching a new Gaelic Toolkit to support businesses in integrating Gaelic into their visitor offer. In July and August we continued to provide updates on managing for visitors, announced the recipients of the Green Recovery Fund, and drew together stories of our rural workforce, including land-based workers, capercaillie keepers, local farmers and conservation project officers.</p> <p>We launched the informal phase of the NPPP4 consultation in September and ran a Gaelic takeover of our social media channels to great success. And in October we ran the rescheduled Wee Walks Week – which included the launch of our newly digitised Community Paths and Routes maps. November and December focused on driving formal consultation responses, alongside promotion of COP26 and associated climate change and conservation themes. We also supported the promotion of the Youth LAG and Cairngorms Trust project fund.</p> <p>Media activity is planned this February around the Young Person’s Guarantee, a commitment to bring together employers, partners and young people to connect every 16 to 24 year old in Scotland to a job, training, learning or volunteering opportunity.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Communications: publications, consultations, media & issues management, Gaelic Language Plan 	<p>COP26 took place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November and CNPA staff were present for a variety of events across the two weeks. Park staff engaged with hundreds of delegates as part of an Environment and Economies Leaders’ Group stand, which was located right outside the main plenary rooms (where the main discussions were taking place). The Chief Executive was invited to deliver a speech on the impacts of climate change on snow levels in the Park at the Cryosphere Pavilion, and also took part in a panel event with other UK National Parks, showcasing our Net Zero with Nature work with Palladium. The Director of Planning and Rural Development participated in a VisitScotland event about Climate Change and Tourism, and Janet Hunter attended their ‘Destination Net Zero’ event in her role as Chair</p>

of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership. CNPA signed up to the Glasgow Declaration (an offshoot of the Tourism Declares initiative) as part of these activities.

The formal phase of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan consultation ran from Thursday 23 September to Friday 17 December, with the draft plan made available via a dedicated Commonplace website, long-format pdf, print and screen reader-friendly versions. We are currently collating and reading through all responses; however, we estimate that around 1,400 people responded to the consultation, nearly five times the number five years ago. Over 50% of respondents came from within the Park boundary.

Part of the reason behind the significant uptick in response was the variety of on and offline promotion that has taken place over the past few months. Dedicated press releases and videos were created, including a partnership with the Press and Journal and Inverness Courier, and paid advertising in the Deeside and Donside Piper, Strathspey Herald and the Dundee Courier. This was accompanied by a paid social media advertising campaign, which reached over 250k people including local residents, workers and visitors to the Park.

A toolkit with resources for e-newsletters, social media and print publications was circulated to hundreds of partner organisations, posters and flyers were distributed to communities and businesses across the Park, and a leaflet was sent to every household in the area, explaining how people could get involved. Face to face sessions were delivered with specific community groups, schools, farmers and other land managers, local businesses and so on, with a series of 1:1 interviews also taking place with harder to reach audiences (including ethnic minority groups and audiences with accessibility needs). Over 500 people and over 50 organisations were engaged through these activities over the consultation period, albeit numbers were inevitably impacted by the lingering effects of Covid-19.

Elsewhere, Bòrd na Gàidhlig agreed to extend our current Gaelic Language Plan by a further year, meaning that this will now cover the standard five-year term rather than four. The extension means we can bring the plan in line with the creation of our corporate plan, and fits with the delivery of the new National Gaelic Language Plan in 2023. Further details on our new plan will be brought to the board in the autumn.

Priority 2 - Ensure high quality internal communications that help to deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan	
Key Work Areas	Update

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisational Development Strategy	<p>We are in the process of developing ODS4, following the 2021/22 Best Companies Survey. We've been advised that we have achieved a position on the Best Companies to Work For first Quarterly League Table reveal of 2022 in 3 categories: - Mid-sized; Not for Profit Body and Scotland.</p> <p>The emerging ODS4 will be informed by these results, as well as the evaluations of the new agile working environment, which includes staff working hybrid hours, and also moving away from all staff having their own dedicated spaces to a hot-desking environment.</p> <p>Our approach to equalities as well as our enhanced IT infrastructure will also feed in to the evolving ODS4 going forward.</p> <p>Staff communications around this involves the continuation of the two-weekly newsletter, as well as drop-in session to support larger, organisation wide consultations.</p> <p>The CEO and Head of Organisational Development meet quarterly with staff who joined the organisation within the previous quarter to set out corporate plans and processes.</p> <p>The organisation grew significantly during the pandemic, with approx. 30 staff joining us remotely. As we start emerging from the pandemic and moving back to more office based work, we will seek to develop more opportunities to bring all staff together in innovative and meaningful ways.</p>
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CORPORATE PLAN REPORTING

Conservation and Land Management	
Priority I – Support landscape-scale conservation, specifically the expansion of native and montane woodland, peatland restoration, natural flood management and Capercaillie management	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver peatland restoration and woodland expansion targets 	<p>In 2021/22 the CNPA Peatland Action programme is currently on track to deliver around 550ha of peatland restoration management across 10 sites on 7 estates by March 2022. The target is 557ha. Precise measurements are not yet available but the team is confident that the work done to date will be very close to target. The current mild winter has enabled peatland restoration to continue throughout much of January. If mild conditions continue into February then around 700ha of peatland restoration management could be achieved.</p> <p>A new entrant scheme developed on Tulchan Estate has been successful in that four new contractors have expressed interest in peatland restoration and now have the skills to work on sites where ditch blocking is the main restoration technique. There is still a shortage of contractors who can work on complex erosion sites.</p> <p>The potential programme for 2022/23 could exceed 1000ha across 18 sites on 16 estates. ScotGov have allocated sufficient capital spend to achieve this but negotiations are ongoing re the resource allocation which is largely staff costs.</p> <p>An internal audit of all controls and processes involved in the management of the Peatland Action fund will be carried out in February. This will aid management of risks associated with the Peatland Action fund and will provide advice on how best to scale up the programme in future years.</p> <p>Since the last update, 1553.5 ha of woodland creation has been approved by Scottish Forestry in the National Park. This is spread across the Highland, Aberdeenshire and Perth & Kinross local authority areas. The bulk of the hectareage is accounted for by an approved natural regeneration scheme of 1425 ha, which will be delivered by Wildland Ltd. A proposed native woodland planting scheme of 426 ha at Kinrara is currently out for consultation by Scottish Forestry.</p>

	<p>Further woodland expansion continues to progress in key areas through managing deer populations for natural regeneration. Catalysed by the increasingly buoyant carbon market, there are various woodland planting schemes currently shaping up which we have been made aware of, and these would amount to several thousand hectares of new woodland to be delivered within the next few years. As well as substantially increasing the amount of woodland cover (across all five local authority areas within the park), this and other new afforestation is likely to have significant, positive effects for forest habitat connectivity across the park, potentially benefitting a wide range of woodland species, including capercaillie.</p> <p>Uptake of the Woodland Challenge Fund in its second year (2020/21) was significantly greater than in the first year, when there were just two successful applications. In Year 2 there were seven successful applications for projects that varied in scale from 1.4 ha to 135 ha, and in grant award from £650 to £3000. In total the seven funded projects were awarded £13,688.80 and represent the creation of roughly 350 ha of new native woodland within the Cairngorms National Park. In Year 3 (2021/22), no applications have yet been received, but several are anticipated before the end of the financial year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Cairngorms Nature Strategy with wider partnership 	<p>The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan (2019 – 2024) is delivered by a wide range of partners including NGOs, land managers, academic and public sector organisations. Progress towards the three main aims of landscape-scale conservation, action for priority species and involving people is overseen by the Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group.</p> <p><u>Landscape scale conservation</u></p> <p>Mapping of aspen and riparian woodland cover and connectivity across the Park is almost complete. Work with Catchment Management Partnerships, farmers and land managers, with investment via the Nature Restoration Fund, continues to augment the existing resource through planting. Mapping of species grassland extent and condition will be completed in summer 2022 and mob grazing pilots are underway to demonstrate biodiversity gain as part of productive systems. River restoration led by Catchment Management Partnerships continues to focus on re-naturalisation through connecting rivers with floodplains and introducing woody debris. A programme of pond restoration and creation is being led by British Dragonfly Society.</p> <p><u>Priority species</u></p> <p>Species conservation continues to be driven forwards primarily through the work of dedicated projects, namely Rare</p>

	<p>Invertebrates in the Cairngorms, Cairngorms Rare Plants & Wild Connections, Wetlands and Waders Initiatives, Cairngorms Wildcat and Cairngorms Capercaillie projects. CNPA and BTO have produced sensitivity maps identifying key curlew habitat and breeding sites across the Park and CNPA is developing Park-wide Fresh Water Pearl Mussel species reinforcement strategy and a raptor conservation strategy.</p> <p><u>Involving people</u></p> <p>After two years of virtual activity, the flagship nature engagement event in the Park, Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend, is set to welcome back people to the landscapes, wildlife and land management in the Park in May 2022. Approximately 100 events run by land managers, organisations, communities and enthusiasts across the Park will be available for people to find out more about the National Park, how it’s managed and the wildlife it’s famous for.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature partners are also developing engagement pathways to support the journey from new-to-nature to active-and-engaged and specialist audiences through a range of opportunities for getting involved.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Capercaillie Framework 	<p>The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project is now half-way through its 3-year delivery phase. Good progress continues to be made against all five of the project’s Approved Purposes. Highlights include over 2,600 residents, visitors and businesses sharing their views about capercaillie conservation and ways they feel they can help; volunteers donating over 2,200 hours to the project to help deliver community-led action for the bird; and over 7,800 hectares of habitat improved for capercaillie. Minor issues have impacted the delivery of some habitat improvement work, community-led action, evaluation and genetic research, but all work remains on track to complete by the end of the project (July 2023). Full details of the project’s progress can be found on the project website https://www.cairngormscapercaillie.scot</p> <p>In addition to the work of the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project and the ongoing work of many partners, CNPA initiated discussions with key stakeholders at a senior level to investigate the desirability and feasibility of new approaches not already under consideration or being implemented, primarily around the management of protected species, translocation/ reintroduction and creating areas of minimum disturbance. A sub-group of the NatureScot Scientific Advisory Committee will publish its findings in March 2022. The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project Board will consider the implications of the findings and the opportunities for the project to contribute towards any recommendations.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure deer management is focused on delivering public interest priorities specifically the expansion of native woodlands and peatland restoration</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support population modelling and herbivore impact assessments 	<p>Nature Scot plans to count open range deer across the South Deeside and North Angus DMG and the South Grampian DMG before March 2022 if weather permits. This count will be conducted from helicopters and using digital photography. With helicopters and teams in place to count the East Grampians, CNPA will take advantage of this to fund a count across the West Grampian DMG. Up to date count data will give us an ideal starting point for developing Strategic Land Use Plans in partnership with DMGs across the Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with Deer Management Groups (DMGs) to deliver public interest priorities 	<p>The Scottish Government accepted 92 of the 99 recommendations within the Deer Working Group report. These recommendations now need to be implemented in the form of new legislation, new regulation, new incentives and a review of all the non-statutory instruments which influence deer management e.g. Best Practice Guidance. A Programme Board has been established to take forward these various work streams and CNPA is represented on that Board.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Support sustainable moorland management to deliver greater habitat diversity and good management practice</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver with estates the work programme of the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership (ECMP) 	<p>The East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership met on 8th December 2021 and discussed how grouse moor management could become more sustainable. This discussion was linked to forthcoming legislation in terms of grouse moor licensing. The potential role of ECMP as a sounding board for ideas and as a link between the grouse sector and Government was discussed. Key elements of sustainability were identified. These included bag size, market adjustment, employment, muirburn and wider habitat management.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group 	<p>The Cairngorms Uplands Advisory Group (CUAG) met on 2nd December and discussed new forestry grant scheme applying to deer management on open range. This grant would support the management required to achieve unfenced natural regeneration. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service attended CUAG and discussed the use of prescribed burning to reduce the risk of wildfires.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate raptor persecution and develop 	<p>Awaiting latest raptor persecution figures from RSPB and Police Scotland. BTO raptor tracker tag development still ongoing, in the meantime three alternative tags fitted to golden eagles in the</p>

wildlife tourism project around raptors	<p>Park in 2021 (one on Deeside two in Strathspey). The Partnership for Action against Wildlife crime (PAW) group, including Police Scotland, met on 29th Sept to discuss wildlife crime procedures in relation to potential raptor persecution events in the National Park. CNPA is linked in with NE Scotland golden eagle monitoring project to ensure overview and collaboration.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group is considering the actions required to further address this issue and take forward raptor conservation in CNP. This includes investigating the potential for wildlife tourism.</p>
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Visitor Experience

Priority I - Continue to ensure visitor infrastructure meets the expectations of visitors to the National Park and help deliver a sustainable tourism economy

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish Speyside Way extension, the Mountains and the People Programme and start Deeside Way extension 	<p>Speyside Way Extension – The Speyside Way extension has been constructed and is being well used. The Newtonmore ‘sculpture’ start/finish location was formally opened by Kate Forbes MSP In Aug 2021. Path signage is being installed with further improvements at Tromie and Insh. Grantown and Kincaig communities are seeking funding for improvements in their communities. Cairngorms Business Association and MoraySpeyside have secured funding to promote the route going forward. Formal opening of the route extension is being planned for Spring 2022</p> <p>Deeside Way – Braemar to Invercauld Bridge planning consent has been extended and CNPA and Aberdeenshire Council has agreed to jointly fund OATS to construct the section of new path in Spring 2022.</p> <p>Mountains & People - The 5 year project was completed in Jan 2021, delayed by Covid, but upgrading 51.8 km of mountain path in Cairngorms out of a five year target of 53 km. Further work with Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) is ongoing to agree how we best support the maintenance of these paths and the volunteers that the project trained in path maintenance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Tourism Action Plan and develop and deliver with partners a Visitor Giving scheme 	<p>Tourism Action Plan – Cairngorms Tourism Partnership (CTP) has met several times to monitor delivery of the Action Plan which underpins the Park’s status with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. CNPA led on a mid-term review of the Action Plan, which was considered by CNPA Board in March 2021. We are in discussions with Europarc about extending the current five year arrangement until 2022 so that development of the next Action Plan follows on from approval of the National Park Partnership Plan.</p>

	<p>A Tourism Emergency Response Group has met regularly, along with a Management for Visitors Group to plan and manage for Covid related work.</p> <p>Voluntary Giving – CNPA Board agreed the principles of this work June 2018 & Cairngorms Trust launched the arrangements in May 2019. The Trust is now working with a range of businesses across the Park and a Partnership Group is in place (chaired by Brian Woods with Pete Crane representing CNPA) to advise on development of the scheme and the projects to be funded.</p> <p>Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) - CNPA successfully secured funding for two projects on National Nature Reserves at Glenmore (multiuse tarmac path) and Muir of Dinnet (car parking, toilet upgrade and sewage disposal) with both projects now complete. Aberdeenshire Council has secured funding for improvements to Glenshee public toilets (Summer 2021) and CNPA has bid for Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan funding to develop detailed, approved and costed plans for improving visitor infrastructure at key visitor destinations around the National Park. Expression of Interest are also being invited for CNPA capital funding as part of the visitor infrastructure improvement programme that fits with the approved visitor management plans.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress with delivery of Cairngorm/Glenmore Strategy 	<p>Highland Council and CNPA have funded further roadside improvements from Beach Car Park along Loch Morlich with improvements ongoing into Spring 2022.</p> <p>The Cairngorm Mountain Masterplan is complete and repair work on the funicular railway is underway with opening anticipated for winter 2022/23. Cairngorm Mountain opened the campervan site at Coire Ciste and is planning improvements to visitor interpretation at the mountain.</p> <p>The greater number of visitors using of Glenmore and Cairngorm post COVID19 lockdown indicates the need for partners to review the current Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy and agree a clear partnership action plan going forward.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Increase physical activity in both residents and visitors and support delivery of Scotland’s Natural Health Service</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver Active Cairngorms with Active Aviemore and Health Walks as flagship projects 	<p>Active Aviemore – Highland Council, Hitrans, Sustrans, NHS Highland are developing an active travel link to the new Aviemore Hospital and Transport Scotland are designing a Non-Motorised User (NMU) link from Aviemore to Carrbridge with the preferred route being following ‘old A9’.. The main multi use infrastructure in Aviemore will form part of the Heritage Horizons bid.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge has secured Sustrans support for construction of an NMU link to Grantown-on-Spey. Laggan community has secured funds for stage one design, and Grantown has stage two funding for active travel design in the village.</p>

	<p>Active travel is a significant part of the Heritage Horizons Lottery Bid and will support the delivery of active travel in many more communities. Sustrans are supporting a 3 year active travel post in the National Park to take forward this work.</p> <p>16 Health Walk groups within the National Park are slowly starting to re-open Health Walks as we come out of Lockdown</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and deliver volunteering programme and specifically Volunteer Rangers 	<p>38 Volunteer Rangers have now been trained and are supporting the work of partners cross CNP as part of our ongoing project supported by Cairngorms LEADER. After being 'on hold' due to Covid the volunteers started to return to the role in May 2021. A further 9 volunteers are being trained in Spring 2022.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Create a 'Park for All' by encouraging people from all backgrounds to come and recreate, learn in or visit the National Park</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support and promote the John Muir Award and Junior Ranger programme 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Inclusive Cairngorms and partners to reduce barriers and encourage participation. 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>CNPA Equality Advisory Panel meets monthly since its inception in October 2021 and has received input to a range of CNPA programmes and is engaged in supporting the development of Equality Outcomes for the next 3 years. The CNPA supported Backbone Symposium event in June 2021 with 90 participants aimed at improving representation of BAME groups within the sector. In October some 130 engaged with outdoor activity intro event at Glenmore. Further events are being planned for 2022. Backbone are being supported to work with some 100 Syrian refugees based in and around Inverness encouraging them to visit and enjoy the National Park while learning how to repeat and share these experience with others but this work is now on hold with COVID19.</p>

<p>Rural Development</p>	
<p>Priority 1 - Support delivery of housing for local needs through an efficient and effective planning service</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Local Development Plan 2020 	<p>Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 adopted by CNPA Board on 26 March 2021 and is now used to determine all planning applications in the National Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community-led housing in the National Park 	<p>5 communities are actively looking to develop community led housing projects.</p> <p>Boat of Garten – Planning permission in Principle was granted by the CNPA in 2021 for 2 affordable units through the Communities Housing Trust.</p> <p>Tomintoul – Following planning approval in May 2021, the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT) were able to secure the required funding to commence construction. Construction commenced in summer 2021 with the buildings now watertight. Expected to be complete and ready for occupancy in 2022.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge – A community working group started a project to deliver self-build house plots. The project is now being investigated in detail by the Communities Housing Trust and Seafield Estate.</p> <p>Braemar – Community took ownership of the site in 2021. Planning application to build 15 affordable houses for rent, was submitted in Sep 21 and called in by CNPA. There have been some road and drainage issues which have delayed its presentation to committee.</p> <p>Laggan – Community now looking to expand their community owned housing stock and have employed CHT to investigate potential for new units in the village</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Support communities, specifically focussing on the most fragile, to deliver their agendas for change</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude Tomintoul/Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, develop new focus area in 	<p>The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership project completed in February 2021, with the final report submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2021. The legacy projects are now underway.</p> <p>The Badenoch Great Place Project concluded in September 2021 with another hugely successful Badenoch Heritage</p>

<p>Badenoch and help deliver Great Place Scheme</p>	<p>Festival plus a closing Conference and concert. The website www.badenochstorylands.com has a final report of the project together with information and resources on the culture of the area and information collated as part of the project.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community organisations to deliver projects that help deliver NPPP 	<p>Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey (VABS) - Have continued to be at the forefront of the community recovery from COVID in Badenoch and Strathspey, supported by the CNPA's Rural Development and Communities Manager. They secured and administered over £100k of COVID support funding for area and provided significant support to a myriad of community-led groups and organisations. They are now refocusing on their core work of supporting a huge range of community groups with governance, finance and project support whilst also being a key partner in the Badenoch Great Places Project, sitting on the Board, Team and employing the Project Officer. VABS now instigating a programme to restart Community Action Planning which has been in abeyance since 2019, starting with Carrbridge in March.</p> <p>Marr Area Partnership (MAP) – Has continued to provide a vital COVID community support network on Deeside working closely with Aberdeenshire council to meet local needs including managing an Aberdeenshire Council support fund for the Marr area communities. Aberdeenshire council is withdrawing its (substantial) funding to all its area partnerships over 3 years. MAP is also dealing with the challenges of 100% turnover of staff twice in 3 years.</p> <p>Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust – Having been forced to close both its income generating businesses (hostel and Discovery Centre) in 2020, both were reopened in summer 2021 with reduced turnover. With Green Recovery Fund support they are creating a new Dark Skies exhibition to enhance offering at the Discovery Centre. They are hoping that their 12 affordable homes will be ready for occupation early this summer (8 for rent, 4 to sell). Having secured external funding they have also undertaken a feasibility study into developing a camping, campervan site.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully conclude LEADER programme and consider future funding for Community Led Local Development 	<p>The 2014 – 2021 LEADER Programme has been successfully concluded, with all projects completing in full with the exception of the inability to secure delivery of an electric minibus as part of the sustainable transport project. Monitoring and evaluation data is still being drawn together, with initial analysis showing all targets have secured a good level of activity against plans, with many targets exceeded.</p> <p>The first two projects trialling new approaches to Community Led Local Development (CLLD) have been implemented</p>

	over 2021, including a Youth Local Action Group working as a sub-group of the Cairngorms Trust and a fund for community led “Green Change” projects. The Trust and Authority or engaged in a number of working groups considering the future structure of CLLD funding in Scotland.
Priority 3 - Work closely with the business community and partners to support a sustainable Park economy	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and help deliver Economic Strategy for the Park with partners 	The CNPA approved Economic Action Plan for the National Park in December 2019 and approved a Green Recovery Plan for the National Park in response to the impacts of COVID19 on the economy in June 2020. The projects funded by the CNPA’s Green Recovery Fund of 2021 are now being delivered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure impacts of A9 dualling are understood and addressed where appropriate by the Park Authority 	Transport Scotland has now published its preferred route for the project to deliver an alternative non-motorised user route to link Aviemore and Carrbridge. A planning application for the route will be made in early 2022.

Corporate Services	
Priority 1 - Implement the Organisational Development Strategy and embed the organisational and cultural improvements to make the CNPA the best small public body in Scotland	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement, review and refresh Organisational Development Strategy as part of continual improvement work. 	<p>Staff completed the Best Companies Staff Engagement survey in October 2021. The Communications update below sets out the preliminary published results of that exercise and those are not repeated here, while we welcome the positive overall feedback received from our staff group. We are currently in the process of analysing the results, and identifying the key highlights (areas in which we are doing well and would seek to retain); and shadows (areas we are not doing as well, and would seek to change). An action plan will be developed in this regard, and this will inform the next phase of the Organisational Development Strategy – ODS4.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of enhancing our organisational approach to equalities, which will feed in to the overarching ODS4.</p> <p>With regards IT, we are in the process of implementing SWAN (Scottish Wide Area Network), and moving to Microsoft Teams. We have enhanced our remote capabilities to support the organisational move towards the hybrid</p>

	<p>working approach.</p> <p>As we emerge out of the Covid-response Business Continuity Plan and move to a more agile working environment, we will seek to evaluate how this approach is working at 3, 6 and 9 month intervals.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support effective staff consultation processes 	<p>We have quarterly Staff Consultative Forum meetings, and have recently invited staff to join the Forum. 3 existing members have returned for a second term, and two new members have joined the SCF.</p> <p>Key areas for consultation over the last 6 months have included the ways of working (office configuration and move to a hybrid working approach), as well as questions to ask staff for consideration around the Scottish Government’s Finance Pay Policy proposals that organisations consider moving to a 35 hour week. These conversations will be ongoing over the coming year as this is very much the start of considerations in this regard, and is currently being supported both through a staff survey and staff drop-in sessions</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure that the office extension, existing accommodation and ICT facilities are ‘fit for purpose’ and help to deliver the ODS</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete extension project 	<p>Extension completed on budget in August 2018, and staff have now settled well in the building. Rental for the extension has now commenced on basis of expected values.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement GIS Strategy 	<p>This work will not complete by the end of the Corporate Plan period, with delays to work during COVID restrictions. Plans are in place to take this strand of work forward in 2022/23 in partnership with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NPA.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement cyber security framework and wider IT development 	<p>Significant progress has been made over the last 18 months in this area of our work. As noted under the OD Strategy commentary, the current focus is on implementing new, robust, secure networks and taking services and records management into cloud based provision. This will not complete fully by 31 March and will continue implementation into the forward year.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Deliver ongoing service improvement, including appropriate shared service development and operation, to the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver corporate support to Scottish Land Commission (SLC), and charitable and community 	<p>The authority has agreed to SLC’s request to extent the shared service arrangements provided by Cairngorms NPA for a further two years. We continue to support their pay remit submissions and wider organisational development; staff consultation and HR advisory requirements.</p> <p>The Authority continues to play a role supporting a wide range of charitable and community organisations formally,</p>

organisations.	through membership of Boards, Committees and groups, and informally through provision of advice and grant support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accommodation and facilities support to NPPP delivery partners 	<p>During the lockdown period of the pandemic, the Authority deployed pool cars and other facilities in support of community responses to the pandemic.</p> <p>In planning around the reopening of our offices, we are conscious that many organisations are rethinking their staff deployment and office needs, as are we. We will be involved in discussions with the aim of facilitating partners and their staff continuing to play their priority roles in NPPP delivery, making flexible use of the Authority's facilities where possible.</p>

Priority 4 - Promote and support the highest standards of governance and management, including equalities actions, within the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement effective and efficient management and control systems. 	Our internal and external audit work continues to demonstrate our management and control systems are generally effective and efficient, while highlighting a number of typically low and moderate risk level recommendations for further improvement which the staff group are working to implement. Our areas of control have changed significantly over the corporate plan period, with significant externally funded programmes of activity now under management and new areas of direct staff delivery. Management and Audit and Risk Committee continue to direct internal audit work into supporting review of the highest risk areas of management and internal control.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Greening Strategy and deliver Youth Development Strategy 	<p>The Greening Group continues to meet as part of the broader Climate Change Programme Board, which focusses on both external and internal greening challenges.</p> <p>The Authority recently signed up as a Young Person's Guarantee organisation, which aligns with our Youth Development Strategy. Our IT Apprentice continues with his SVG Level 6 in IT; and in addition we have just appointed two Graduate Trainee Accountants to support the work of the finance team. We also supported an internship within the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project team. The 4 x Kickstart Trainee rangers completed their placements, with one successfully applying for one of the Seasonal Rangers posts in the 2021 season, following an unexpected vacancy. For 2022, we are seeking to support 2 more Trainee Rangers.</p>

Communications

Priority 1 - Deliver the Communication and Engagement Strategy and increase awareness, engagement and involvement with the Park

Key Work Areas	Update
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Communications & Social Media 	<p>In 2021, we reached 351,820 website sessions, a 7% increase on the 2020 figure but short of our 400k target. On social media we reached 72,300 followers across 3 Facebook pages, 1 Instagram account, 1 LinkedIn account and 5 Twitter accounts. This was an increase of 50% on the previous year. This growth can be attributed to focusing on building our Instagram and LinkedIn audiences, including reaching our end of year goal of 10,000 followers on Instagram.</p> <p>Due to major changes to the provision of analytics data from all social media channels access to audience insights has been limited, therefore we are undergoing a review of how best to analyse end of year data for each platform. One impact of this is that our reach data is limited – based on what we can access for Facebook and Twitter, this figure stands at 2.54m, but the true figure is likely to be much higher (Cairngorms News, for instance, accounted for 2.45m on Twitter alone).</p> <p>A full audit of our website was conducted in November by accessibility experts DAC (Digital Accessibility Centre). This included automated testing in line with best practice guidance (WCAG 2.1), along with an expert manual compliance audit and testing by users with a range of disabilities. The audit was complementary about a number of elements of the site; however, specific issues were flagged around third-party plugins to the site (mapping, forms etc) which do not meet the latest accessibility guidelines, pdf downloads not always being screen-reader accessible, and images needing easier to understand alternative text. We will be working through these findings with our web developers over the coming months.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns: Cairngorms Nature, Active Cairngorms & ‘Make it Yours’ 	<p>Cairngorms Nature: The Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend ‘At Home’ event ran in May and, as expected, it was a different beast entirely from the 2020 lockdown ‘10 Days’ event. Concerned that ‘digital fatigue’ may have set in we tried a new approach to engage families with the launch of CN Explorers. This was a great success, with 200 families signed up for the activity packs to engage over the weekend and 145 sign-ups for a new Explorers Club E-Zine, designed to deepen engagement throughout the rest of the year. The level of response was hugely encouraging and gives us something to build on in 2022 as we move back to a physical festival.</p> <p>Over the BIG Weekend the website received 1,622 page views from 600 users. Two events required booking and we saw 50 attending the wildcat webinar and 200 at the Scottish Environment LINK webinar. One of the areas that was markedly down was the Children’s Art competition, with around 160 entries as opposed to the usual 200-300. We suspect this was impacted by schools coming out of lockdown and being busy with other things, but will keep an eye on</p>

numbers in 2022.

We already have around 60 events being developed for the 2022 programme and are hoping the bulk of activity will be outside in person, although some of the offering will continue to be online to reach those people who are unable to attend physically. Two flagship events are being planned – a panel-based webinar which will expand on the People/Nature theme of NPPP4 and a live traditional music event. We have offered the ‘community hub’ to Grantown on Spey this year and hope to run an event in Anagach Woods to round off the weekend. A new BIG Weekend website is also being developed.

Active Cairngorms: September saw our managing for visitor’s activity slow down and attention turning to reviewing the success of the previous six months. On a national basis, the #RespectProtectEnjoy campaign reached 205m people on social media between March and September, the campaign video was viewed 584k times, and at least 83% of Scottish adults saw some form of campaign activity at least once (57% saw it 3+ times). In total, CNPA activity reached 950k people across our social media channels, and our PR activity was featured across the BBC, STV, P&J, Courier, Scotsman and various local titles. A particular success was focusing on the work of rangers across the Park, with lots of attention on the Kickstart Ranger posts, interviews with key staff and consistent SOAC messaging. We will be looking to ramp up responsible visitor messaging over the coming months, particularly around dogs on leads from mid-February.

As we found improved success running visitor management messages via our Cairngorms News channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, we continued to use these accounts over Active Cairngorms for the duration of 2021. However, with the introduction of the CNP Rangers account on Twitter this has provided us an alternative avenue to promote visitor management messages through the Rangers to complement our corporate messaging.

‘Make it Yours’ (MIY): In the absence of the usual in-person MIY sessions with visitor-facing staff across the Park, we have developed a video training resource, designed to provide bitesize information for businesses and their employees. As restrictions ease we plan to offer the face-to-face sessions again.

At the start of the Covid-19 lockdown the CNPA set up a weekly Cairngorms Tourism Emergency Response Group, chaired by Janet Hunter. Membership consists of CNPA, Cairngorms Business Partnership, VisitAberdeenshire,

	<p>MoraySpeyside, VisitScotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. In August the title of the group changed to the Cairngorms Tourism Recovery Group and meetings became less frequent. The future of this group will be discussed at the next meeting of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership on 2nd February.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver stakeholder engagement & events 	<p>Throughout the period our comms activity continued to be coordinated via a central Communications Grid, with a variety of themes covering a range of key strategic priorities for the organisation. In June we focused on Cairngorms Nature and the BIG Weekend, as well as launching a new Gaelic Toolkit to support businesses in integrating Gaelic into their visitor offer. In July and August we continued to provide updates on managing for visitors, announced the recipients of the Green Recovery Fund, and drew together stories of our rural workforce, including land-based workers, capercaillie keepers, local farmers and conservation project officers.</p> <p>We launched the informal phase of the NPPP4 consultation in September and ran a Gaelic takeover of our social media channels to great success. And in October we ran the rescheduled Wee Walks Week – which included the launch of our newly digitised Community Paths and Routes maps. November and December focused on driving formal consultation responses, alongside promotion of COP26 and associated climate change and conservation themes. We also supported the promotion of the Youth LAG and Cairngorms Trust project fund.</p> <p>Media activity is planned this February around the Young Person’s Guarantee, a commitment to bring together employers, partners and young people to connect every 16 to 24 year old in Scotland to a job, training, learning or volunteering opportunity.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Communications: publications, consultations, media & issues management, Gaelic Language Plan 	<p>COP26 took place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November and CNPA staff were present for a variety of events across the two weeks. Park staff engaged with hundreds of delegates as part of an Environment and Economies Leaders’ Group stand, which was located right outside the main plenary rooms (where the main discussions were taking place). The Chief Executive was invited to deliver a speech on the impacts of climate change on snow levels in the Park at the Cryosphere Pavilion, and also took part in a panel event with other UK National Parks, showcasing our Net Zero with Nature work with Palladium. The Director of Planning and Rural Development participated in a VisitScotland event about Climate Change and Tourism, and Janet Hunter attended their ‘Destination Net Zero’ event in her role as Chair</p>

of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership. CNPA signed up to the Glasgow Declaration (an offshoot of the Tourism Declares initiative) as part of these activities.

The formal phase of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan consultation ran from Thursday 23 September to Friday 17 December, with the draft plan made available via a dedicated Commonplace website, long-format pdf, print and screen reader-friendly versions. We are currently collating and reading through all responses; however, we estimate that around 1,400 people responded to the consultation, nearly five times the number five years ago. Over 50% of respondents came from within the Park boundary.

Part of the reason behind the significant uptick in response was the variety of on and offline promotion that has taken place over the past few months. Dedicated press releases and videos were created, including a partnership with the Press and Journal and Inverness Courier, and paid advertising in the Deeside and Donside Piper, Strathspey Herald and the Dundee Courier. This was accompanied by a paid social media advertising campaign, which reached over 250k people including local residents, workers and visitors to the Park.

A toolkit with resources for e-newsletters, social media and print publications was circulated to hundreds of partner organisations, posters and flyers were distributed to communities and businesses across the Park, and a leaflet was sent to every household in the area, explaining how people could get involved. Face to face sessions were delivered with specific community groups, schools, farmers and other land managers, local businesses and so on, with a series of 1:1 interviews also taking place with harder to reach audiences (including ethnic minority groups and audiences with accessibility needs). Over 500 people and over 50 organisations were engaged through these activities over the consultation period, albeit numbers were inevitably impacted by the lingering effects of Covid-19.

Elsewhere, Bòrd na Gàidhlig agreed to extend our current Gaelic Language Plan by a further year, meaning that this will now cover the standard five-year term rather than four. The extension means we can bring the plan in line with the creation of our corporate plan, and fits with the delivery of the new National Gaelic Language Plan in 2023. Further details on our new plan will be brought to the board in the autumn.

Priority 2 - Ensure high quality internal communications that help to deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan	
Key Work Areas	Update

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisational Development Strategy	<p>We are in the process of developing ODS4, following the 2021/22 Best Companies Survey. We've been advised that we have achieved a position on the Best Companies to Work For first Quarterly League Table reveal of 2022 in 3 categories: - Mid-sized; Not for Profit Body and Scotland.</p> <p>The emerging ODS4 will be informed by these results, as well as the evaluations of the new agile working environment, which includes staff working hybrid hours, and also moving away from all staff having their own dedicated spaces to a hot-desking environment.</p> <p>Our approach to equalities as well as our enhanced IT infrastructure will also feed in to the evolving ODS4 going forward.</p> <p>Staff communications around this involves the continuation of the two-weekly newsletter, as well as drop-in session to support larger, organisation wide consultations.</p> <p>The CEO and Head of Organisational Development meet quarterly with staff who joined the organisation within the previous quarter to set out corporate plans and processes.</p> <p>The organisation grew significantly during the pandemic, with approx. 30 staff joining us remotely. As we start emerging from the pandemic and moving back to more office based work, we will seek to develop more opportunities to bring all staff together in innovative and meaningful ways.</p>
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CORPORATE PLAN REPORTING

Conservation and Land Management	
Priority I – Support landscape-scale conservation, specifically the expansion of native and montane woodland, peatland restoration, natural flood management and Capercaillie management	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver peatland restoration and woodland expansion targets 	<p>In 2021/22 the CNPA Peatland Action programme is currently on track to deliver around 550ha of peatland restoration management across 10 sites on 7 estates by March 2022. The target is 557ha. Precise measurements are not yet available but the team is confident that the work done to date will be very close to target. The current mild winter has enabled peatland restoration to continue throughout much of January. If mild conditions continue into February then around 700ha of peatland restoration management could be achieved.</p> <p>A new entrant scheme developed on Tulchan Estate has been successful in that four new contractors have expressed interest in peatland restoration and now have the skills to work on sites where ditch blocking is the main restoration technique. There is still a shortage of contractors who can work on complex erosion sites.</p> <p>The potential programme for 2022/23 could exceed 1000ha across 18 sites on 16 estates. ScotGov have allocated sufficient capital spend to achieve this but negotiations are ongoing re the resource allocation which is largely staff costs.</p> <p>An internal audit of all controls and processes involved in the management of the Peatland Action fund will be carried out in February. This will aid management of risks associated with the Peatland Action fund and will provide advice on how best to scale up the programme in future years.</p> <p>Since the last update, 1553.5 ha of woodland creation has been approved by Scottish Forestry in the National Park. This is spread across the Highland, Aberdeenshire and Perth & Kinross local authority areas. The bulk of the hectareage is accounted for by an approved natural regeneration scheme of 1425 ha, which will be delivered by Wildland Ltd. A proposed native woodland planting scheme of 426 ha at Kinrara is currently out for consultation by Scottish Forestry.</p>

	<p>Further woodland expansion continues to progress in key areas through managing deer populations for natural regeneration. Catalysed by the increasingly buoyant carbon market, there are various woodland planting schemes currently shaping up which we have been made aware of, and these would amount to several thousand hectares of new woodland to be delivered within the next few years. As well as substantially increasing the amount of woodland cover (across all five local authority areas within the park), this and other new afforestation is likely to have significant, positive effects for forest habitat connectivity across the park, potentially benefitting a wide range of woodland species, including capercaillie.</p> <p>Uptake of the Woodland Challenge Fund in its second year (2020/21) was significantly greater than in the first year, when there were just two successful applications. In Year 2 there were seven successful applications for projects that varied in scale from 1.4 ha to 135 ha, and in grant award from £650 to £3000. In total the seven funded projects were awarded £13,688.80 and represent the creation of roughly 350 ha of new native woodland within the Cairngorms National Park. In Year 3 (2021/22), no applications have yet been received, but several are anticipated before the end of the financial year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Cairngorms Nature Strategy with wider partnership 	<p>The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan (2019 – 2024) is delivered by a wide range of partners including NGOs, land managers, academic and public sector organisations. Progress towards the three main aims of landscape-scale conservation, action for priority species and involving people is overseen by the Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group.</p> <p><u>Landscape scale conservation</u></p> <p>Mapping of aspen and riparian woodland cover and connectivity across the Park is almost complete. Work with Catchment Management Partnerships, farmers and land managers, with investment via the Nature Restoration Fund, continues to augment the existing resource through planting. Mapping of species grassland extent and condition will be completed in summer 2022 and mob grazing pilots are underway to demonstrate biodiversity gain as part of productive systems. River restoration led by Catchment Management Partnerships continues to focus on re-naturalisation through connecting rivers with floodplains and introducing woody debris. A programme of pond restoration and creation is being led by British Dragonfly Society.</p> <p><u>Priority species</u></p> <p>Species conservation continues to be driven forwards primarily through the work of dedicated projects, namely Rare</p>

	<p>Invertebrates in the Cairngorms, Cairngorms Rare Plants & Wild Connections, Wetlands and Waders Initiatives, Cairngorms Wildcat and Cairngorms Capercaillie projects. CNPA and BTO have produced sensitivity maps identifying key curlew habitat and breeding sites across the Park and CNPA is developing Park-wide Fresh Water Pearl Mussel species reinforcement strategy and a raptor conservation strategy.</p> <p><u>Involving people</u></p> <p>After two years of virtual activity, the flagship nature engagement event in the Park, Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend, is set to welcome back people to the landscapes, wildlife and land management in the Park in May 2022. Approximately 100 events run by land managers, organisations, communities and enthusiasts across the Park will be available for people to find out more about the National Park, how it’s managed and the wildlife it’s famous for.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature partners are also developing engagement pathways to support the journey from new-to-nature to active-and-engaged and specialist audiences through a range of opportunities for getting involved.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Capercaillie Framework 	<p>The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project is now half-way through its 3-year delivery phase. Good progress continues to be made against all five of the project’s Approved Purposes. Highlights include over 2,600 residents, visitors and businesses sharing their views about capercaillie conservation and ways they feel they can help; volunteers donating over 2,200 hours to the project to help deliver community-led action for the bird; and over 7,800 hectares of habitat improved for capercaillie. Minor issues have impacted the delivery of some habitat improvement work, community-led action, evaluation and genetic research, but all work remains on track to complete by the end of the project (July 2023). Full details of the project’s progress can be found on the project website https://www.cairngormscapercaillie.scot</p> <p>In addition to the work of the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project and the ongoing work of many partners, CNPA initiated discussions with key stakeholders at a senior level to investigate the desirability and feasibility of new approaches not already under consideration or being implemented, primarily around the management of protected species, translocation/ reintroduction and creating areas of minimum disturbance. A sub-group of the NatureScot Scientific Advisory Committee will publish its findings in March 2022. The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project Board will consider the implications of the findings and the opportunities for the project to contribute towards any recommendations.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure deer management is focused on delivering public interest priorities specifically the expansion of native woodlands and peatland restoration</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support population modelling and herbivore impact assessments 	<p>Nature Scot plans to count open range deer across the South Deeside and North Angus DMG and the South Grampian DMG before March 2022 if weather permits. This count will be conducted from helicopters and using digital photography. With helicopters and teams in place to count the East Grampians, CNPA will take advantage of this to fund a count across the West Grampian DMG. Up to date count data will give us an ideal starting point for developing Strategic Land Use Plans in partnership with DMGs across the Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with Deer Management Groups (DMGs) to deliver public interest priorities 	<p>The Scottish Government accepted 92 of the 99 recommendations within the Deer Working Group report. These recommendations now need to be implemented in the form of new legislation, new regulation, new incentives and a review of all the non-statutory instruments which influence deer management e.g. Best Practice Guidance. A Programme Board has been established to take forward these various work streams and CNPA is represented on that Board.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Support sustainable moorland management to deliver greater habitat diversity and good management practice</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver with estates the work programme of the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership (ECMP) 	<p>The East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership met on 8th December 2021 and discussed how grouse moor management could become more sustainable. This discussion was linked to forthcoming legislation in terms of grouse moor licensing. The potential role of ECMP as a sounding board for ideas and as a link between the grouse sector and Government was discussed. Key elements of sustainability were identified. These included bag size, market adjustment, employment, muirburn and wider habitat management.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group 	<p>The Cairngorms Uplands Advisory Group (CUAG) met on 2nd December and discussed new forestry grant scheme applying to deer management on open range. This grant would support the management required to achieve unfenced natural regeneration. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service attended CUAG and discussed the use of prescribed burning to reduce the risk of wildfires.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate raptor persecution and develop 	<p>Awaiting latest raptor persecution figures from RSPB and Police Scotland. BTO raptor tracker tag development still ongoing, in the meantime three alternative tags fitted to golden eagles in the</p>

<p>wildlife tourism project around raptors</p>	<p>Park in 2021 (one on Deeside two in Strathspey). The Partnership for Action against Wildlife crime (PAW) group, including Police Scotland, met on 29th Sept to discuss wildlife crime procedures in relation to potential raptor persecution events in the National Park. CNPA is linked in with NE Scotland golden eagle monitoring project to ensure overview and collaboration.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group is considering the actions required to further address this issue and take forward raptor conservation in CNP. This includes investigating the potential for wildlife tourism.</p>
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Visitor Experience

Priority I - Continue to ensure visitor infrastructure meets the expectations of visitors to the National Park and help deliver a sustainable tourism economy

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish Speyside Way extension, the Mountains and the People Programme and start Deeside Way extension 	<p>Speyside Way Extension – The Speyside Way extension has been constructed and is being well used. The Newtonmore ‘sculpture’ start/finish location was formally opened by Kate Forbes MSP In Aug 2021. Path signage is being installed with further improvements at Tromie and Insh. Grantown and Kincaig communities are seeking funding for improvements in their communities. Cairngorms Business Association and MoraySpeyside have secured funding to promote the route going forward. Formal opening of the route extension is being planned for Spring 2022</p> <p>Deeside Way – Braemar to Invercauld Bridge planning consent has been extended and CNPA and Aberdeenshire Council has agreed to jointly fund OATS to construct the section of new path in Spring 2022.</p> <p>Mountains & People - The 5 year project was completed in Jan 2021, delayed by Covid, but upgrading 51.8 km of mountain path in Cairngorms out of a five year target of 53 km. Further work with Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) is ongoing to agree how we best support the maintenance of these paths and the volunteers that the project trained in path maintenance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Tourism Action Plan and develop and deliver with partners a Visitor Giving scheme 	<p>Tourism Action Plan – Cairngorms Tourism Partnership (CTP) has met several times to monitor delivery of the Action Plan which underpins the Park’s status with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. CNPA led on a mid-term review of the Action Plan, which was considered by CNPA Board in March 2021. We are in discussions with Europarc about extending the current five year arrangement until 2022 so that development of the next Action Plan follows on from approval of the National Park Partnership Plan.</p>

	<p>A Tourism Emergency Response Group has met regularly, along with a Management for Visitors Group to plan and manage for Covid related work.</p> <p>Voluntary Giving – CNPA Board agreed the principles of this work June 2018 & Cairngorms Trust launched the arrangements in May 2019. The Trust is now working with a range of businesses across the Park and a Partnership Group is in place (chaired by Brian Woods with Pete Crane representing CNPA) to advise on development of the scheme and the projects to be funded.</p> <p>Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) - CNPA successfully secured funding for two projects on National Nature Reserves at Glenmore (multiuse tarmac path) and Muir of Dinnet (car parking, toilet upgrade and sewage disposal) with both projects now complete. Aberdeenshire Council has secured funding for improvements to Glenshee public toilets (Summer 2021) and CNPA has bid for Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan funding to develop detailed, approved and costed plans for improving visitor infrastructure at key visitor destinations around the National Park. Expression of Interest are also being invited for CNPA capital funding as part of the visitor infrastructure improvement programme that fits with the approved visitor management plans.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress with delivery of Cairngorm/Glenmore Strategy 	<p>Highland Council and CNPA have funded further roadside improvements from Beach Car Park along Loch Morlich with improvements ongoing into Spring 2022.</p> <p>The Cairngorm Mountain Masterplan is complete and repair work on the funicular railway is underway with opening anticipated for winter 2022/23. Cairngorm Mountain opened the campervan site at Coire Ciste and is planning improvements to visitor interpretation at the mountain.</p> <p>The greater number of visitors using of Glenmore and Cairngorm post COVID19 lockdown indicates the need for partners to review the current Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy and agree a clear partnership action plan going forward.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Increase physical activity in both residents and visitors and support delivery of Scotland’s Natural Health Service</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Active Cairngorms with Active Aviemore and Health Walks as flagship projects 	<p>Active Aviemore – Highland Council, Hitrans, Sustrans, NHS Highland are developing an active travel link to the new Aviemore Hospital and Transport Scotland are designing a Non-Motorised User (NMU) link from Aviemore to Carrbridge with the preferred route being following ‘old A9’.. The main multi use infrastructure in Aviemore will form part of the Heritage Horizons bid.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge has secured Sustrans support for construction of an NMU link to Grantown-on-Spey. Laggan community has secured funds for stage one design, and Grantown has stage two funding for active travel design in the village.</p>

	<p>Active travel is a significant part of the Heritage Horizons Lottery Bid and will support the delivery of active travel in many more communities. Sustrans are supporting a 3 year active travel post in the National Park to take forward this work.</p> <p>16 Health Walk groups within the National Park are slowly starting to re-open Health Walks as we come out of Lockdown</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and deliver volunteering programme and specifically Volunteer Rangers 	<p>38 Volunteer Rangers have now been trained and are supporting the work of partners cross CNP as part of our ongoing project supported by Cairngorms LEADER. After being 'on hold' due to Covid the volunteers started to return to the role in May 2021. A further 9 volunteers are being trained in Spring 2022.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Create a 'Park for All' by encouraging people from all backgrounds to come and recreate, learn in or visit the National Park</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support and promote the John Muir Award and Junior Ranger programme 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Inclusive Cairngorms and partners to reduce barriers and encourage participation. 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>CNPA Equality Advisory Panel meets monthly since its inception in October 2021 and has received input to a range of CNPA programmes and is engaged in supporting the development of Equality Outcomes for the next 3 years. The CNPA supported Backbone Symposium event in June 2021 with 90 participants aimed at improving representation of BAME groups within the sector. In October some 130 engaged with outdoor activity intro event at Glenmore. Further events are being planned for 2022. Backbone are being supported to work with some 100 Syrian refugees based in and around Inverness encouraging them to visit and enjoy the National Park while learning how to repeat and share these experience with others but this work is now on hold with COVID19.</p>

Rural Development

Priority 1 - Support delivery of housing for local needs through an efficient and effective planning service

<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Local Development Plan 2020 	<p>Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 adopted by CNPA Board on 26 March 2021 and is now used to determine all planning applications in the National Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community-led housing in the National Park 	<p>5 communities are actively looking to develop community led housing projects.</p> <p>Boat of Garten – Planning permission in Principle was granted by the CNPA in 2021 for 2 affordable units through the Communities Housing Trust.</p> <p>Tomintoul – Following planning approval in May 2021, the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT) were able to secure the required funding to commence construction. Construction commenced in summer 2021 with the buildings now watertight. Expected to be complete and ready for occupancy in 2022.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge – A community working group started a project to deliver self-build house plots. The project is now being investigated in detail by the Communities Housing Trust and Seafield Estate.</p> <p>Braemar – Community took ownership of the site in 2021. Planning application to build 15 affordable houses for rent, was submitted in Sep 21 and called in by CNPA. There have been some road and drainage issues which have delayed its presentation to committee.</p> <p>Laggan – Community now looking to expand their community owned housing stock and have employed CHT to investigate potential for new units in the village</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Support communities, specifically focussing on the most fragile, to deliver their agendas for change</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude Tomintoul/Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, develop new focus area in 	<p>The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership project completed in February 2021, with the final report submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2021. The legacy projects are now underway.</p> <p>The Badenoch Great Place Project concluded in September 2021 with another hugely successful Badenoch Heritage</p>

<p>Badenoch and help deliver Great Place Scheme</p>	<p>Festival plus a closing Conference and concert. The website www.badenochstorylands.com has a final report of the project together with information and resources on the culture of the area and information collated as part of the project.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community organisations to deliver projects that help deliver NPPP 	<p>Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey (VABS) - Have continued to be at the forefront of the community recovery from COVID in Badenoch and Strathspey, supported by the CNPA's Rural Development and Communities Manager. They secured and administered over £100k of COVID support funding for area and provided significant support to a myriad of community-led groups and organisations. They are now refocusing on their core work of supporting a huge range of community groups with governance, finance and project support whilst also being a key partner in the Badenoch Great Places Project, sitting on the Board, Team and employing the Project Officer. VABS now instigating a programme to restart Community Action Planning which has been in abeyance since 2019, starting with Carrbridge in March.</p> <p>Marr Area Partnership (MAP) – Has continued to provide a vital COVID community support network on Deeside working closely with Aberdeenshire council to meet local needs including managing an Aberdeenshire Council support fund for the Marr area communities. Aberdeenshire council is withdrawing its (substantial) funding to all its area partnerships over 3 years. MAP is also dealing with the challenges of 100% turnover of staff twice in 3 years.</p> <p>Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust – Having been forced to close both its income generating businesses (hostel and Discovery Centre) in 2020, both were reopened in summer 2021 with reduced turnover. With Green Recovery Fund support they are creating a new Dark Skies exhibition to enhance offering at the Discovery Centre. They are hoping that their 12 affordable homes will be ready for occupation early this summer (8 for rent, 4 to sell). Having secured external funding they have also undertaken a feasibility study into developing a camping, campervan site.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully conclude LEADER programme and consider future funding for Community Led Local Development 	<p>The 2014 – 2021 LEADER Programme has been successfully concluded, with all projects completing in full with the exception of the inability to secure delivery of an electric minibus as part of the sustainable transport project. Monitoring and evaluation data is still being drawn together, with initial analysis showing all targets have secured a good level of activity against plans, with many targets exceeded.</p> <p>The first two projects trialling new approaches to Community Led Local Development (CLLD) have been implemented</p>

	over 2021, including a Youth Local Action Group working as a sub-group of the Cairngorms Trust and a fund for community led “Green Change” projects. The Trust and Authority or engaged in a number of working groups considering the future structure of CLLD funding in Scotland.
Priority 3 - Work closely with the business community and partners to support a sustainable Park economy	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and help deliver Economic Strategy for the Park with partners 	The CNPA approved Economic Action Plan for the National Park in December 2019 and approved a Green Recovery Plan for the National Park in response to the impacts of COVID19 on the economy in June 2020. The projects funded by the CNPA’s Green Recovery Fund of 2021 are now being delivered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure impacts of A9 dualling are understood and addressed where appropriate by the Park Authority 	Transport Scotland has now published its preferred route for the project to deliver an alternative non-motorised user route to link Aviemore and Carrbridge. A planning application for the route will be made in early 2022.

Corporate Services	
Priority 1 - Implement the Organisational Development Strategy and embed the organisational and cultural improvements to make the CNPA the best small public body in Scotland	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement, review and refresh Organisational Development Strategy as part of continual improvement work. 	<p>Staff completed the Best Companies Staff Engagement survey in October 2021. The Communications update below sets out the preliminary published results of that exercise and those are not repeated here, while we welcome the positive overall feedback received from our staff group. We are currently in the process of analysing the results, and identifying the key highlights (areas in which we are doing well and would seek to retain); and shadows (areas we are not doing as well, and would seek to change). An action plan will be developed in this regard, and this will inform the next phase of the Organisational Development Strategy – ODS4.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of enhancing our organisational approach to equalities, which will feed in to the overarching ODS4.</p> <p>With regards IT, we are in the process of implementing SWAN (Scottish Wide Area Network), and moving to Microsoft Teams. We have enhanced our remote capabilities to support the organisational move towards the hybrid</p>

	<p>working approach.</p> <p>As we emerge out of the Covid-response Business Continuity Plan and move to a more agile working environment, we will seek to evaluate how this approach is working at 3, 6 and 9 month intervals.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support effective staff consultation processes 	<p>We have quarterly Staff Consultative Forum meetings, and have recently invited staff to join the Forum. 3 existing members have returned for a second term, and two new members have joined the SCF.</p> <p>Key areas for consultation over the last 6 months have included the ways of working (office configuration and move to a hybrid working approach), as well as questions to ask staff for consideration around the Scottish Government’s Finance Pay Policy proposals that organisations consider moving to a 35 hour week. These conversations will be ongoing over the coming year as this is very much the start of considerations in this regard, and is currently being supported both through a staff survey and staff drop-in sessions</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure that the office extension, existing accommodation and ICT facilities are ‘fit for purpose’ and help to deliver the ODS</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete extension project 	<p>Extension completed on budget in August 2018, and staff have now settled well in the building. Rental for the extension has now commenced on basis of expected values.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement GIS Strategy 	<p>This work will not complete by the end of the Corporate Plan period, with delays to work during COVID restrictions. Plans are in place to take this strand of work forward in 2022/23 in partnership with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NPA.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement cyber security framework and wider IT development 	<p>Significant progress has been made over the last 18 months in this area of our work. As noted under the OD Strategy commentary, the current focus is on implementing new, robust, secure networks and taking services and records management into cloud based provision. This will not complete fully by 31 March and will continue implementation into the forward year.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Deliver ongoing service improvement, including appropriate shared service development and operation, to the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver corporate support to Scottish Land Commission (SLC), and charitable and community 	<p>The authority has agreed to SLC’s request to extent the shared service arrangements provided by Cairngorms NPA for a further two years. We continue to support their pay remit submissions and wider organisational development; staff consultation and HR advisory requirements.</p> <p>The Authority continues to play a role supporting a wide range of charitable and community organisations formally,</p>

organisations.	through membership of Boards, Committees and groups, and informally through provision of advice and grant support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accommodation and facilities support to NPPP delivery partners 	<p>During the lockdown period of the pandemic, the Authority deployed pool cars and other facilities in support of community responses to the pandemic.</p> <p>In planning around the reopening of our offices, we are conscious that many organisations are rethinking their staff deployment and office needs, as are we. We will be involved in discussions with the aim of facilitating partners and their staff continuing to play their priority roles in NPPP delivery, making flexible use of the Authority's facilities where possible.</p>

Priority 4 - Promote and support the highest standards of governance and management, including equalities actions, within the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement effective and efficient management and control systems. 	<p>Our internal and external audit work continues to demonstrate our management and control systems are generally effective and efficient, while highlighting a number of typically low and moderate risk level recommendations for further improvement which the staff group are working to implement. Our areas of control have changed significantly over the corporate plan period, with significant externally funded programmes of activity now under management and new areas of direct staff delivery. Management and Audit and Risk Committee continue to direct internal audit work into supporting review of the highest risk areas of management and internal control.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Greening Strategy and deliver Youth Development Strategy 	<p>The Greening Group continues to meet as part of the broader Climate Change Programme Board, which focusses on both external and internal greening challenges.</p> <p>The Authority recently signed up as a Young Person's Guarantee organisation, which aligns with our Youth Development Strategy. Our IT Apprentice continues with his SVG Level 6 in IT; and in addition we have just appointed two Graduate Trainee Accountants to support the work of the finance team. We also supported an internship within the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project team. The 4 x Kickstart Trainee rangers completed their placements, with one successfully applying for one of the Seasonal Rangers posts in the 2021 season, following an unexpected vacancy. For 2022, we are seeking to support 2 more Trainee Rangers.</p>

Communications

Priority 1 - Deliver the Communication and Engagement Strategy and increase awareness, engagement and involvement with the Park

Key Work Areas	Update
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Communications & Social Media 	<p>In 2021, we reached 351,820 website sessions, a 7% increase on the 2020 figure but short of our 400k target. On social media we reached 72,300 followers across 3 Facebook pages, 1 Instagram account, 1 LinkedIn account and 5 Twitter accounts. This was an increase of 50% on the previous year. This growth can be attributed to focusing on building our Instagram and LinkedIn audiences, including reaching our end of year goal of 10,000 followers on Instagram.</p> <p>Due to major changes to the provision of analytics data from all social media channels access to audience insights has been limited, therefore we are undergoing a review of how best to analyse end of year data for each platform. One impact of this is that our reach data is limited – based on what we can access for Facebook and Twitter, this figure stands at 2.54m, but the true figure is likely to be much higher (Cairngorms News, for instance, accounted for 2.45m on Twitter alone).</p> <p>A full audit of our website was conducted in November by accessibility experts DAC (Digital Accessibility Centre). This included automated testing in line with best practice guidance (WCAG 2.1), along with an expert manual compliance audit and testing by users with a range of disabilities. The audit was complementary about a number of elements of the site; however, specific issues were flagged around third-party plugins to the site (mapping, forms etc) which do not meet the latest accessibility guidelines, pdf downloads not always being screen-reader accessible, and images needing easier to understand alternative text. We will be working through these findings with our web developers over the coming months.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns: Cairngorms Nature, Active Cairngorms & 'Make it Yours' 	<p>Cairngorms Nature: The Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend 'At Home' event ran in May and, as expected, it was a different beast entirely from the 2020 lockdown '10 Days' event. Concerned that 'digital fatigue' may have set in we tried a new approach to engage families with the launch of CN Explorers. This was a great success, with 200 families signed up for the activity packs to engage over the weekend and 145 sign-ups for a new Explorers Club E-Zine, designed to deepen engagement throughout the rest of the year. The level of response was hugely encouraging and gives us something to build on in 2022 as we move back to a physical festival.</p> <p>Over the BIG Weekend the website received 1,622 page views from 600 users. Two events required booking and we saw 50 attending the wildcat webinar and 200 at the Scottish Environment LINK webinar. One of the areas that was markedly down was the Children's Art competition, with around 160 entries as opposed to the usual 200-300. We suspect this was impacted by schools coming out of lockdown and being busy with other things, but will keep an eye on</p>

numbers in 2022.

We already have around 60 events being developed for the 2022 programme and are hoping the bulk of activity will be outside in person, although some of the offering will continue to be online to reach those people who are unable to attend physically. Two flagship events are being planned – a panel-based webinar which will expand on the People/Nature theme of NPPP4 and a live traditional music event. We have offered the ‘community hub’ to Grantown on Spey this year and hope to run an event in Anagach Woods to round off the weekend. A new BIG Weekend website is also being developed.

Active Cairngorms: September saw our managing for visitor’s activity slow down and attention turning to reviewing the success of the previous six months. On a national basis, the #RespectProtectEnjoy campaign reached 205m people on social media between March and September, the campaign video was viewed 584k times, and at least 83% of Scottish adults saw some form of campaign activity at least once (57% saw it 3+ times). In total, CNPA activity reached 950k people across our social media channels, and our PR activity was featured across the BBC, STV, P&J, Courier, Scotsman and various local titles. A particular success was focusing on the work of rangers across the Park, with lots of attention on the Kickstart Ranger posts, interviews with key staff and consistent SOAC messaging. We will be looking to ramp up responsible visitor messaging over the coming months, particularly around dogs on leads from mid-February.

As we found improved success running visitor management messages via our Cairngorms News channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, we continued to use these accounts over Active Cairngorms for the duration of 2021. However, with the introduction of the CNP Rangers account on Twitter this has provided us an alternative avenue to promote visitor management messages through the Rangers to complement our corporate messaging.

‘Make it Yours’ (MIY): In the absence of the usual in-person MIY sessions with visitor-facing staff across the Park, we have developed a video training resource, designed to provide bitesize information for businesses and their employees. As restrictions ease we plan to offer the face-to-face sessions again.

At the start of the Covid-19 lockdown the CNPA set up a weekly Cairngorms Tourism Emergency Response Group, chaired by Janet Hunter. Membership consists of CNPA, Cairngorms Business Partnership, VisitAberdeenshire,

	<p>MoraySpeyside, VisitScotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. In August the title of the group changed to the Cairngorms Tourism Recovery Group and meetings became less frequent. The future of this group will be discussed at the next meeting of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership on 2nd February.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver stakeholder engagement & events 	<p>Throughout the period our comms activity continued to be coordinated via a central Communications Grid, with a variety of themes covering a range of key strategic priorities for the organisation. In June we focused on Cairngorms Nature and the BIG Weekend, as well as launching a new Gaelic Toolkit to support businesses in integrating Gaelic into their visitor offer. In July and August we continued to provide updates on managing for visitors, announced the recipients of the Green Recovery Fund, and drew together stories of our rural workforce, including land-based workers, capercaillie keepers, local farmers and conservation project officers.</p> <p>We launched the informal phase of the NPPP4 consultation in September and ran a Gaelic takeover of our social media channels to great success. And in October we ran the rescheduled Wee Walks Week – which included the launch of our newly digitised Community Paths and Routes maps. November and December focused on driving formal consultation responses, alongside promotion of COP26 and associated climate change and conservation themes. We also supported the promotion of the Youth LAG and Cairngorms Trust project fund.</p> <p>Media activity is planned this February around the Young Person’s Guarantee, a commitment to bring together employers, partners and young people to connect every 16 to 24 year old in Scotland to a job, training, learning or volunteering opportunity.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Communications: publications, consultations, media & issues management, Gaelic Language Plan 	<p>COP26 took place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November and CNPA staff were present for a variety of events across the two weeks. Park staff engaged with hundreds of delegates as part of an Environment and Economies Leaders’ Group stand, which was located right outside the main plenary rooms (where the main discussions were taking place). The Chief Executive was invited to deliver a speech on the impacts of climate change on snow levels in the Park at the Cryosphere Pavilion, and also took part in a panel event with other UK National Parks, showcasing our Net Zero with Nature work with Palladium. The Director of Planning and Rural Development participated in a VisitScotland event about Climate Change and Tourism, and Janet Hunter attended their ‘Destination Net Zero’ event in her role as Chair</p>

of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership. CNPA signed up to the Glasgow Declaration (an offshoot of the Tourism Declares initiative) as part of these activities.

The formal phase of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan consultation ran from Thursday 23 September to Friday 17 December, with the draft plan made available via a dedicated Commonplace website, long-format pdf, print and screen reader-friendly versions. We are currently collating and reading through all responses; however, we estimate that around 1,400 people responded to the consultation, nearly five times the number five years ago. Over 50% of respondents came from within the Park boundary.

Part of the reason behind the significant uptick in response was the variety of on and offline promotion that has taken place over the past few months. Dedicated press releases and videos were created, including a partnership with the Press and Journal and Inverness Courier, and paid advertising in the Deeside and Donside Piper, Strathspey Herald and the Dundee Courier. This was accompanied by a paid social media advertising campaign, which reached over 250k people including local residents, workers and visitors to the Park.

A toolkit with resources for e-newsletters, social media and print publications was circulated to hundreds of partner organisations, posters and flyers were distributed to communities and businesses across the Park, and a leaflet was sent to every household in the area, explaining how people could get involved. Face to face sessions were delivered with specific community groups, schools, farmers and other land managers, local businesses and so on, with a series of 1:1 interviews also taking place with harder to reach audiences (including ethnic minority groups and audiences with accessibility needs). Over 500 people and over 50 organisations were engaged through these activities over the consultation period, albeit numbers were inevitably impacted by the lingering effects of Covid-19.

Elsewhere, Bòrd na Gàidhlig agreed to extend our current Gaelic Language Plan by a further year, meaning that this will now cover the standard five-year term rather than four. The extension means we can bring the plan in line with the creation of our corporate plan, and fits with the delivery of the new National Gaelic Language Plan in 2023. Further details on our new plan will be brought to the board in the autumn.

Priority 2 - Ensure high quality internal communications that help to deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan	
Key Work Areas	Update

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisational Development Strategy	<p>We are in the process of developing ODS4, following the 2021/22 Best Companies Survey. We've been advised that we have achieved a position on the Best Companies to Work For first Quarterly League Table reveal of 2022 in 3 categories: - Mid-sized; Not for Profit Body and Scotland.</p> <p>The emerging ODS4 will be informed by these results, as well as the evaluations of the new agile working environment, which includes staff working hybrid hours, and also moving away from all staff having their own dedicated spaces to a hot-desking environment.</p> <p>Our approach to equalities as well as our enhanced IT infrastructure will also feed in to the evolving ODS4 going forward.</p> <p>Staff communications around this involves the continuation of the two-weekly newsletter, as well as drop-in session to support larger, organisation wide consultations.</p> <p>The CEO and Head of Organisational Development meet quarterly with staff who joined the organisation within the previous quarter to set out corporate plans and processes.</p> <p>The organisation grew significantly during the pandemic, with approx. 30 staff joining us remotely. As we start emerging from the pandemic and moving back to more office based work, we will seek to develop more opportunities to bring all staff together in innovative and meaningful ways.</p>
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CORPORATE PLAN REPORTING

Conservation and Land Management	
Priority I – Support landscape-scale conservation, specifically the expansion of native and montane woodland, peatland restoration, natural flood management and Capercaillie management	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver peatland restoration and woodland expansion targets 	<p>In 2021/22 the CNPA Peatland Action programme is currently on track to deliver around 550ha of peatland restoration management across 10 sites on 7 estates by March 2022. The target is 557ha. Precise measurements are not yet available but the team is confident that the work done to date will be very close to target. The current mild winter has enabled peatland restoration to continue throughout much of January. If mild conditions continue into February then around 700ha of peatland restoration management could be achieved.</p> <p>A new entrant scheme developed on Tulchan Estate has been successful in that four new contractors have expressed interest in peatland restoration and now have the skills to work on sites where ditch blocking is the main restoration technique. There is still a shortage of contractors who can work on complex erosion sites.</p> <p>The potential programme for 2022/23 could exceed 1000ha across 18 sites on 16 estates. ScotGov have allocated sufficient capital spend to achieve this but negotiations are ongoing re the resource allocation which is largely staff costs.</p> <p>An internal audit of all controls and processes involved in the management of the Peatland Action fund will be carried out in February. This will aid management of risks associated with the Peatland Action fund and will provide advice on how best to scale up the programme in future years.</p> <p>Since the last update, 1553.5 ha of woodland creation has been approved by Scottish Forestry in the National Park. This is spread across the Highland, Aberdeenshire and Perth & Kinross local authority areas. The bulk of the hectareage is accounted for by an approved natural regeneration scheme of 1425 ha, which will be delivered by Wildland Ltd. A proposed native woodland planting scheme of 426 ha at Kinrara is currently out for consultation by Scottish Forestry.</p>

	<p>Further woodland expansion continues to progress in key areas through managing deer populations for natural regeneration. Catalysed by the increasingly buoyant carbon market, there are various woodland planting schemes currently shaping up which we have been made aware of, and these would amount to several thousand hectares of new woodland to be delivered within the next few years. As well as substantially increasing the amount of woodland cover (across all five local authority areas within the park), this and other new afforestation is likely to have significant, positive effects for forest habitat connectivity across the park, potentially benefitting a wide range of woodland species, including capercaillie.</p> <p>Uptake of the Woodland Challenge Fund in its second year (2020/21) was significantly greater than in the first year, when there were just two successful applications. In Year 2 there were seven successful applications for projects that varied in scale from 1.4 ha to 135 ha, and in grant award from £650 to £3000. In total the seven funded projects were awarded £13,688.80 and represent the creation of roughly 350 ha of new native woodland within the Cairngorms National Park. In Year 3 (2021/22), no applications have yet been received, but several are anticipated before the end of the financial year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Cairngorms Nature Strategy with wider partnership 	<p>The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan (2019 – 2024) is delivered by a wide range of partners including NGOs, land managers, academic and public sector organisations. Progress towards the three main aims of landscape-scale conservation, action for priority species and involving people is overseen by the Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group.</p> <p><u>Landscape scale conservation</u></p> <p>Mapping of aspen and riparian woodland cover and connectivity across the Park is almost complete. Work with Catchment Management Partnerships, farmers and land managers, with investment via the Nature Restoration Fund, continues to augment the existing resource through planting. Mapping of species grassland extent and condition will be completed in summer 2022 and mob grazing pilots are underway to demonstrate biodiversity gain as part of productive systems. River restoration led by Catchment Management Partnerships continues to focus on re-naturalisation through connecting rivers with floodplains and introducing woody debris. A programme of pond restoration and creation is being led by British Dragonfly Society.</p> <p><u>Priority species</u></p> <p>Species conservation continues to be driven forwards primarily through the work of dedicated projects, namely Rare</p>

	<p>Invertebrates in the Cairngorms, Cairngorms Rare Plants & Wild Connections, Wetlands and Waders Initiatives, Cairngorms Wildcat and Cairngorms Capercaillie projects. CNPA and BTO have produced sensitivity maps identifying key curlew habitat and breeding sites across the Park and CNPA is developing Park-wide Fresh Water Pearl Mussel species reinforcement strategy and a raptor conservation strategy.</p> <p><u>Involving people</u></p> <p>After two years of virtual activity, the flagship nature engagement event in the Park, Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend, is set to welcome back people to the landscapes, wildlife and land management in the Park in May 2022. Approximately 100 events run by land managers, organisations, communities and enthusiasts across the Park will be available for people to find out more about the National Park, how it’s managed and the wildlife it’s famous for.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature partners are also developing engagement pathways to support the journey from new-to-nature to active-and-engaged and specialist audiences through a range of opportunities for getting involved.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Capercaillie Framework 	<p>The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project is now half-way through its 3-year delivery phase. Good progress continues to be made against all five of the project’s Approved Purposes. Highlights include over 2,600 residents, visitors and businesses sharing their views about capercaillie conservation and ways they feel they can help; volunteers donating over 2,200 hours to the project to help deliver community-led action for the bird; and over 7,800 hectares of habitat improved for capercaillie. Minor issues have impacted the delivery of some habitat improvement work, community-led action, evaluation and genetic research, but all work remains on track to complete by the end of the project (July 2023). Full details of the project’s progress can be found on the project website https://www.cairngormscapercaillie.scot</p> <p>In addition to the work of the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project and the ongoing work of many partners, CNPA initiated discussions with key stakeholders at a senior level to investigate the desirability and feasibility of new approaches not already under consideration or being implemented, primarily around the management of protected species, translocation/ reintroduction and creating areas of minimum disturbance. A sub-group of the NatureScot Scientific Advisory Committee will publish its findings in March 2022. The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project Board will consider the implications of the findings and the opportunities for the project to contribute towards any recommendations.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure deer management is focused on delivering public interest priorities specifically the expansion of native woodlands and peatland restoration</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support population modelling and herbivore impact assessments 	<p>Nature Scot plans to count open range deer across the South Deeside and North Angus DMG and the South Grampian DMG before March 2022 if weather permits. This count will be conducted from helicopters and using digital photography. With helicopters and teams in place to count the East Grampians, CNPA will take advantage of this to fund a count across the West Grampian DMG. Up to date count data will give us an ideal starting point for developing Strategic Land Use Plans in partnership with DMGs across the Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with Deer Management Groups (DMGs) to deliver public interest priorities 	<p>The Scottish Government accepted 92 of the 99 recommendations within the Deer Working Group report. These recommendations now need to be implemented in the form of new legislation, new regulation, new incentives and a review of all the non-statutory instruments which influence deer management e.g. Best Practice Guidance. A Programme Board has been established to take forward these various work streams and CNPA is represented on that Board.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Support sustainable moorland management to deliver greater habitat diversity and good management practice</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver with estates the work programme of the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership (ECMP) 	<p>The East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership met on 8th December 2021 and discussed how grouse moor management could become more sustainable. This discussion was linked to forthcoming legislation in terms of grouse moor licensing. The potential role of ECMP as a sounding board for ideas and as a link between the grouse sector and Government was discussed. Key elements of sustainability were identified. These included bag size, market adjustment, employment, muirburn and wider habitat management.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group 	<p>The Cairngorms Uplands Advisory Group (CUAG) met on 2nd December and discussed new forestry grant scheme applying to deer management on open range. This grant would support the management required to achieve unfenced natural regeneration. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service attended CUAG and discussed the use of prescribed burning to reduce the risk of wildfires.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate raptor persecution and develop 	<p>Awaiting latest raptor persecution figures from RSPB and Police Scotland. BTO raptor tracker tag development still ongoing, in the meantime three alternative tags fitted to golden eagles in the</p>

wildlife tourism project around raptors	<p>Park in 2021 (one on Deeside two in Strathspey). The Partnership for Action against Wildlife crime (PAW) group, including Police Scotland, met on 29th Sept to discuss wildlife crime procedures in relation to potential raptor persecution events in the National Park. CNPA is linked in with NE Scotland golden eagle monitoring project to ensure overview and collaboration.</p> <p>Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group is considering the actions required to further address this issue and take forward raptor conservation in CNP. This includes investigating the potential for wildlife tourism.</p>
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Visitor Experience

Priority I - Continue to ensure visitor infrastructure meets the expectations of visitors to the National Park and help deliver a sustainable tourism economy
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Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish Speyside Way extension, the Mountains and the People Programme and start Deeside Way extension 	<p>Speyside Way Extension – The Speyside Way extension has been constructed and is being well used. The Newtonmore ‘sculpture’ start/finish location was formally opened by Kate Forbes MSP In Aug 2021. Path signage is being installed with further improvements at Tromie and Insh. Grantown and Kincaig communities are seeking funding for improvements in their communities. Cairngorms Business Association and MoraySpeyside have secured funding to promote the route going forward. Formal opening of the route extension is being planned for Spring 2022</p> <p>Deeside Way – Braemar to Invercauld Bridge planning consent has been extended and CNPA and Aberdeenshire Council has agreed to jointly fund OATS to construct the section of new path in Spring 2022.</p> <p>Mountains & People - The 5 year project was completed in Jan 2021, delayed by Covid, but upgrading 51.8 km of mountain path in Cairngorms out of a five year target of 53 km. Further work with Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) is ongoing to agree how we best support the maintenance of these paths and the volunteers that the project trained in path maintenance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Tourism Action Plan and develop and deliver with partners a Visitor Giving scheme 	<p>Tourism Action Plan – Cairngorms Tourism Partnership (CTP) has met several times to monitor delivery of the Action Plan which underpins the Park’s status with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. CNPA led on a mid-term review of the Action Plan, which was considered by CNPA Board in March 2021. We are in discussions with Europarc about extending the current five year arrangement until 2022 so that development of the next Action Plan follows on from approval of the National Park Partnership Plan.</p>

	<p>A Tourism Emergency Response Group has met regularly, along with a Management for Visitors Group to plan and manage for Covid related work.</p> <p>Voluntary Giving – CNPA Board agreed the principles of this work June 2018 & Cairngorms Trust launched the arrangements in May 2019. The Trust is now working with a range of businesses across the Park and a Partnership Group is in place (chaired by Brian Woods with Pete Crane representing CNPA) to advise on development of the scheme and the projects to be funded.</p> <p>Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) - CNPA successfully secured funding for two projects on National Nature Reserves at Glenmore (multiuse tarmac path) and Muir of Dinnet (car parking, toilet upgrade and sewage disposal) with both projects now complete. Aberdeenshire Council has secured funding for improvements to Glenshee public toilets (Summer 2021) and CNPA has bid for Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan funding to develop detailed, approved and costed plans for improving visitor infrastructure at key visitor destinations around the National Park. Expression of Interest are also being invited for CNPA capital funding as part of the visitor infrastructure improvement programme that fits with the approved visitor management plans.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress with delivery of Cairngorm/Glenmore Strategy 	<p>Highland Council and CNPA have funded further roadside improvements from Beach Car Park along Loch Morlich with improvements ongoing into Spring 2022.</p> <p>The Cairngorm Mountain Masterplan is complete and repair work on the funicular railway is underway with opening anticipated for winter 2022/23. Cairngorm Mountain opened the campervan site at Coire Ciste and is planning improvements to visitor interpretation at the mountain.</p> <p>The greater number of visitors using of Glenmore and Cairngorm post COVID19 lockdown indicates the need for partners to review the current Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy and agree a clear partnership action plan going forward.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Increase physical activity in both residents and visitors and support delivery of Scotland’s Natural Health Service</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Active Cairngorms with Active Aviemore and Health Walks as flagship projects 	<p>Active Aviemore – Highland Council, Hitrans, Sustrans, NHS Highland are developing an active travel link to the new Aviemore Hospital and Transport Scotland are designing a Non-Motorised User (NMU) link from Aviemore to Carrbridge with the preferred route being following ‘old A9’.. The main multi use infrastructure in Aviemore will form part of the Heritage Horizons bid.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge has secured Sustrans support for construction of an NMU link to Grantown-on-Spey. Laggan community has secured funds for stage one design, and Grantown has stage two funding for active travel design in the village.</p>

	<p>Active travel is a significant part of the Heritage Horizons Lottery Bid and will support the delivery of active travel in many more communities. Sustrans are supporting a 3 year active travel post in the National Park to take forward this work.</p> <p>16 Health Walk groups within the National Park are slowly starting to re-open Health Walks as we come out of Lockdown</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and deliver volunteering programme and specifically Volunteer Rangers 	<p>38 Volunteer Rangers have now been trained and are supporting the work of partners cross CNP as part of our ongoing project supported by Cairngorms LEADER. After being 'on hold' due to Covid the volunteers started to return to the role in May 2021. A further 9 volunteers are being trained in Spring 2022.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Create a 'Park for All' by encouraging people from all backgrounds to come and recreate, learn in or visit the National Park</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support and promote the John Muir Award and Junior Ranger programme 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Inclusive Cairngorms and partners to reduce barriers and encourage participation. 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, and 832 in 2021, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>CNPA Equality Advisory Panel meets monthly since its inception in October 2021 and has received input to a range of CNPA programmes and is engaged in supporting the development of Equality Outcomes for the next 3 years. The CNPA supported Backbone Symposium event in June 2021 with 90 participants aimed at improving representation of BAME groups within the sector. In October some 130 engaged with outdoor activity intro event at Glenmore. Further events are being planned for 2022. Backbone are being supported to work with some 100 Syrian refugees based in and around Inverness encouraging them to visit and enjoy the National Park while learning how to repeat and share these experience with others but this work is now on hold with COVID19.</p>

<p>Rural Development</p>	
<p>Priority 1 - Support delivery of housing for local needs through an efficient and effective planning service</p>	
<p>Key Work Areas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Update</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Local Development Plan 2020 	<p>Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 adopted by CNPA Board on 26 March 2021 and is now used to determine all planning applications in the National Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community-led housing in the National Park 	<p>5 communities are actively looking to develop community led housing projects.</p> <p>Boat of Garten – Planning permission in Principle was granted by the CNPA in 2021 for 2 affordable units through the Communities Housing Trust.</p> <p>Tomintoul – Following planning approval in May 2021, the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT) were able to secure the required funding to commence construction. Construction commenced in summer 2021 with the buildings now watertight. Expected to be complete and ready for occupancy in 2022.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge – A community working group started a project to deliver self-build house plots. The project is now being investigated in detail by the Communities Housing Trust and Seafield Estate.</p> <p>Braemar – Community took ownership of the site in 2021. Planning application to build 15 affordable houses for rent, was submitted in Sep 21 and called in by CNPA. There have been some road and drainage issues which have delayed its presentation to committee.</p> <p>Laggan – Community now looking to expand their community owned housing stock and have employed CHT to investigate potential for new units in the village</p>

Priority 2 - Support communities, specifically focussing on the most fragile, to deliver their agendas for change

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude Tomintoul/Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, develop new focus area in 	<p>The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership project completed in February 2021, with the final report submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2021. The legacy projects are now underway.</p> <p>The Badenoch Great Place Project concluded in September 2021 with another hugely successful Badenoch Heritage</p>

<p>Badenoch and help deliver Great Place Scheme</p>	<p>Festival plus a closing Conference and concert. The website www.badenochstorylands.com has a final report of the project together with information and resources on the culture of the area and information collated as part of the project.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community organisations to deliver projects that help deliver NPPP 	<p>Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey (VABS) - Have continued to be at the forefront of the community recovery from COVID in Badenoch and Strathspey, supported by the CNPA's Rural Development and Communities Manager. They secured and administered over £100k of COVID support funding for area and provided significant support to a myriad of community-led groups and organisations. They are now refocusing on their core work of supporting a huge range of community groups with governance, finance and project support whilst also being a key partner in the Badenoch Great Places Project, sitting on the Board, Team and employing the Project Officer. VABS now instigating a programme to restart Community Action Planning which has been in abeyance since 2019, starting with Carrbridge in March.</p> <p>Marr Area Partnership (MAP) – Has continued to provide a vital COVID community support network on Deeside working closely with Aberdeenshire council to meet local needs including managing an Aberdeenshire Council support fund for the Marr area communities. Aberdeenshire council is withdrawing its (substantial) funding to all its area partnerships over 3 years. MAP is also dealing with the challenges of 100% turnover of staff twice in 3 years.</p> <p>Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust – Having been forced to close both its income generating businesses (hostel and Discovery Centre) in 2020, both were reopened in summer 2021 with reduced turnover. With Green Recovery Fund support they are creating a new Dark Skies exhibition to enhance offering at the Discovery Centre. They are hoping that their 12 affordable homes will be ready for occupation early this summer (8 for rent, 4 to sell). Having secured external funding they have also undertaken a feasibility study into developing a camping, campervan site.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully conclude LEADER programme and consider future funding for Community Led Local Development 	<p>The 2014 – 2021 LEADER Programme has been successfully concluded, with all projects completing in full with the exception of the inability to secure delivery of an electric minibus as part of the sustainable transport project. Monitoring and evaluation data is still being drawn together, with initial analysis showing all targets have secured a good level of activity against plans, with many targets exceeded.</p> <p>The first two projects trialling new approaches to Community Led Local Development (CLLD) have been implemented</p>

	over 2021, including a Youth Local Action Group working as a sub-group of the Cairngorms Trust and a fund for community led “Green Change” projects. The Trust and Authority or engaged in a number of working groups considering the future structure of CLLD funding in Scotland.
Priority 3 - Work closely with the business community and partners to support a sustainable Park economy	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and help deliver Economic Strategy for the Park with partners 	The CNPA approved Economic Action Plan for the National Park in December 2019 and approved a Green Recovery Plan for the National Park in response to the impacts of COVID19 on the economy in June 2020. The projects funded by the CNPA’s Green Recovery Fund of 2021 are now being delivered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure impacts of A9 dualling are understood and addressed where appropriate by the Park Authority 	Transport Scotland has now published its preferred route for the project to deliver an alternative non-motorised user route to link Aviemore and Carrbridge. A planning application for the route will be made in early 2022.

Corporate Services	
Priority 1 - Implement the Organisational Development Strategy and embed the organisational and cultural improvements to make the CNPA the best small public body in Scotland	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement, review and refresh Organisational Development Strategy as part of continual improvement work. 	<p>Staff completed the Best Companies Staff Engagement survey in October 2021. The Communications update below sets out the preliminary published results of that exercise and those are not repeated here, while we welcome the positive overall feedback received from our staff group. We are currently in the process of analysing the results, and identifying the key highlights (areas in which we are doing well and would seek to retain); and shadows (areas we are not doing as well, and would seek to change). An action plan will be developed in this regard, and this will inform the next phase of the Organisational Development Strategy – ODS4.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of enhancing our organisational approach to equalities, which will feed in to the overarching ODS4.</p> <p>With regards IT, we are in the process of implementing SWAN (Scottish Wide Area Network), and moving to Microsoft Teams. We have enhanced our remote capabilities to support the organisational move towards the hybrid</p>

	<p>working approach.</p> <p>As we emerge out of the Covid-response Business Continuity Plan and move to a more agile working environment, we will seek to evaluate how this approach is working at 3, 6 and 9 month intervals.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support effective staff consultation processes 	<p>We have quarterly Staff Consultative Forum meetings, and have recently invited staff to join the Forum. 3 existing members have returned for a second term, and two new members have joined the SCF.</p> <p>Key areas for consultation over the last 6 months have included the ways of working (office configuration and move to a hybrid working approach), as well as questions to ask staff for consideration around the Scottish Government’s Finance Pay Policy proposals that organisations consider moving to a 35 hour week. These conversations will be ongoing over the coming year as this is very much the start of considerations in this regard, and is currently being supported both through a staff survey and staff drop-in sessions</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure that the office extension, existing accommodation and ICT facilities are ‘fit for purpose’ and help to deliver the ODS</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete extension project 	<p>Extension completed on budget in August 2018, and staff have now settled well in the building. Rental for the extension has now commenced on basis of expected values.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement GIS Strategy 	<p>This work will not complete by the end of the Corporate Plan period, with delays to work during COVID restrictions. Plans are in place to take this strand of work forward in 2022/23 in partnership with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NPA.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement cyber security framework and wider IT development 	<p>Significant progress has been made over the last 18 months in this area of our work. As noted under the OD Strategy commentary, the current focus is on implementing new, robust, secure networks and taking services and records management into cloud based provision. This will not complete fully by 31 March and will continue implementation into the forward year.</p>
<p>Priority 3 - Deliver ongoing service improvement, including appropriate shared service development and operation, to the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support</p>	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver corporate support to Scottish Land Commission (SLC), and charitable and community 	<p>The authority has agreed to SLC’s request to extent the shared service arrangements provided by Cairngorms NPA for a further two years. We continue to support their pay remit submissions and wider organisational development; staff consultation and HR advisory requirements.</p> <p>The Authority continues to play a role supporting a wide range of charitable and community organisations formally,</p>

organisations.	through membership of Boards, Committees and groups, and informally through provision of advice and grant support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accommodation and facilities support to NPPP delivery partners 	<p>During the lockdown period of the pandemic, the Authority deployed pool cars and other facilities in support of community responses to the pandemic.</p> <p>In planning around the reopening of our offices, we are conscious that many organisations are rethinking their staff deployment and office needs, as are we. We will be involved in discussions with the aim of facilitating partners and their staff continuing to play their priority roles in NPPP delivery, making flexible use of the Authority's facilities where possible.</p>

Priority 4 - Promote and support the highest standards of governance and management, including equalities actions, within the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement effective and efficient management and control systems. 	Our internal and external audit work continues to demonstrate our management and control systems are generally effective and efficient, while highlighting a number of typically low and moderate risk level recommendations for further improvement which the staff group are working to implement. Our areas of control have changed significantly over the corporate plan period, with significant externally funded programmes of activity now under management and new areas of direct staff delivery. Management and Audit and Risk Committee continue to direct internal audit work into supporting review of the highest risk areas of management and internal control.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Greening Strategy and deliver Youth Development Strategy 	<p>The Greening Group continues to meet as part of the broader Climate Change Programme Board, which focusses on both external and internal greening challenges.</p> <p>The Authority recently signed up as a Young Person's Guarantee organisation, which aligns with our Youth Development Strategy. Our IT Apprentice continues with his SVG Level 6 in IT; and in addition we have just appointed two Graduate Trainee Accountants to support the work of the finance team. We also supported an internship within the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project team. The 4 x Kickstart Trainee rangers completed their placements, with one successfully applying for one of the Seasonal Rangers posts in the 2021 season, following an unexpected vacancy. For 2022, we are seeking to support 2 more Trainee Rangers.</p>

Communications

Priority 1 - Deliver the Communication and Engagement Strategy and increase awareness, engagement and involvement with the Park

Key Work Areas	Update
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Communications & Social Media 	<p>In 2021, we reached 351,820 website sessions, a 7% increase on the 2020 figure but short of our 400k target. On social media we reached 72,300 followers across 3 Facebook pages, 1 Instagram account, 1 LinkedIn account and 5 Twitter accounts. This was an increase of 50% on the previous year. This growth can be attributed to focusing on building our Instagram and LinkedIn audiences, including reaching our end of year goal of 10,000 followers on Instagram.</p> <p>Due to major changes to the provision of analytics data from all social media channels access to audience insights has been limited, therefore we are undergoing a review of how best to analyse end of year data for each platform. One impact of this is that our reach data is limited – based on what we can access for Facebook and Twitter, this figure stands at 2.54m, but the true figure is likely to be much higher (Cairngorms News, for instance, accounted for 2.45m on Twitter alone).</p> <p>A full audit of our website was conducted in November by accessibility experts DAC (Digital Accessibility Centre). This included automated testing in line with best practice guidance (WCAG 2.1), along with an expert manual compliance audit and testing by users with a range of disabilities. The audit was complementary about a number of elements of the site; however, specific issues were flagged around third-party plugins to the site (mapping, forms etc) which do not meet the latest accessibility guidelines, pdf downloads not always being screen-reader accessible, and images needing easier to understand alternative text. We will be working through these findings with our web developers over the coming months.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns: Cairngorms Nature, Active Cairngorms & ‘Make it Yours’ 	<p>Cairngorms Nature: The Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend ‘At Home’ event ran in May and, as expected, it was a different beast entirely from the 2020 lockdown ‘10 Days’ event. Concerned that ‘digital fatigue’ may have set in we tried a new approach to engage families with the launch of CN Explorers. This was a great success, with 200 families signed up for the activity packs to engage over the weekend and 145 sign-ups for a new Explorers Club E-Zine, designed to deepen engagement throughout the rest of the year. The level of response was hugely encouraging and gives us something to build on in 2022 as we move back to a physical festival.</p> <p>Over the BIG Weekend the website received 1,622 page views from 600 users. Two events required booking and we saw 50 attending the wildcat webinar and 200 at the Scottish Environment LINK webinar. One of the areas that was markedly down was the Children’s Art competition, with around 160 entries as opposed to the usual 200-300. We suspect this was impacted by schools coming out of lockdown and being busy with other things, but will keep an eye on</p>

numbers in 2022.

We already have around 60 events being developed for the 2022 programme and are hoping the bulk of activity will be outside in person, although some of the offering will continue to be online to reach those people who are unable to attend physically. Two flagship events are being planned – a panel-based webinar which will expand on the People/Nature theme of NPPP4 and a live traditional music event. We have offered the ‘community hub’ to Grantown on Spey this year and hope to run an event in Anagach Woods to round off the weekend. A new BIG Weekend website is also being developed.

Active Cairngorms: September saw our managing for visitor’s activity slow down and attention turning to reviewing the success of the previous six months. On a national basis, the #RespectProtectEnjoy campaign reached 205m people on social media between March and September, the campaign video was viewed 584k times, and at least 83% of Scottish adults saw some form of campaign activity at least once (57% saw it 3+ times). In total, CNPA activity reached 950k people across our social media channels, and our PR activity was featured across the BBC, STV, P&J, Courier, Scotsman and various local titles. A particular success was focusing on the work of rangers across the Park, with lots of attention on the Kickstart Ranger posts, interviews with key staff and consistent SOAC messaging. We will be looking to ramp up responsible visitor messaging over the coming months, particularly around dogs on leads from mid-February.

As we found improved success running visitor management messages via our Cairngorms News channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, we continued to use these accounts over Active Cairngorms for the duration of 2021. However, with the introduction of the CNP Rangers account on Twitter this has provided us an alternative avenue to promote visitor management messages through the Rangers to complement our corporate messaging.

‘Make it Yours’ (MIY): In the absence of the usual in-person MIY sessions with visitor-facing staff across the Park, we have developed a video training resource, designed to provide bitesize information for businesses and their employees. As restrictions ease we plan to offer the face-to-face sessions again.

At the start of the Covid-19 lockdown the CNPA set up a weekly Cairngorms Tourism Emergency Response Group, chaired by Janet Hunter. Membership consists of CNPA, Cairngorms Business Partnership, VisitAberdeenshire,

	<p>MoraySpeyside, VisitScotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. In August the title of the group changed to the Cairngorms Tourism Recovery Group and meetings became less frequent. The future of this group will be discussed at the next meeting of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership on 2nd February.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver stakeholder engagement & events 	<p>Throughout the period our comms activity continued to be coordinated via a central Communications Grid, with a variety of themes covering a range of key strategic priorities for the organisation. In June we focused on Cairngorms Nature and the BIG Weekend, as well as launching a new Gaelic Toolkit to support businesses in integrating Gaelic into their visitor offer. In July and August we continued to provide updates on managing for visitors, announced the recipients of the Green Recovery Fund, and drew together stories of our rural workforce, including land-based workers, capercaillie keepers, local farmers and conservation project officers.</p> <p>We launched the informal phase of the NPPP4 consultation in September and ran a Gaelic takeover of our social media channels to great success. And in October we ran the rescheduled Wee Walks Week – which included the launch of our newly digitised Community Paths and Routes maps. November and December focused on driving formal consultation responses, alongside promotion of COP26 and associated climate change and conservation themes. We also supported the promotion of the Youth LAG and Cairngorms Trust project fund.</p> <p>Media activity is planned this February around the Young Person’s Guarantee, a commitment to bring together employers, partners and young people to connect every 16 to 24 year old in Scotland to a job, training, learning or volunteering opportunity.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Communications: publications, consultations, media & issues management, Gaelic Language Plan 	<p>COP26 took place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November and CNPA staff were present for a variety of events across the two weeks. Park staff engaged with hundreds of delegates as part of an Environment and Economies Leaders’ Group stand, which was located right outside the main plenary rooms (where the main discussions were taking place). The Chief Executive was invited to deliver a speech on the impacts of climate change on snow levels in the Park at the Cryosphere Pavilion, and also took part in a panel event with other UK National Parks, showcasing our Net Zero with Nature work with Palladium. The Director of Planning and Rural Development participated in a VisitScotland event about Climate Change and Tourism, and Janet Hunter attended their ‘Destination Net Zero’ event in her role as Chair</p>

of the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership. CNPA signed up to the Glasgow Declaration (an offshoot of the Tourism Declares initiative) as part of these activities.

The formal phase of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan consultation ran from Thursday 23 September to Friday 17 December, with the draft plan made available via a dedicated Commonplace website, long-format pdf, print and screen reader-friendly versions. We are currently collating and reading through all responses; however, we estimate that around 1,400 people responded to the consultation, nearly five times the number five years ago. Over 50% of respondents came from within the Park boundary.

Part of the reason behind the significant uptick in response was the variety of on and offline promotion that has taken place over the past few months. Dedicated press releases and videos were created, including a partnership with the Press and Journal and Inverness Courier, and paid advertising in the Deeside and Donside Piper, Strathspey Herald and the Dundee Courier. This was accompanied by a paid social media advertising campaign, which reached over 250k people including local residents, workers and visitors to the Park.

A toolkit with resources for e-newsletters, social media and print publications was circulated to hundreds of partner organisations, posters and flyers were distributed to communities and businesses across the Park, and a leaflet was sent to every household in the area, explaining how people could get involved. Face to face sessions were delivered with specific community groups, schools, farmers and other land managers, local businesses and so on, with a series of 1:1 interviews also taking place with harder to reach audiences (including ethnic minority groups and audiences with accessibility needs). Over 500 people and over 50 organisations were engaged through these activities over the consultation period, albeit numbers were inevitably impacted by the lingering effects of Covid-19.

Elsewhere, Bòrd na Gàidhlig agreed to extend our current Gaelic Language Plan by a further year, meaning that this will now cover the standard five-year term rather than four. The extension means we can bring the plan in line with the creation of our corporate plan, and fits with the delivery of the new National Gaelic Language Plan in 2023. Further details on our new plan will be brought to the board in the autumn.

Priority 2 - Ensure high quality internal communications that help to deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan	
Key Work Areas	Update

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisational Development Strategy	<p>We are in the process of developing ODS4, following the 2021/22 Best Companies Survey. We've been advised that we have achieved a position on the Best Companies to Work For first Quarterly League Table reveal of 2022 in 3 categories: - Mid-sized; Not for Profit Body and Scotland.</p> <p>The emerging ODS4 will be informed by these results, as well as the evaluations of the new agile working environment, which includes staff working hybrid hours, and also moving away from all staff having their own dedicated spaces to a hot-desking environment.</p> <p>Our approach to equalities as well as our enhanced IT infrastructure will also feed in to the evolving ODS4 going forward.</p> <p>Staff communications around this involves the continuation of the two-weekly newsletter, as well as drop-in session to support larger, organisation wide consultations.</p> <p>The CEO and Head of Organisational Development meet quarterly with staff who joined the organisation within the previous quarter to set out corporate plans and processes.</p> <p>The organisation grew significantly during the pandemic, with approx. 30 staff joining us remotely. As we start emerging from the pandemic and moving back to more office based work, we will seek to develop more opportunities to bring all staff together in innovative and meaningful ways.</p>
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