

---

## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

---

### FOR DECISION

**Title: COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME  
2016/17**

**Prepared by: Francoise van Buuren, Head of Communications and  
Engagement**

#### **Purpose**

To update Board members on the communications & engagement activities carried out during 2015/16 and gain approval for the proposed programme of activity for 2016/17. This programme of work has been guided by the Communications and Engagement board group chaired by Brian Wood consisting of Gregor Hutcheon, Angela Douglas and Gregor Rimell.

#### **Recommendations**

**Board Members approve the proposed Communications and Engagement Programme for 2016/17. The final communications & engagement budget will be approved as part of the operational plan in March 2016. Indicative figures for the next 3 years are set out in the Corporate Plan.**

## COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2016/ 17 – FOR DECISION

### Strategic Context

- I. Our Corporate Plan 2015 identifies communication with visitors, communities and stakeholders as vital for the work of the CNPA. Our role is to raise the profile of the Park and create a connection and commitment to care for it with identified audiences so they actively support the National Park and benefit from doing so. Our key priorities for action are:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Priority 1 | Increase awareness of the Park, what makes it special and the contribution it makes to deliver the Scottish Governments strategic objectives. |
| Priority 2 | Develop a sense of ‘closeness’ (win hearts and minds) with identified audiences.  |
| Priority 3 | Increase the sense of responsibility and ownership to get involved and make a contribution to the Park.                                       |
| Priority 4 | Ensure high quality internal communications that help to deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan.                                    |

### Summary of Work to Date

2. During 2015/16 our communications and engagement work has focused on three campaigns;
  - i. ‘Make it Yours’ to help businesses and residents promote the Park to deliver a better visitor experience and benefit from the Park brand,
  - ii. Cairngorms Nature to get visitors and residents to engage with Cairngorms Nature,
  - iii. Active Cairngorms to get visitors and residents to be more active in the Park.
3. In addition we have delivered our corporate communications activities; digital communications, media relations, stakeholder engagement & events, publications & consultations. See Annex I for details of the progress made to date and the forward look.

## Monitoring & KPIs

4. Opinion surveys show our stakeholder engagement and events programme is raising the Park's profile and gaining support for the work of the Park and Park Authority.
5. MSP survey results confirm over a third of all MSPs are familiar with the Park and CNPA, over half have a favourable view and a third will speak highly of the organisation unprompted. The next survey will be carried out in November 2016.
6. Recent visitor survey results show most (91%) visitors know they are in the Park and the majority of overseas visitors (63%) and over a third (39%) of UK visitors said it influenced their decision to visit. Being a National Park means people expect a lot before they arrive but despite these high expectations, visitors said these were met and exceeded on every measure surveyed. Facilities and customer service were also described as high and all visitors rated their overall visit of at least 8.6 out of 10 (the average score overall was 8.76), an increase in the overall visit ratings since the previous survey in 2010. The next Visitor Survey will be carried out in 2020.
7. Business Barometer results for 2014/15 show support and contribution provided by CBP/DMOs was rated most positively (5.45) out of seven organisations evaluated by businesses that took part in the survey. As in previous years, the second most valued organisation was CNPA rated at 5.05.
8. Since its launch in November 2013 the number of businesses signed up to the Brand Charter is 104 (45 new and 59 existing brand users) and the MIY programme is 75. This means the total Brand users now stand at 295.
9. Significant progress has been made to build up our online presence through social media, blogs, e-newsletters and the launch of our new website.
10. Statistics below will be used as a benchmark for reporting on key indicators over the corporate plan period of 2015-2018:
  - a) Website: 166,190 visits, average pages visited (2.98), average time on site (2:33), bounce rate (49.64%) – statistics taken on 1<sup>st</sup> August from old website
  - b) Social Media: 7917 followers, twitter 'klout' score 51, engagement peak 30%
  - c) E-newsletter: 2078 recipients including Cairngorms News (1,103), 'Make it Yours' (370), Convener's e-newsletter (224) Broadband Updates (381).
11. **Recommendation: note progress made during 2014/15**

## Proposed programme for 2016/17

12. To build on the progress made to date it is proposed we continue to focus on the three campaigns; 'Make it Yours', Cairngorms Nature and Active Cairngorms as well as delivering our corporate communication responsibilities. Priority areas of work will include:

### *'Make It Yours'*

- a) World Host training (or equivalent) & presentation programme for visitor facing staff
- b) Increase use of the Park brand and support materials at major visitor attractions (Macdonald Aviemore Resort, Edinburgh Zoo, Highland Wildlife Park, Cairngorm Mountain, Ballater VIC, House of Bruar, Blair Castle, Glenlivet Distillery)
- c) Branded Merchandise available via licence agreements with suppliers & local retailers
- d) Launch of a 'friends of the cairngorms' initiative & 'get involved' scheme
- e) Relationship management programme in place with Brand users & MIY supporters

### *Cairngorms Nature*

- a) Raise the profile of Cairngorms Nature with potential enthusiasts and supporters
- b) Promote the conservation work being delivered across the Park
- c) Raise understanding and support for the Capercaillie programme of work
- d) Promote volunteering opportunities in the Park and increase levels of engagement
- e) CN Festival 2016 – increased publicity and number of attendees actively involved
- f) CN Seminar 2016 – increased contribution from CN partners across all sectors

### *Active Cairngorms*

- a) Target less active residents and 'day visitors' to enjoy the Park through being active
- b) Develop a programme of health walks through GP and self-referrals and a new app/web platform to monitor activity levels with Community Planning Partnerships
- c) 'Getting Started Pathway' initiative to encourage less active people to try a new activity with support from Ramblers Scotland
- d) Support walking/cycling festivals by including 'Be Active' events aimed at less active residents & visitors
- e) Work with local schools to encourage walking & cycling to school

### *Corporate Communications*

- a) Support the NPPP and LDP2 consultations
- b) Promote the CNPA's planning services & Design Awards 2016
- c) Manage, monitor and develop the CNP website
- d) Build up our digital communications capabilities and activities
- e) Co-ordinate and monitor our corporate stakeholder & events programme

- f) Corporate publications including our annual review & NPPP progress report
- g) Gaelic Language Plan delivery and progress report
- h) Corporate media relations and issues management

### **13. Recommendation: approved proposed programme of work for 2016/17**

#### **Resource Implications**

14. The Communications & Engagement programme of work is delivered by staff across the organisation, co-ordinated and supported by the Communications & Engagement team. The Corporate Plan 2015 has allocated associated budgets which account for 7% of our total operational plan and staff costs. The 2016/17 budget will be approved as part of the operational plan in March 2016.

#### **Success Measures**

15. The **Corporate** Plan has identified 3 Key Performance Indicators:
- i. *Opinion Survey Results*: Visitor Survey, Scotland's People & Nature Survey, MSP Survey, Business Barometer
  - ii. *Digital Communications Statistics*: website users, social media followers, e-bulletin subscribers/recipients
  - iii. *Campaign Specific Indicators*: World Host/'MIY' participants, brand charter holders, Cairngorms Nature Festival & Seminar attendees, number of volunteer days, Health Walks, NPPP/LDP2 consultation responses, Design Award entries, specific web page hits and social media engagement scores.

#### **Next Steps**

16. It is proposed that the new Communications & Brand Group provides Board support and advice for this area of work. The Board will be updated on progress through the CEO quarterly reports and the Corporate Plan reporting processes and an annual update along with details of the proposed programme for 2017/18 will be presented at the September 2016 Board meeting.

**Francoise van Buuren**

**25<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

[francoisevanbuuren@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:francoisevanbuuren@cairngorms.co.uk)