

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN MONITORING

Prepared by: Operational Management Group

Purpose

To present the results of the latest six monthly analysis of progress in delivering the National Park Partnership Plan.

Recommendations

- a) The Board is asked to note the report, and to raise any questions on the update provided.
- b) That the Board consider whether the format of the report provides enough information for a strategic overview of National Park Partnership Plan delivery.

Executive Summary

This paper provides an update on delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan for 2012-2017. At only a few months into the five-year plan, there is relatively little significant change to report. The paper focuses on setting out the format that will be used in future to demonstrate change and maintain the Board and the National Park Partnership's strategic oversight of delivery.

Future reports will be prepared with the help of the National Park Partnership's Monitoring and Coordination Group, and will include updates on indicators of progress and more critical analysis of progress or emerging issues.

NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN MONITORING – FOR DECISION

Introduction

1. This paper provides the National Park Partnership and Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) Board with an update on delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan. Monitoring reports will be produced twice a year based on March and September reference points.
2. This is the first update on delivery of Plan, only four months since it was approved by the Minister in June 2012. For that reason, it follows the form that future reports will take but does not include the critical analysis of progress that later reports will have. It has been prepared by the CNPA Operational Management Group, but future reports will also be informed through the National Park Partnership Plan's Monitoring and Coordination Group and will provide that analysis of progress. Reports will also be used to inform the National Park Partnership of progress and to highlight significant issues.
3. The paper has 2 sections:
 - a) It presents an analysis on monitoring of indicators and targets associated with the National Park Partnership Plan's five-year outcomes. (In this first report mainly an update on establishing baseline data).
 - b) It provides an update on delivery with the opportunity to highlight significant successes or areas where delivery is unlikely to achieve outcomes.

Background

4. The National Park Partnership Plan is the plan that coordinates how the aims of the National Park will be delivered. Although it is prepared by the National Park Authority, it was developed with the help of many organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors, as well as interested groups and communities in the National Park. The National Park Partnership includes the organisations that are best able to coordinate delivery of the Plan.
5. The National Park Partnership Plan for 2012-2017 was approved by the Environment Minister in June 2012. It sets out the vision for the National Park and three long term outcomes as:

***An outstanding National Park,
enjoyed and valued by
everyone, where nature and
people thrive together***



6. The Plan also sets out 10 five-year outcomes that provide the focus for work for the five years between 2012 and 2017 and will help to deliver the vision and long term outcomes. A series of programmes and with work packages were identified with partners help deliver those outcomes and form the starting point for delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan.
7. The National Park Partnership Plan Monitoring and Coordination Group is a small sub-group of the partnership including senior representation from organisations (public/private/voluntary) with responsibilities for managing the Park beyond individual project delivery. The group is being formed and will meet before the next monitoring report is prepared for March 2013.

Analysis of Progress Toward National Park Partnership Plan Five-year Outcomes

8. Progress towards achieving the National Park Partnership Plan’s five-year outcomes will be tracked in future reports with the help of indicators and targets and summarised in Table I. However, at only four months from approval of the Plan in June 2012, there has been little significant change so this first monitoring report only has commentary on the current state of the indicator or baseline. We expect baselines to be established for all indicators by the next monitoring report in six months’ time. We will use the Monitoring and Coordination Group to refine the way this is shown and the level of detail needed to explain clearly.

Table I progress towards five-year outcomes			
Five-year outcomes	Indicators	Targets	Comment
Long-term outcome 1: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities			
1. The economy of the Park will have grown and diversified, drawing on the Park’s special qualities	Business confidence reported through Cairngorms Business Barometer	Increase	Business confidence dropped in the recession and started at a low point for this National Park Partnership Plan in 2012
	Number of jobs created in the Park	To have grown by more than the rate of population growth	Currently identifying baseline
2. Businesses and communities will be successfully adapting to a low carbon economy	% population living within connection of high speed broadband or equivalent	75%	Currently identifying baseline. Estimated at XX%
	Renewable energy production	To increase year on year	Data for 2011 held. 2012 baseline available 2013.

Table 1 progress towards five-year outcomes			
Five-year outcomes	Indicators	Targets	Comment
3. Communities will be more empowered and able to develop their own models of sustainability	The number of community enterprises generating income	Increase by at least 50%	Baseline estimated at 2 in 2012
Long-term outcome 2: A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced			
4. The quality and connectivity of habitats is enhanced	Area of woodland	Increase of 5% (c.4,000 Ha) in total woodland area	2011 baseline established. Currently collating new woodland planting data for 2012
	Water quality	Maintenance or increase in water quality status	2011 baseline established. 90% or water bodies at 'high' or 'good' status
5. The species for which the Park is most important are in better conservation status	Active conservation for LBAP priority species	Targets identified in LBAP achieved	Not assessed till 2013
	Estates participating in Wildlife Estates Initiative	75% of estates in the Park	Baseline 2012 data is 6 Estates (10% of estimated 60 large estates)
6. The special landscape qualities, including wildness, are conserved and enhanced	Qualities of wildness	Equivalent or increased area of the Park characterised as high or medium wildness	Not assessed till 2015
7. Settlements and built development will retain and enhance the distinct sense of place and identity in the Park	Number of conservation area improvement projects	To cover all conservation areas	No work programmed till 2014
Long-term outcome 3: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences			
8. More people will enjoy, learn about and help to conserve and enhance the Park	Number of volunteer days spent caring for the Park per year	Increase by 50% by 2017	Currently identifying baseline. (Ranger days volunteering was 900 in 2010/11)

Table 1 progress towards five-year outcomes			
Five-year outcomes	Indicators	Targets	Comment
9. The expectations of visitors are met or exceeded	Visitor satisfaction reported in Cairngorms Visitor Survey	Increase	Baseline 2010 Survey. Next data 2015
10. The Park's recreation opportunities have improved the health and enjoyment of residents and visitors	Number of people using promoted core paths	Increased path use overall and more even spread throughout year	Currently identifying baseline and selecting path counter samples.

Update on Delivery of National Park Partnership Plan Programmes

8. Table 2 below summarises activity within the twelve National Park Partnership Plan programmes and their work packages. It included highlights at this point in time, 4 months into the delivery of the Plan, so is not an account of all activity.

Table 2. Summary of National Park Partnership Plan Programme Activity	
Programme	Key Work Packages
I Supporting business	<p>Ia Enterprise Forum, economic strategy development and implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CBP Board have approached a range of potential business representatives to sit on the Cairngorms Enterprise Forum (CEF) but unfortunately have not yet managed to confirm membership. CBP are keen that the CEF give direction to how the Strategy is taken forward and as such the Strategy has been stalled due to the delay in establishing the CEF. CBP recognise both the operational and reputational risks of delaying this work further and a meeting of HIE, SE and CNPA representatives is being arranged to identify a plan of action. <p>Ic Food and drink development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work with schools and community groups to increase knowledge, understanding and growing of local produce. A review of the Cairngorms Farmers Market is now complete and recommendations for the future sustainability of the Market are being explored. <p>Id Growing the Cairngorms Business Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner funding for CBP Business Plan 2012/13 is now in place.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBP website www.visitcairngorms.com has been refreshed and reflects the 'Make it Yours' marketing campaign which is being further rolled out including new horse-riding, golf and hostels leaflets and wider PR. • Annual Business Conference planned for 8th November themed around 'Your bottom line' i.e. helping businesses to save money.
2 Infrastructure & communications improvements	<p>2a Improving IT and mobile communications connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Park-wide audit of issues and potential technical solutions is now complete. • Scottish Government has announced Phase I of a Community Broadband Seed Fund. This will focus on rural communities where specific technical solutions will be required to deliver Broadband/Faster Broadband beyond the wider Scottish Government/HIE roll-out. A number of areas in the CNP have been nominated. <p>2b Improving access to housing for local needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing Officer working actively with a number of communities on various local initiatives • Seminar on Community Land Trusts held in Boat of Garten
3 Low Carbon Cairngorms	<p>3a Renewable Energy Generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of developer checklists for renewable energy developments • Developing seminar/workshop programme on practical renewable energy opportunities • Hydro generation training event at Atholl Estates planned for October 2012 <p>3b Low Carbon Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a programme to support community groups develop renewable energy schemes and generate income as well as increase energy efficiency of community assets. • Scoping research to identify how the local economy and business can benefit from future Green Deal opportunities <p>3c. Low Carbon Land Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peatlands seminar, on 19th September, aimed at advising on sensitive management of carbon stores. • Continued support for woodfuel action plan. Woodfuel seminar held to advise on improving woodfuel development

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4 Community Empowerment	<p>4a Community action planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Braemar Community Action Plan completed. Steering group being established to take forward action plan. • Review of existing Community Action Plans to be conducted (2012-2014) <p>4b Community capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities project launched in Badenoch and Strathspey, all 13 communities taking part in the three year training project. • Youth focussed Community Development Officer in place for Badenoch and Strathspey (Spring 2014) • The Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT) was established in June and has 8 Directors. An audit of training and skills development requirements for Directors is underway. Recruitment is currently underway for a Development Officer. • Two funding fairs to take place (west side of the Park autumn 2012, east side spring 2013)
5 Building vibrant places	<p>5a Planning the best development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Plan programmed for proposed plan consultation in spring/summer 2013. <p>5b Delivering the most effective Planning Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Improvement Plan 2012-14 approved by Planning Committee 22 June 2012 setting out package of work to improve service for all customers – applicants, developers, communities • Developers Forum, Community Council/Association Planning Network established • Planning applications and Local Plan can all be viewed on website <p>5c Supporting the regeneration of Tomintoul and Glenlivet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ‘Transform Team’ of key public sector partners, community and business representatives and Directors of TGDT has been established to support delivery of projects and to oversee the HLF bid. • Crown Estate in partnership with TGDT to appoint landscape architects to develop proposals to upgrade two key lay-bys. <p>5d Quality in Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Cairngorms National Park Design Award taking place • Working actively with applicants/agents with emphasis on pre-application discussion to promote higher standards of

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	<p>design</p> <p>5e Townscape Enhancement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programming work to complete conservation area appraisals by 2014 with subsequent bid for improvement grants.
6 Nature and Landscapes	<p>6a Wildlife Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First strategy group of Cairngorms Nature meeting held on 27th September. • Cairngorms Nature and Action plan to be consulted on at end of 2012 and published and launched in Spring 2013. <p>6b Cairngorms Landscapes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web-based landscape toolkit (first phase) up and running. Futurescapes (Wetlands and woodlands) linked in to development of Cairngorms Nature. • Tomintoul and Glenlivet landscape partnership project bid at pre-application stage. <p>6c Designated Sites Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint-Agency Working on priority (Section7) deer sites continues. • Trial ranger service in Boat of Garten wood highly successful for managing recreation and preventing disturbance to capercaillie
7 Supporting Land Management	<p>7a. Land Management Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent training courses on wildlife and natural environment act, Deer stalking certificate, peatlands management, woodfuel, grassland management. • Biodiversity and forestry seminar aimed at ensuring best practice • Up and coming training courses on wildfire soil management a hydro electricity generation. <p>7b. Advice and Support Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land management forum, farmers' forum, monitor farm and CDAG continue to be active and usually well attended. • New land management advisor post being recruited – interviews 8th October. • Responses to forestry consultations aimed at developing woodland habitat networks, enhancing biodiversity and landscapes, access improvements, etc. <p>7c. Wildlife Estates Scotland Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial pilot on 6 estates in the NP successfully leading to wider roll out of WES. Promotion in NP currently <i>ad</i>

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	<p><i>hoc</i> – will be increased.</p> <p>7d. Catchment Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchment management partnerships (Dee, Spey and South Esk) active. Recent stakeholder meeting for the Spey a great success. • Upper Dee riparian woodland project (aka Pearls in Peril) headline for the Dee launched 28th September. • Lorgy Burn (on the River Dulnain) meander restoration becoming a figurehead project in the Spey of national (possibly International) interest • CNPA lead body responsible for Spey Catchment officer funding through LEADER etc.
8 Leading Sustainable Tourism	<p>8b Cairngorm Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of a Planning Development Brief for Glenmore Village underway in consultation with CRAGG partners. Completion scheduled for November. This Brief will form part of the Draft Local Development plan. Independent study for a Master's Thesis on the work of CRAGG completed.
9 Active Cairngorms	<p>9a Delivering and reviewing the Cairngorms National Park Outdoor Access Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most significant change since the Strategy was completed in 2007 has been in the growth in cycling. The first element in taking forward the review is to build up a comprehensive picture on supply and demand and look at the opportunities and threats. This will be done at a workshop in November which will bring together all the key players. <p>9b Promoting active enjoyment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health walks continue to meet demand in each community. Early involvement with the development of an Aviemore “Sports Hub” will help to better bridge the gap between active schools and local sports clubs and other more informal groups that are active in the area. <p>9c Developing cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A partnership has been established with Sportscotland and the Cairngorms Business Partnership to take forward this area of work. • New Mountain Bike trails under construction at Crown Estate, Glenlivet.
10 Outdoor learning	<p>10a. Using National Parks in the Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor learning in National Parks project to be extended until the end of 2013. Three year action plan to

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	<p>be drawn up by the partnership to ensure the legacy of the project. (2013-2016) Monitored and evaluated by the existing steering group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD programme being developed for Education services going forward. • Outdoor learning Strategy groups in Highland and Aberdeenshire making good progress in promoting the use of outdoor learning and highlighting opportunities in the National Park. Other work is being done in other authorities. <p>I 0b. Learning from the Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June 41 pupils from 5 schools completed the 5 day Junior Ranger Programme. 2 junior rangers attended the international camp in Slovenia and 9 junior rangers took part in the exchange programme with the Bavarian Forest. • To date 1461 John Muir Awards have been achieved through 77 Award Providers. 29% of the awards have been from a social inclusion background. The target for 2012 is 2200 awards.
I 1 Sharing the Stories	<p>I 1b Developing and delivering inspiring campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans developed with partners for a series of events and activities celebrating 2013 Year of Natural Scotland, and 10th Anniversary of Cairngorms National Park. CBP and CNPA working in partnership to deliver ‘<i>Make it Yours</i>’ campaign of inspiring messages and a condensed version of ‘<i>Sharing the Stories</i>’ document.
I 2 Visitor Access and infrastructure	<p>I 2a Management of core paths and outdoor access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community path leaflets are now available in Dalwhinnie and Blair Atholl and a second print ruin has been commissioned for Boat of Garten. <p>I 2b Maintaining and improving high quality visitor facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The refurbished Blair Atholl Visitor Centre & Ranger Base opened in August, and work has started on the expansion and upgrading of the car park. This will be completed in December with an ‘official opening’ in spring 2013. Project supported by Blair Atholl Area Tourist Association, Blair Charitable Trust, Perth & Kinross Council, Historic Scotland and Scottish Government. • Boat of Garten Community Company, with support from Scottish Government, are redeveloping Station Square and installing visitor information, interpretation and a 5m

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	<p>osprey feather sculpture. Work scheduled to start in November.</p> <p>I2c Scotland's National Parks Mountain Path Restoration Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Path works are underway or have been completed this season on some challenging paths leading in and out of the Shelter Stone using the remote cabin system. These include Beinn Meadhoin, Strath Nethy and Coire Raibert. The training project has recruited 6 trainees who have been in post since the spring and learning a broad range of practical conservation skills.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

October 2012