

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK PLAN 2007
ENJOYING & UNDERSTANDING ADVISORY FORUM MEETING NOTES
28TH SEPTEMBER 2007, COYLUMBRIDGE HILTON

Present:

Bruce Luffman (Chair)	CNPA Board Member
Francoise van Buuren (Secretariat)	CNPA Staff
Robert Armstrong	Aberdeenshire Council
Scott Armstrong	VisitScotland
Keith Bootle	
Duncan Bryden	CNPA Board Member
Paul Corrigan	CairnGorm Mountain Ltd
Pete Crane	CNPA Staff
Sally Dowden	Speyside Wildlife
Ian Dunlop	VisitScotland
Trish Eccles	Nethy Station
Murray Ferguson	CNPA Staff
Fred Gordon	Aberdeenshire Council
Pamela Grant	Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce
Bob Kinnaird	CNPA Board Member
Abndrew Kirk	Cairn Hotel, Carrbridge
Rita Marks	Moray Tourism Forum
Mark McClelland Jones	Volunteer Centre Moray
Gillian McCrum	Macaulay Institute
Mick Pawley	Angus Council
Martin Price	UHI
Alan Rankin	Aviemore & the Cairngorms DMO
Andy Rockall	SNH
Roger Searle	
James Stewart	Blair Atholl Area Tourism Association
Tim Walker	Sportscotland
Silvia Woodier	Brooklynn Guest House

Welcome & Remit of Advisory Forums

Bruce Luffman confirmed the remit of the new advisory forum would be to provide advice and feedback to the CNPA and its partner organisations on the management of the National Park, specifically in terms of progress being made in delivering the park plan, any issues or concerns that need to be addressed and helping to generate new ideas for policy and implementation. The second role is for the forums to help communicate key messages with other interested parties to help gain their support and understanding for the work being carried out in association with the Park Plan. The scope of the forum will be to provide a strategic overview of the progress being made across the Park from the perspective of people Enjoying and Understanding the Park, one of the Park Plan's strategic themes. Membership of the Forum aims to be open and inclusive and may change over time as additional members are invited to contribute to ensure the Forum maintain a breadth of interest and experience. It was agreed that any suggestions for new members should be passed to Gavin Miles or Francoise van Buuren so that their names could be included in future correspondence relating to National Park Plan advisory forum meetings.

Election of a Chair for ‘Enjoying & Understanding the Park’ Advisory Forum

Bruce Luffman invited nominations for Chair of the Advisory Forum and Fred Gordon nominated Sally Dowden which was seconded by Trish Eccles. Sally confirmed she was happy to take on the role of Chair for the Advisory Forum for the next 12 months which would meet twice a year.

Close of old Visit Forum Business

Following a review of Park-wide print materials a number of actions have been agreed to be taken forward by the National Park Plan Awareness & Understanding priority for action delivery team. Recommendations fell into three broad areas of work:-

1. Improved Distribution
 - Review current commercial distribution arrangements
 - Work more closely with VisitScotland and CCC
 - Promote visitor leaflets to tourism businesses including other partners leaflets e.g. SNH.
 - CNPA produce more branded leaflet racks
2. Improved Design
 - CNPA produce design guideline for Park wide leaflets.
 - Titles of leaflets to be clear and clearly visible when racked.
 - Leaflet designs to clearly inform the user about the content of the leaflet
3. Scope
 - Countryside Events Leaflet to be produced on-line only and if possible to link with VisitScotlands events e-bulletin.
 - CNPA to look at use and usefulness of ‘Welcome Leaflet’ and ‘Traditional Place Names’ leaflets.
 - CNPA to encourage private sector to produce path guides in CNP.
 - CNPA to produce design guidelines for ‘community path leaflets’.

A website for the Park as a whole focusing on visitor information is being developed and it is anticipated this will be available in the early part of 2008. The project to develop this site has involved input from VisitScotland, the DMOs and the CNPA and has been put out for competitive tender.

Priority for Action Success Measures - General Discussion Points:

- Measures should focus on successes as well as areas that need improvement and issues being measured should be presented in context of successes (e.g. nos of people who access and actively enjoy the Park)
- Keep clear focus on the NPP five year outcomes
- Need benchmarks to know where we are now in order to measure progress
- Need tangible measures to demonstrate success (success breeds success)
- Need qualitative as well as quantitative measures (more is not always better)
- Measures need to be agreed (what do we want/how will they be used/are they comparable/do they measure progress over time)
- Look at what measures are already available/consistency and robustness of data available)
- Need measures to inter-link and be more generic to see what consequences certain activities have across all priority for action outcomes

- Need to consider whether measures reflect cause and effect/ important to link measures to reasons for cause/effect of changes in the Park
- Involve the private sector in the monitoring process and take ownership to ask particular questions of visitors etc. (Tourism Intelligence Scotland co-ordinates consumer research/attitude surveys to gain comparable data and avoid duplication)
- Monitoring should be a tool to support the implementation of the park plan and should not be an end in itself particularly if it detracts from delivering on the ground (analogy of car dash board showing speed and fuel only compared to all the information available today – start with important information and then gradually add to it making sure additional measures do improve performance)

Raising awareness and understanding of the Park success measures:

- Carry out attitude surveys on a five year time frame
- Measure tangible and intangible outcomes (e.g. occupancy figures as well as enjoyment/happiness ‘would you recommend a visit to the park to a friend?’)

Providing high quality opportunities for outdoor access success measures:

- Need a measure which reflects inclusivity and an increase in opportunities for those less able to gain access to the Park (Park for All)

Making tourism and businesses more sustainable success measures:

- Numbers of businesses taking up the Green Tourism Business Scheme
- Figures relating to change of ownership of businesses
- Use of local produce/services
- Use of public transport
- Involvement of small businesses
- Aviemore & Cairngorms DMO is working on a business barometer for the Park via a web-based survey which looks at trends (occupancy, investment, business confidence etc.) – it was suggested the Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce could help pilot the survey with their members

Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and landscapes success measures:

- Specific targets are measured by SNH on designated sites (species and conditions of habitats) but this does not explain cause of effect of changes which are much more difficult to understand or explain
- Information on biodiversity and landscapes in the Park is important as it is why people come and can help raise people’s understanding of the Park

Date of the next meeting:

It was agreed that there would be two meetings each year and that forums would be full day meetings (10am – 3pm). The next meeting would be in the early spring of 2008 and a date would be agreed with the new Chair to ensure this meets the needs of the advisory forum members.