

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

**Title: COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME
2017/18**

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COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

Purpose

To update Board members on the communications & engagement activities carried out during 2016/17 and gain approval for the proposed programme of activity for 2017/18. This programme of work has been guided by the Communications and Brand board group chaired by Brian Wood consisting of Gregor Hutcheon, Paul Easto, Eleanor Mackintosh, Janet Hunter, Angela Douglas and Dave Fallows.

Recommendations

Board Members approve the proposed Communications and Engagement Programme for 2017/18. The final communications & engagement budget will be approved as part of the operational plan in March 2017. Indicative figures for the next year are set out in the Corporate Plan; however this will be subject to the outcome of the spending review and National Park Partnership Plan consultation.

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:

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| 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 2016/17 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; the National Park Partnership consultation, Cairngorm & Glenmore consultation, digital communications, media relations, stakeholder engagement & events, corporate publications. See Annex I for details of the progress made to date and the proposed activities for 2017/18.

Monitoring & KPIs

4. Since last September the only opinion survey results available are those of the Business Barometer carried out by the CBP across the Park. The full year results for 2015 show that businesses increasingly see that being in the CNP has a positive influence on their business both in terms of attracting first time customers and repeat business. The influence of the Park on business operation and business profitability is still perceived as relatively low but is increasing and is rated at the highest level since the survey began. The recognition of the support of CNPA is also increasing slowly.
5. A survey with all MSPs will be carried out in the autumn in partnership with Loch Lomond & the Trossachs NPA and results will be available in January 2017. The next Visitor Survey will be carried out in 2020.
6. All our key stakeholders including residents have been encouraged to engage in the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) consultation which asks for people's views on nine big issues to be addressed over the next five years. Launched on 27th June the consultation ends on 30th September and a final National Park Partnership Plan will be prepared for approval by Scottish Ministers by April 2017.
7. Since its launch in November 2013 the number of businesses signed up to the Brand Charter is 123 with 148 signed up to the MIY e-bulletin.
8. Design Awards 2016 were launched in support of the 2016 Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design and has resulted in 32 entries. Judging will take place over the summer and the winner will be announced at an event in November.
9. Progress has been made to build up our online presence through social media, blogs, e-newsletters and our website. Statistics on the next page are compared to the benchmark set in August 2015 as key indicators over the corporate plan period of 2015-2018:

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Paper 4 30th September 2016

Measure	2015 Benchmark	1st September 2016	Target 2016/17
Unique Visits	166,190	155,695	180,000
Ave Page Views	2.98	2.86	3
Ave time	2.33	2.22	2.4
Bounce Rate	49.64%	52.68%	50%
Social Media followers	C News: 3,367 C Nature: 4,000 Active C: 550 Total: 7,917	C News: 4,600 C Nature: 8,454 Active C: 1,632 Total: 14,686	C News: 4,200 C Nature: 5,000 Active C: 825 Total: 10,000
SM Engagement	N/A	7% - monthly average	12% - monthly average
e-bulletins	CNews/Nature: 1,103 Active C: 0 MIY: 0 Total: 1,473	CNews/Nature: 1,211 Active C: 240 MIY: 148 Total: 1,599	CNews/Nature: 1,500 Active C: 500 MIY: 200 Total: 2,200

10. Recommendation: note progress made to date.

Proposed programme for 2017/18

11. 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) Interactive presentation sessions with visitor facing staff & programme of presentations developed with community groups.
- b) Develop links with VisitScotland 'iKnow' scheme including business product knowledge training, links with VICs and the online community.
- c) Improve online presence of CNP for visitors on CNPA and partner websites such as VisitScotland and neighbouring 'Destinations'.
- d) Increase use of the Park brand and support materials at major visitor attractions; Highland Wildlife Park, Highland Folk Museum, Cairngorm Mountain, Ballater Station.
- e) Promote the Snow Roads Scenic Route as a visitor experience to encourage visitors to the Eastern Cairngorms.

- f) Relationship management programme in place with Brand users & MIY supporters to include communicating cairngorms 'free resources' particularly for use on social media & Gaelic as an Asset.
- g) Regional Marketing Strategy in place guiding activity and campaign delivery in collaboration with VisitScotland, Cairngorms Business Partnership and others.
- h) Prioritisation of activity based on the current review of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy and development of the new Tourism Action Plan.

Cairngorms Nature

- a) Raise the profile of Cairngorms Nature with potential enthusiasts and supporters (CN Young Presenter competition, CN Farm Award, CN Festival)
- b) Promote the conservation work being delivered across the Park (CN Seminar)
- c) Raise understanding and support for the Capercaillie programme of work (HLF bid)
- d) Promote volunteering opportunities in the Park and increase levels of engagement
- e) CN Festival 2017 – increased publicity and number of attendees actively involved
- f) LEADER bid to develop a sustainable model by CN Festival by 2020
- g) CN Seminar 2017 – 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 – build SM followers/engagement & improve CNP web pages (Discover & Explore)
- 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) Review 'Wee Walks Week' 2016 to build on successes and increase participation
- d) 'Getting Started Pathway' initiative to encourage less active people to try a new activity with support from Ramblers Scotland
- e) Support walking/cycling festivals by including 'Be Active' events aimed at less active residents & visitors/work with local schools to encourage walking/cycling to school
- f) Develop an environmental volunteering programme
- g) Support Mountains and People Project in promoting upland paths
- h) Work with Developing Mountain Biking Scotland to support their biennial international conference in Aviemore, November 2016
- i) Work with Ramblers Scotland & CBP to submit a bid for Eurando 2021

Corporate Communications

- a) Produce final NPPP for submission to Ministers and prepare for LDP2 consultation
- b) Build up our digital communications capabilities and activities
- c) Manage, monitor and develop the CNP website
- d) Co-ordinate and monitor our corporate stakeholder & events programme
- e) Corporate publications including our annual review & NPPP progress report
- f) Gaelic Language Plan delivery, annual progress report & preparation of CNPA Gaelic Language Plan 2018 for consultation and submission by March 2018
- g) Promote the CNPA's planning services & Design Awards 2016
- h) Corporate media relations and issues management
- i) Major projects support (ACM, Cairngorm & Glenmore, A9, HLF bids, LEADER)

12. Recommendation: approved proposed programme of work for 2017/18.

Resource Implications

13. 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 2017/18 budget will be approved as part of the operational plan in March 2017.

Success Measures

14. The **Corporate** Plan has identified 3 Key Performance Indicators:
- i. *Opinion Survey Results*: Visitor Survey, MSP Survey, Business Barometer
 - ii. *Digital Communications Statistics*: website users, social media followers, e-bulletin subscribers/recipients
 - iii. *Campaign Specific Indicators*: '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

15. It is proposed that the Communications & Brand Group continues to provide Board support and advice for this area of work. The Board will be updated on progress through the CEO quarterly reports, the Corporate Plan reporting processes and an annual update along with details of the proposed programme for 2018/19 to be presented at the September 2017 Board meeting.

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September 2016

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