

## **CAIRNGORMS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

**Meeting held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2003 at 10.30am  
At the Lonach Hall, Strathdon**

### **Present**

Sally Dowden (Chair)	Speyside Wildlife
Ruathy Donald	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Ian Dunlop	Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board
Patricia Eccles	Nethy House, Nethy Bridge
John Grant	Rothiemurchus Estate
Jane Hope	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Bob Kinnaird	Cairngorm Mountain
James MacFarlane	Muckrach House Hotel, Dulnain Bridge
Elma McMenemy	Royal Deeside and Mearns Tourism Forum
David Noble	Highlands of Scotland Tourist Board
Andrew Thin	Convenor, Cairngorms National Park Authority
Bob Wilson	Aberdeen & Grampian Tourist Board
Andrew Bruce Wootton	Atholl Estates

### **Apologies**

Bruce Luffman	Auld Cummerton, Strathdon
Andrew Kirk	The Cairn Hotel, Carrbridge
Gary Marsden	Balmoral Estate
Meg Mearns	Brandy Burn Hotel, Glen Clova
James Milne	Kinross House, Grantown
Caroline Mitchell	Aberlour Distillery
Christine Morrison	Rothiemurchus Estate
Douglas Ritchie	Perth and Kinross Tourist Board
Bob Severn	National Park Board member
Syd Smardon	Speyside Highland Leisure Park, Aviemore
Colin Smith	Angus and Dundee Tourist Board
Sean Sullivan	Aviemore Mountain Resort
Elizabeth Thompson	Dalwhinnie Distillery
Ken Thomson	Craigendarroch Hotel, Ballater
Tim Walker	Sportscotland Glenmore Lodge
Andy Wells	Glenlivet Estate, Tomintoul

### **Welcome and Apologies**

### **Action**

1. Sally Dowden welcomed those present to the meeting and explained that in Bruce's absence she would chair the meeting.

### **Minutes of the Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

2. It was agreed that future minutes should be succinct and action orientated as the previous verbatim report of the meeting was not helpful. Amendments to para's 27, 31 & 33 were made as follows:
  - Para 27: Change "John Grant said..." to "It was important that the industry works with Visitscotland to identify the solutions to tourism problems."
  - Para 31 Third sentence delete as inaccurate.
  - Para 33 Change paragraph to "It is important that in developing and promoting the area, people behave responsibly when visiting, especially in respect of land management, and that in all aspects those responsible learn from mistakes made in the past."

3. Thereafter the minutes were approved.

#### Matters Arising:

4. It was confirmed that the publication of the Cairngorms Visitor Guide is going ahead will be available in January. A Leader + funding application will be made, however should this be unsuccessful, contingency funding is in place.
5. Ruathy Donald confirmed that Sam Ham would deliver a series of workshops on interpretation in the Cairngorms during the week of the 19<sup>th</sup> –23rd January 2004. One workshop will be held on Cairngorm Mountain, with the on site interpretation used as a case study.
6. Sally Dowden explained that the concept of the Cairngorms National Park having a presence at the World Travel Market had been explored, however it was felt that the available timescale was too short this year but a presence would be considered in the future.
7. Sally Dowden said that at the recent AGM of the Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce it was unanimously agreed to support the resolution to amend the constitution to expand the Chamber area.

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#### Role of the Forum as a Working Group

8. It was explained that the Board had approved a series of Working Groups to deliver outputs on various issues. The Tourism Forum would assume the role of the Tourism Development Working Group and will remain industry led, and industry focussed.
9. Bruce Luffman was proposed and seconded as Chair of the Working Group and Sally Dowden was proposed and seconded as vice Chair of the Group.
10. It was agreed that meetings may need to be bi monthly in the short term, moving to quarterly in the medium to longer term.
11. It was agreed it would be helpful if members were kept informed of developments in other working groups, therefore a short bi monthly paper updating members will be prepared and circulated by Ruathy Donald.
12. As most members often have links with many different organisations, it was suggested that it would be useful to know of all relevant “hats” Working Group members wear. It was agreed that this list should be prepared as it would be helpful in developing links.
13. The purpose of the Working Group and its short term outputs were discussed and agreed, subject to the timescale of the second output being changed from Feb 04 to March 04.
14. The first output for the Working Group is to identify the key issues affecting tourism in the Cairngorms. Ruathy Donald tabled bullet points of some of the key issues as a starting point for discussion. It was agreed that the key issues should be considered and discussed amongst all Working Group members, with comments fed in to Ruathy by **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November.**

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### **Feedback from Ministerial meeting and the meeting between ATB's & CNPA**

15. Jane Hope explained that she, and Andrew Thin had met with Allan Wilson, Minister for the Environment, during which tourism in the National Park was discussed. Following this Allan Wilson met Frank McAveety, Minister for Tourism Culture and Sport in October to discuss tourism challenges and opportunities in the Cairngorms National Park. The feedback from this meeting was that ministers recognise the difficulties presented by the current situation, and that the co-ordination and integration of all public and private sector organisations involved is crucial to the success of tourism in the area. It was recognised that relationships with VisitScotland and the Parks need to be improved and the Scottish Executive will be in contact with VisitScotland in the near future to discuss this in more detail. Furthermore the report on the review of the Area Tourist Boards will be known by the end of the year.
16. Jane Hope went on to explain that she had met with the Chief Executives of the ATB's and Park Board members last week to discuss what needs to be done to improve co-ordination and deliver particularly in relation to funding of tourism initiatives and to what extent this should be included in the National Park Corporate Plan.

### **Cairngorms Strategic Marketing Plan**

17. Ruathy Donald explained that View Marketing have been appointed by the National Park Authority to deliver a Marketing Strategy for the Cairngorms, building on work already done for the ABSC Group but on a pan Park basis. The work already developed on marketing by HOST will also be incorporated within the Marketing Strategy. A draft Strategy will be completed by week ending 21<sup>st</sup> November and will be sent out to Working Group members for comment thereafter, via e-mail, for discussion at the next meeting of the Group.

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### **ABSC Update**

18. It was explained that following the update given at the last meeting, progress has been made, focussing on delivering tactical marketing activity, particularly PR. The Group welcomed the fact that the same consultant is engaged in both Marketing Strategy and ABSC developments as this should avoid duplication and ensure cohesive links are maintained.

### **Cairngorms Visitor Survey Update**

19. Ruathy Donald explained that the Cairngorms Visitor Survey is ongoing in the area until May 2004, with the same survey running concurrently in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, which as it is a month ahead will finish in April 2004. The survey uses both face-to-face interviews and self-administered questionnaire techniques to date the consultants are on target for the anticipated and required number of responses.

### **Tourism Training**

20. Ruathy Donald explained that training for a National Park Welcome, led by Tourist Board Training, is scheduled to take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> November at the Heather Centre, Skye of Curr and Glen Lui Hotel, Ballater respectively. This training is open to all to all those involved in tourism.
21. **Date of Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30 in Grantown on Spey at a venue to be confirmed.