

# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## FOR INFORMATION

**Title:** CORPORATE PLAN REPORT: THEME 1

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### **Purpose**

To inform the Board of our work to achieve the first theme of the Corporate Plan 2005-08 and plans for future activity.

### **Recommendations**

- a) That the Board note the progress and plans for achieving the first theme of the Corporate Plan 2005-08.

### **Executive Summary**

The first theme of the Corporate Plan for 2005-08 is:

*“To enable current and future generations to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the Park in a way that fosters those qualities and supports the activities of others.”*

This report follows on from the last report in August 2006 and has been structured around key policy areas. A brief progress report and consideration of future plans is given under the following headings:

- a) Outdoor access
  - b) Ranger services
  - c) Visitor information and interpretation
  - d) Entry point markers and other signage
  - e) John Muir Award
  - f) Sustainable tourism
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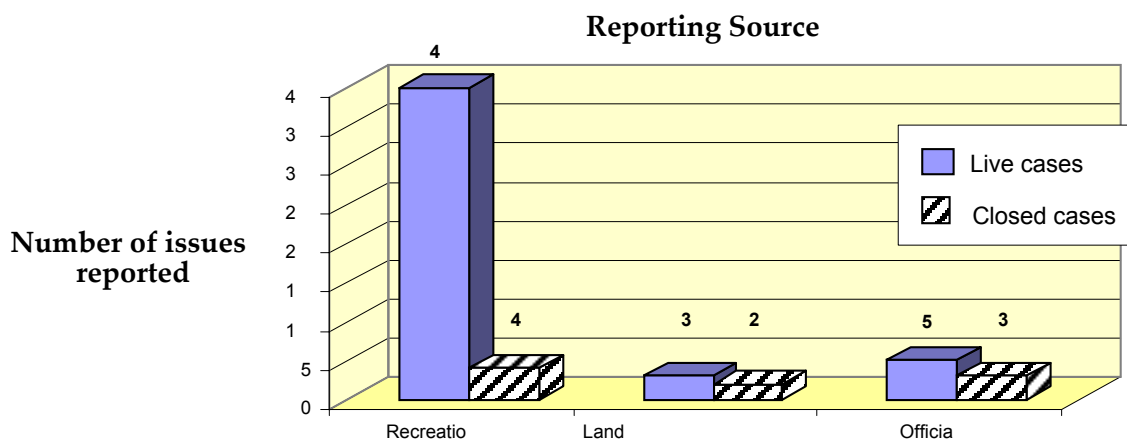
## CORPORATE PLAN REPORT: THEME 1 – FOR INFORMATION

### Background

1. The first theme of the Corporate Plan for 2005-08 is:  
“To enable current and future generations to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the Park in a way that fosters those qualities and supports the activities of others.”
2. Delivery of the first Corporate Plan theme is primarily the responsibility of the Visitor Services and Recreation Group and the Economic and Social Development Group, although other members of staff also make substantial contributions.

### Outdoor Access

3. The Park Authority has been the access authority for over two and half years now. Good progress has been made in fulfilling each of the four key statutory duties (shown in italics below):
  - a) The Cairngorms *Local Outdoor Access Forum* (LOAF) is now fully established. An internal review of the Forum was undertaken in August 1997 and, overall, the conclusion from Forum members and staff was that there was a high degree of satisfaction with the way the Forum is functioning. The review also led to a number of minor improvements to procedures. A successful annual open event was held in Nethy Bridge in October. The Business Report for the Forum was published in Autumn 2007 and is available in hard copy and online.
  - b) The second phase of public engagement on the *Core Paths Plan* (CPP) took place between April and July 2007. A significant paper will be presented at the January meeting of the Board, seeking approval to submit the Plan to Ministers. In the future attention will turn to getting the network established and in favourable condition through signposting and other works in agreement with land managers.
  - c) A considerable amount of work has gone into *publicising the new Scottish Outdoor Access Code* and, along with SNH, promoting awareness and understanding of it. Activity has included running courses under the Land Based Business Training Scheme, organising workshops for golf course managers and hosting the Spey Users Group which brings together paddlers and fishing representatives on the Spey.
  - d) The Park Authority has a duty to *uphold access rights*. Detailed reports are routinely made to the LOAF on the number and type of issues that are reported. The Forum advises on the most difficult cases and has helped develop procedures to decide on priorities. The caseload has stabilised at around 50 live cases and the breakdown by which group has reported the issue to CNPA is shown in Figure 1.



4. The Outdoor Access Strategy for the Park was approved in March 2007 and has now been printed and circulated. There has been good progress in recent months with the formation of a Trust to lead much of the practical work on outdoor access. An agreement has been reached with the Directors of the Upper Deeside Access Trust to change the name and constitution of the Trust so that it can cover the whole of the National Park.
  
5. A number of specific projects have moved forward in recent months, as summarised in the table below:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Progress report</b>	<b>Future plans (next six months)</b>
Proposed Speyside Way extension to Newtonmore	CNPA has advised SNH on the line of the route extension.	SNH to seek Ministerial approval.
Aviemore to Glenmore Off-road Route	Funding package is in place, planning permission has been granted and contractors are ready to commence works.	Completion of the route.
Upland path repair and bridges	Plans for strategic assessment through stakeholder workshop to being taken forward by Upper Deeside Access Trust.	Completion of assessment and business planning through Trust
Low ground path repair/enhancement	Upper Deeside Access Trust have completed a number of low ground paths in Deeside. Aberdeenshire Council have made good	CNPA and Highland Council to fund replacement of Gynack Bridge in Kingussie.

Project	Progress report	Future plans (next six months)
	progress with completion of Deeside Way.	
Community Investment Programme	Nine community-led path development projects supported and budget fully committed	Further round of projects in discussion with community representatives
Events Guidance	Policy on organised outdoor access events was agreed through Outdoor Access Strategy. Project Team is in place to develop guidance.	Workshop is planned for late November and Guidance to be produced by Spring 2008.

### Ranger Services

6. A comprehensive paper on the coordination of ranger services is on the agenda for the November meeting of the Board.

### Visitor Information and Interpretation

7. Progress and plans are outlined in the table below:

Project	Progress Report	Future Actions
Visitor Information	A review took place of the visitor oriented print material, with input from the ViSIT Forum, finalised with Delivery Team.	Implement changes arising from the review. Production of new suite of leaflets with unified design and brand image
Vital Spark International Conference	Very successful conference held in Aviemore at which the National Park had high profile.	Follow up actions to build on energy and interest generated by the event
Support for key place for visitor information	Designs in development for Rothiemurchus and Nethy Bridge.  Design under development to use panoramic paintings in community notice boards.	Installation of panels.
Interpretation guidance	Project under way and making good progress	Roll out guidance in 2008 with a series of practical workshops.
Community Investment Programme	Olympians Statute unveiled in Aviemore by Sebastian Coe.  Five interpretation projects in development.	New interpretation to be installed at Highland Wildlife Park, Glen Tanar and Loch Garten

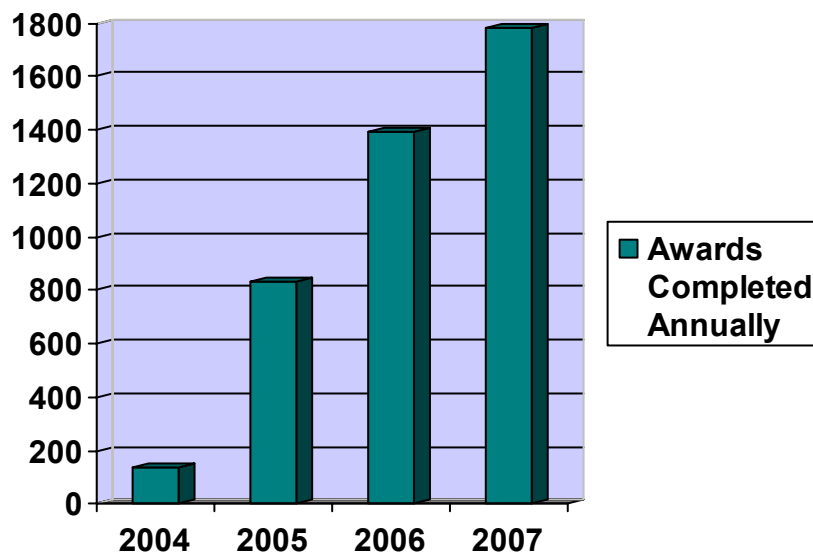
## Entry Point Markers and Other Signage

8. All markers are now in place at stations and on non-trunk roads. Work is currently under way at two sites on trunk roads. The development of five painted panoramic maps of the Park, to go along with the entry point markers at suitable sites, has had a very good reception. The first map is due to be installed at Dinnet in early 2008. Plans are developing to use the maps in a wide variety of other ways to promote awareness and understanding of the Park.
9. Scoping study of brown tourist signs to Park has been completed. Some signs will be installed this financial year in partnership with local authorities. Funding has been allocated for re-signing the Highland Tourist Route in line with this study.

## John Muir Award

10. The John Muir Award Project, run in partnership with SNH and John Muir Trust, has exceeded its targets annually and continues to grow in terms of total participants (Figure 2) and the number of centres assisting the project (currently around 40 active providers involved with the project). Participants are predominantly young people and nearly 12% of participants were identified as coming from groups that find it challenging to get outdoors and experience a sense of wildness. In a survey of participants, 96% agreed that the John Muir Award had given them the chance to do something for wild places and 74% said that it had positively changed the way that they behaved toward the environment.

**Figure 2: John Muir Award Annual Outputs, 2003 to 2007 (to date)**



11. The Board have recently approved, in principle, a three year extension of project to link to the development of junior rangers.

## **Sustainable Tourism**

12. The work associated with delivery of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy runs across two Corporate Plan themes. The work that is not covered under the headings above was reported on under Theme 3 in September 2007.

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**November 2007**

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