

# **Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan**

## **Consultation and Engagement Process - Stage 1**

### **Community Engagement & Results – Central Cairngorms**

#### **Introduction**

The core paths plan process targeted four main interest groups to engage with, these included; communities, land managers, people who recreate in the National Park (visitors and residents including businesses, national organisations and clubs e.g. Ramblers, Scottish Canoe Association, Cairngorm Club etc.) and visitors to the National Park (those who may not specifically come to the Park to recreate but may do so whilst they are here). The following report details how the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) engaged with the public for the Central Cairngorms, the people who participated in the engagement process and the feedback and results that they provided.

#### **Engaging with the public for the Central Cairngorms**

The engagement period ran from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006. Questionnaires for the Central Cairngorms were made available on the CNPA website, through contacting the CNPA directly and at drop-in events across the National Park.

#### **Participants in the Engagement Process**

Throughout the 3 month period a total of 21 questionnaires were completed for the Central Cairngorms. To help the CNPA gauge

whether or not the process successfully engaged with a wide enough cross section of people, the questionnaires asked people to provide information on their gender, age group and where they live. The results are shown below.

Participants by Gender

Male	71%	Female	29%
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Participants by Age Group

Under 16	0%	16 - 24	0%	25 - 44	10%	45 - 64	75%	65 - 74	10%	Over 75	0%
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Where people came from

% of people from each place who completed questionnaires			
Central Cairngorms	70%	Elsewhere	30%

## Results of the Engagement Process

### Map Results

People were given the opportunity to provide their views on the Central Cairngorms area via questionnaires and at events. People were asked to identify the paths that are important to them on a map in the questionnaire, they were also asked to identify any new routes or areas that they would like to have easier access to and were encouraged to make comments. Participants at events throughout the National Park were asked to annotate large maps highlighting their popular routes in detail and also adding comments. Where someone made a comment on the maps this has been listed in a table shown in Annex 1. The routes identified by people for the Central Cairngorms area are shown in Annex 2. Each comment has a number attributed to it to enable cross-referencing with the map in Annex 2 (only where the comment is specific to a geographic area). The routes shown in a solid line are those which people identified as being important to them. The dashed lines are proposed routes that people identified.

### Questionnaire Results

A total of 21 questionnaires were received for the Central Cairngorms area. The responses to each of the questions are outlined below.

*What outdoor activities do you currently do in and around Central Cairngorms?*

Activity	% of respondents who undertake the activity
Low level walking	67%
Dog walking	29%
Hill walking	90%
Running	10%
Getting about in a wheelchair	0%
Walking with a pushchair	5%
Cycling off-road	71%
Climbing	29%
Horse-riding	10%
Watersports	5%
Winter sports	48%
None	0%
Other*	14%

\*Other activities identified were 'Backpacking', 'Nordic Ski Touring' and 'Teach walking & climbing skills (my occupation)'.

*Why do you do these activities?*

Reason	% of respondents who identified the reason
To keep fit/healthy	86%
Enjoying the Countryside	90%
Travel to work/school	52%
Getting about	62%
Other*	19%

\*Other reasons identified were 'For work', 'Tourism Business', 'Holiday riding business' and 'refresh the soul'.

*What activities would you like to see better opportunities for in and around the area?*

Activity	% of respondents who identified the activity
Low level walking	19%
Dog walking	5%
Hill walking	33%
Running	0%
Getting about in a wheelchair	10%
Walking with a pushchair	5%
Cycling off-road	43%
Climbing	5%
Horse-riding	10%
Watersports	5%
Winter sports	19%
None	10%
Other*	10%

\*Other activities identified were 'Nordic Walking Trails' and 'cycling on-road'.

*Would better opportunities for these activities encourage you to;*

Reason	% of respondents who identified each activity
Visit new places	48%
Get fit	38%
Try new activities	24%
Get outdoors more	57%
Other	5%

### Summary

During the public engagement process it was found that the area is highly valued for its special qualities and there is a desire not to see promoted paths within the area. The most popular paths identified were Glen Avon including Glen Builg (identified by 52% of

respondents). Glen Feshie to the Geldie Burn and the Lairig and Laoigh were also very popular.

Most activities proved popular in the area although hill-walking and was by far the most popular, closely followed by cycling off-road with most people doing activities to keep fit and healthy and to enjoy the countryside. There was some demand for better off-road cycling opportunities.

## **Reflections**

There was a reasonable response for the Central Cairngorms area although it came from a fairly limited age group and there were no responses from visitors. A lot of information was compiled on maps at many of the events throughout the National Park. In particular there was a good response from people who attended the outdoor activities workshops that were held in Ballater and Aviemore.

## **Next Steps**

The issues raised and the information gathered throughout the process will be used to inform the development of selection criteria for core paths. The selection criteria will then be used to select core paths for the Cairngorms National Park. The selection criteria and maps of the selected paths will be drawn up into an Interim Draft Core Paths Plan which will be completed by the end of March 2007. This Plan will then be made available for the public to make comment.

**Cairngorms National Park Authority**

**1 March 2007**

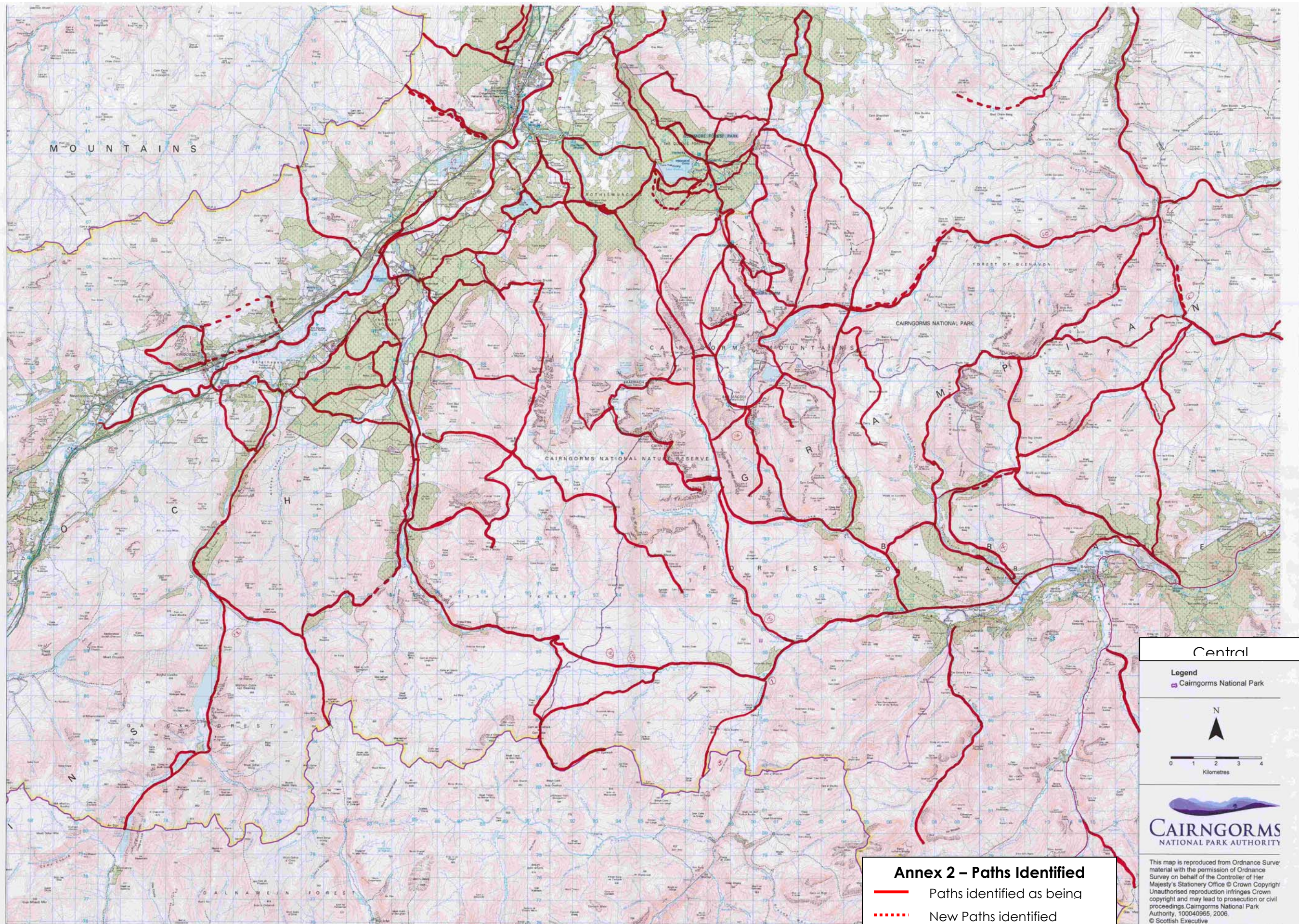
[sandramiddleton@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:sandramiddleton@cairngorms.co.uk)

## Annex 1 - Comments received on maps at events and in the questionnaires

Where the comment relates to a geographic area on the map the number of the comment has been written on to the map in Annex 2.	
No.	Comment ( <i>as written by respondent</i> )
1	Footbridge over Geldie Burn needed
2	Better path over the scree area
3	Improvement of path between Eidor Bridge and landrover track east
4	Footbridge needed to give access to Beinn a Bhuird
5	Possible link path to Fealar
6	Bridge over river to help link path
7	I'm a great devotee to the Cairngorm, mostly the Central ones i.e. Cairngorm, Ben MacDui, Cairn Toul and Braeriach (I've walked all the Munros in my younger days) The walks are wonderful, a great inspiration to get into these wild hills ( <i>not marked on Annex 2</i> )
8	No new paths! Only want erosion of current paths halted. ( <i>not marked on Annex 2</i> )
9	Note: I have marked in only what I call access routes to the hills, which I would be pleased to see improved, not internal hill routes which don't need signposts. Exception is main path to Ben MacDhui (as signposts but worth working on a constructed path). ( <i>not marked on Annex 2</i> )
10	Proposed route for C2C Highlands off-road cycle route
11	A proper Speyside Way i.e. access along bank or the river itself
12	Access blocked owing to new planting
13	Watershed of Geldie Burn – path is crossed by numerous rivulets – edged by very soft peaty ground. Some work has been done on part of the path- mostly useful for horses but in some places, stepping stones have been used. Useless for horses – and making it harder as we often have to use even softer parts of ground. Beyond where the path has been improved, there is one particular part where the ground is so boggy that it is almost impassable for horses, we would be very keen on some improvement here, as if we cannot get past this point, our whole route is negated.
14	Do not 'improve' both Lairigs all the way through!

15	Very bad bog. Path to inspect & upgrade Chest of Dee to Corroun.
16	Do not agree with designating 'upland' or 'high level paths' as core paths. Does the Park have an altitude cut off point for core paths?
17	Access to Loch Alvie?






**Annex 2 – Paths Identified**

- Paths identified as being
- ⋯ New Paths identified


**Central**

**Legend**


- Cairngorms National Park



N



0 1 2 3 4  
Kilometres



**CAIRNGORMS**  
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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