



► Residents in three communities are being asked how their villages could build on their past successes.

PAGE 3



► A school playground has been transformed into a wildlife wonderland thanks to a CNPA grant.

PAGE 5



► Hundreds of people have signed up for two new training schemes launched by the Park Authority.

PAGE 7

THE NEWSLETTER OF
 THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Parklife

A panoramic view of the Park



PEOPLE entering the Cairngorms National Park will be greeted with an interesting sight – a panoramic view of the Park.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has commissioned Heinz Vielkind, the world's leading

panoramic artist, to produce five panoramic views of the Park. It will be the first British national park to have such images.

The art work will highlight five different views: south east; east; north east; north west; south west, and will enable visitors to have a better

understanding of the Park's lay-out and geography as well as its communities.

Once completed, they will be placed at various entry points around the Park, highlighting to visitors how vast and varied the area is.

The panoramas will also be used as promotional material in a variety of ways and formats. For example, at tourist information centres, visitor attractions and by community groups.

The first panorama, from the east, has already been produced and will be erected at Dinnet.

Mr Vielkind is considered to be at the forefront of his field and is celebrated around the world due to the quality of his work. It will take him around two months to complete each image as he does them by hand.

The paintings form part of the Entry Point project, which has seen granite markers, featuring the National Park brand already placed at entry points such as Laggan and Dinnet.

The markers and panoramas will give an exciting and informative welcome to the Park.

POLICY

Delivering the Cairngorms National Park Plan

THE future vision of the Cairngorms National Park was secured last March when Scottish ministers approved the Cairngorms National Park Plan.

The statutory document sets out both the long-term vision (25 years) for the Park and the Priorities for Action during the first five years (2007-2012).

It was produced through collaboration between the Cairngorms National Park Authority and its partners, public, private and voluntary, as well as through extensive public consultation.

The CNPA and partner organisations are working together in seven delivery teams to make sure that the Priorities for Action are implemented over the next five years.

The delivery phase was formally launched at an event in Coylumbridge in September which included the first meetings of three advisory forums set up to advise the CNPA and other bodies on the management of the Park and the implementation of the National Park Plan.

The advisory teams focus on three key areas: understanding and enjoying the Park; communities living and working in the Park and conserving, enhancing and managing the Park.

Copies of the National Park Plan can be downloaded from www.cairngorms.co.uk



POLICY

Update on Paths in the Park

THE final draft document setting out proposals for core paths in the Cairngorms National Park has been drawn up.

The Draft Core Paths Plan is a statutory document identifying a network of important paths which will give the public reasonable access throughout the area. Core paths will be the main routes which will link into the wider path network.

The Draft Core Paths Plan has been developed following public consultation which took place earlier this year.

The document will now go to the CNPA board for approval to consult in December, before being submitted to the Scottish Government in February 2008. A final formal public consultation will take place later next year.



POLICY

Update on Deposit Local Plan

CHANGES are being made to a document setting out future development and land use in the Cairngorms National Park following a public consultation.

The Cairngorms National Park Deposit Local Plan went out for consultation earlier this year with the public being asked to make representations on the policies set out in it.

The Plan sets out proposed policies on how development and use of land in the Park should be guided and managed for a five year period.

Following the public response, the Park Authority is now making modifications to the document. They will be published early next year, when the public will again be invited to respond.

It will eventually form the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan, a statutory document which will replace the local plans currently in existence for the four local authority areas covering the Park: Aberdeenshire; Angus; Highland and Moray.

The Local Plan will help to deliver affordable housing, as well as conserve and enhance the Park's natural and cultural heritage. Although separate to the Cairngorms National Park Plan it will help to deliver its Priorities for Action.



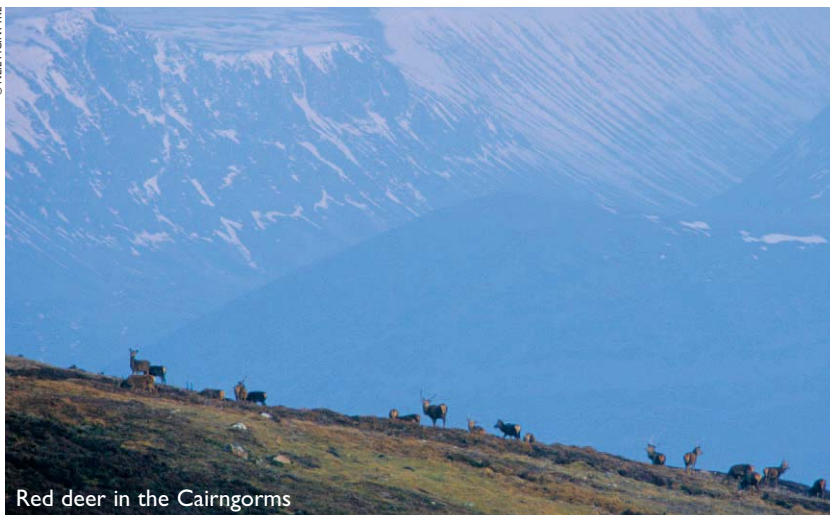
OUTDOOR ACCESS

Busy year for LOAF

IT has been a busy year for the Local Outdoor Access Forum with the publication of its first ever business report detailing its work over the past two years. The Forum of 21 members from recreational, land management and community sectors was set up by the CNPA to advise on outdoor access, rights of way and core paths. September also saw its second annual event held at Nethy Bridge. The highlight was a talk by Scottish mountaineer Jamie Andrews.

Copies of the LOAF Business Report can be downloaded from www.cairngorms.co.uk/outdooraccess

© NEL MONTYRE



Red deer in the Cairngorms

DEER MANAGEMENT

Raising awareness of deer issues

A NEW project by the Cairngorms National Park Authority aims to study the socio-economic impacts of deer reduction and the real costs and benefits it brings.

Many areas around the Park have experienced heavy culls to reduce deer, driven by both private and public sector policies. However many estates are concerned about the impacts of heavy culling on income and employment.

Project leader Colin MacClean from the CNPA said: "Scottish national parks have four aims including promoting the sustainable economic and social development of communities. This means that the Park Authority has a clear interest in the socio economic impacts of deer reductions."

Projects are also being developed

that will raise the public's awareness of deer management and the animals value in terms of stalking, venison and eco-tourism.

Following a successful public deer viewing event earlier this year by Lynaberack Estate, the CNPA and The Highland Council, more events are being planned over the next year. As well as increasing awareness about deer issues, it is hoped they will also develop commercial deer viewing opportunities.

The CNPA has also teamed up with the Country Sports Tourism Group to develop introductory sessions for the public on deer stalking. They will be particularly aimed at young, active people interested in land management and outdoor pursuits.

CONSULTATION

Residents help to improve their communities

RESIDENTS in three Cairngorms National Park communities are being asked how their villages could build on their past successes.

The Community Engagement Project started in August and is asking residents in Cromdale, Grantown-on-Spey and Dulnain Bridge about positive aspects of their community, how to build on them and the resources that need to be built on. The information will help to establish future projects and developments in the communities.

Hard to reach groups such as mothers and toddlers, disabled, elderly and youth, are being targeted to ensure there is a diverse and wide range of opinion.

The project is a pilot scheme carried out by Housing Plus on behalf of the CNPA, the local enterprise company, The Highland Council, community councils and others.

It will run until December, when the responses will be collated and an action plan drawn up detailing what the priorities are and how they could be delivered through possible future projects.

Claire Ross, the CNPA's education and inclusion manager, said: "The important thing is to make the pilot as fun, innovative and engaging as possible. Communities sometimes feel that they are over consulted, with this pilot we are keen to take the lead from the communities themselves."

ENVIRONMENT

John Muir Award's continued success

THE John Muir Award continues to go from strength to strength with 1,500 completing the course in the Park this year – the most since its launch in 2003.

The Award is an environmental scheme that encourages people to discover, explore and conserve a wild place, and to share those experiences with others.

It is named after the Scots born founder of National Parks and helps to meet one of the Priorities for Action for 2007-2012 in the Cairngorms National Park Plan – to raise awareness and understanding of the area. Earlier this year the CNPA board agreed to extend the use of the John Muir Award for a further three years, until 2010.

For more information on the John Muir Award contact Alan Smith, John Muir Award Manager; on 01479 870 518 or email alansmith@cairngorms.co.uk



© CNPA/STEWART GRANT

Toddlers collect litter in Anagach Woods, Grantown-on-Spey

Young musicians blaze a cèilidh trail in the Park



Young musicians taking part in the Cèilidh Trail

© FEISEAN NAN GAIDHEAL

THE Cairngorms National Park normally evokes romantic images of peaceful lochs, vast forests and spectacular, rolling mountains. Now a group of young people are ensuring that its cultural heritage becomes as celebrated as its natural beauty.

The Cairngorms Cèilidh Trail was launched earlier this year and is providing training and performance opportunities for young musicians from in and around the Park in traditional Highland music, dance and culture. Following auditions eight youngsters, aged 16 and 17, were chosen to front the group. They have been working with professional artists

to learn about music, dance, language and song.

The three-year project is being run by the traditional music development group Fèis Spè and has a number of aims, including:

- Providing performance, employment and professional development opportunities for young people aged between 16-25;
- Highlighting the traditional culture of the area through song, dance, Gaelic language and music, for the enjoyment of residents and visitors and
- Offering a high quality programme of events that will highlight the cultural heritage of the area and enhance people's enjoyment and experience of the Park.

Since its launch last May, the group has already staged ten performances. They have proved popular around the Park, from the Angus Glens to Glenlivet, with well

over 100 people watching performances in Ballater and Braemar.

Caroline Reagh, the project co-ordinator, said: "This was the first Cèilidh Trail I have managed and the group was enthusiastic, professional and extremely talented. They had never met before and yet gelled immediately, entertaining every audience. They even had people up dancing by the third tune.

"Anyone interested in joining our group should get in touch for the 2008 season."

There will be a series of performances over the Festive season from December 27th to January 3rd. The group will be performing at Talla Nan Ros, Kingussie, on January 3rd.

Check your local press for information on other events including at Braemar and Ballater. For more information or to join the group contact: Caroline Reagh on 0778 092 5663 or email: reagh@madasafish.com



Cèilidh trail drummer

© FEISEAN NAN GAIDHEAL

Wildlife wonderland

A SCHOOL playground has been transformed into a wildlife wonderland thanks to a biodiversity grant.



Abernethy Primary pupils enjoy their new wildlife pond

Pupils at Abernethy Primary are enjoying their new garden which was funded by the Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) project.

A new pond has been built at the school complete with native aquatic and marsh plants. An all access wooden foot bridge has been constructed over it to allow people to use it and study the pond's wildlife and plants. There is also a seasonal wet area at the site of a previous pond and a rockery garden.

A second garden, also funded through LBAP and Highland 2007, includes

vegetable patches, tree and plant seedlings and plants to attract butterflies.

It is hoped the improvements will support and strengthen the local wildlife, habitats and biodiversity and also be used as an educational resource to improve the pupils learning and understanding of the environment.

The work was carried out earlier this year as part of the school's successful bid to gain the Eco Schools Green Flag status – an international project that aims to improve environmental learning and action in schools.



Goldeneye duck

Supporting local biodiversity

BIODIVERSITY grants are awarded to groups and communities whose work helps to deliver the Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

The Action Plan aims to raise awareness of protecting, enhancing and appreciating the Park's biodiversity. Grants are awarded to projects that address the Plan, including addressing lack of data and/or important information, raising awareness of biodiversity, direct habitat loss and fragmentation, climate change, pollution, the control of non-native species and also objectives in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

Funding for 2008/09 is still to be finalised but for more information contact LBAP officers Justin Prigmore or Stephen Corcoran on 01479 870528 or email justinprigmore@cairngorms.co.uk or stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk

Other projects to benefit from the biodiversity grant this year include:

- a project by Birse Community Trust on auditing the wildlife around the area;
- Anagach Woods Trust for improvements at Kylindra meadow and pond;
- workshops for volunteer recorders on amphibians, dragonflies, moths, otters, bumblebees and fungi by the North East Scotland Biological Centre;
- two Farming Wildlife Advisory Group projects working with local farmers, one on barn owls in Deeside and the other on tree sparrows in the Angus Glens.



CINRISTEWART GRANT

THE GREEN OUTLOOK

David Green, convener of the Cairngorms National Park Authority

SOME of the most exciting and important work going on in the Cairngorms National Park is about action on climate change.

Earlier this year Scottish ministers approved the Cairngorms National Park Plan. This document will be a significant step forward in developing a sustainable National Park. Mitigating against and adapting to climate change are embedded in all the Plan's Priorities for Action and the work it will carry out over the next 25 years.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority board has also approved work on a range of projects that will help protect the Park, its special qualities, wildlife and landscapes.

Work is underway to develop a sustainability fund, supported by both

public and private sectors. This will provide grants for energy efficient and sustainable projects around the Park on a small and large scale. Community groups and individuals will be able to apply and it is hoped it will encourage innovative projects and learning, for example affordable heating through micro-grid district heating and training and support in how to become 'carbon neutral'.

Another initiative is establishing a one-stop-shop in the Park. This will act as an information and advice centre for residents, workers and visitors. In an area as large as the Park and with so many different public, private and voluntary organisations working in it, it is not always possible to know everything that is going on. The shop will help people to know more about the sustainability work and how they can get involved and be supported in that.

Another project the CNPA, along with Aberdeenshire Council, is involved with is the climate change unit set up by the Macaulay Institute. We have all

signed up to a Memorandum of Understanding which will allow a better understanding of climate change and its impacts in the Park. It will also help to identify ways of mitigating against and adapting to it in rural areas and how to significantly reduce the level of greenhouse gases in the Park.

These projects have been endorsed by others. Last August the Scottish Parliament Information Centre visited the Park to learn about our sustainability work. It is now intended to include the projects in a briefing guide to Scottish ministers for the climate change bill, which is due to be debated next year.

There is little doubt that climate change is having an impact on the natural heritage of the National Park. We must address this – we were designated as a National Park because it is an important area and we have a duty to conserve and enhance it. It will be a long-term commitment to ensure we have a sustainable Park that can be enjoyed by all for years to come.

TOURISM

Tourism course goes online

TOURISM businesses will be able to improve the service they provide visitors thanks to a new free online training course.

Cairngorms Connections has been running for two years to improve tourism businesses and visitor centres understanding and awareness of the National Park and its many attractions. Due to its popularity an online version was launched in August.

As part of the course, users are given a series of scenarios where they must provide a suitable itinerary according to the groups' requirements and preferences – for example a family of four wanting an adventure holiday.

The course has a step-by-step guide to help users and takes around

four hours to complete.

The project is unique to the Park and is being run by the Cairngorms National Park Authority and Tourist Board Training, with funding from the European Social Fund.

To enrol on Cairngorms Connections Online or to request a CD-Rom please contact Tourist Board Training on 01294 313006 or email tbt@tbt.visitscotland.com

HOUSING

Rural empty property grant

SURVEYS are being carried out on empty properties and steadings in the Park to assess whether they could be turned into affordable housing.

Property owners nominated their empty buildings or steadings to be

turned into affordable rented accommodation for a minimum of ten years under two Communities Scotland's grant schemes to address the Park's housing problem.

Communities Scotland will assess the properties to see if they meet the grant criteria and the CNPA will initially fund all the surveys.

If a property meets the criteria, the CNPA will then assist owners in applying to Communities Scotland for a Rural Empty Property Grant or Lead Tenancy Grant to help towards renovation work.



© KAREN ARCHER

Spey Valley

TRAINING

Learning rural skills

A NEW educational partnership between the CNPA and its partners is helping to engage youngsters in rural skills.

Earlier this year Maxine Garson was appointed as the first ever schools liaison officer for rural skills for The Highland Council and Cairngorms National Park areas.

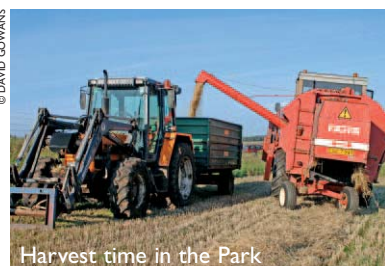
She is working with secondary schools to promote the Rural Skills 'Skills for Work' and 'Scottish Progression Awards' courses. They offer hands-on experience in the land based sector – such as agriculture, crop production and animal husbandry.

Pupils aged 14-17 take part in the courses and train at local farms, estates and forests to gain first-hand experience and better understanding of the sector. The courses are SQA qualified and are run as part of the timetable for S3-S6.

Maxine's post, which runs until August 2008, is being funded by the CNPA, The Highland Council and LANTRA.

For more information contact: Maxine Garson, schools liaison officer – Rural Skills, on 079 19 691 422 or email Maxine.garson@highland.gov.uk

© DAVID GOWANS



Harvest time in the Park

© CNPA



William MacKenzie and Matthew Donnelly enjoy their argocat training

TRAINING

New training schemes for Park residents

HUNDREDS of people have signed up for two new training schemes launched by the Park Authority this year.

Cairngorms Action for Training and Skills (CATS) is a bursary scheme for young people aged 16-24 living in the Park. It offers financial assistance in courses that will help them towards a career aligned to the Park's aims. A number of young people have benefited so far in areas such as winter sports instruction and farming.

Cairngorms Awareness and Pride (CAP) runs courses for residents and businesses to promote, teach and train in areas that are central to the

Park's aims and special qualities. Amongst the courses this year were pond creation; horticulture for crofters and small producers; habitats of the Cairngorms; and cultural heritage of the Cairngorms. Following a successful pilot period, the Cairngorms National Park Authority agreed to match fund it until 2010. A number of courses are already planned for 2008.

For more information on both projects or to book places contact Kate Christie or Sam Masson on 01479 870 535 or email katechristie@cairngorms.co.uk or sammasson@cairngorms.co.uk

SPORT

Cycle challenge round the Park

THE CNPA part-funded an exciting Park-wide cycle endurance event earlier this year.

The first ever Cycle Cairngorms took place in September with a group of cyclists completing a 169-

miles route which started and finished in Coylumbridge.

The event was organised by the charity Speyside Trust, which is based at Badaguish Outdoor Centre in Glenmore. It provides care, training education, and supported employment for the disabled.

The Trust also runs the popular Corrieyairack Challenge and Aviemore Half Marathon and it is

hoped to turn Cycle Cairngorms into an annual fundraising event.

The organisers are now looking for feedback from local communities and participants on this year's cycle to help them plan for the 2008 event, particularly to establish the least disruptive timed road closures.

For more information on Cycle Cairngorms call the Badaguish Outdoor Centre on 01479 861 285.

CREDIT



COMMUNICATIONS

Future plans for Parklife

KEEP an eye out for the new look Parklife that will be out next year.

In the last edition there was a questionnaire for readers to complete on their views of the magazine and how it could be developed, including the type of articles you would like to see included.

There were a total of 211 responses and it was clear that the three most popular subjects were wildlife, the environment and community.

You also said you would like to know more about paths, housing and planning.

Many thanks for all your comments. We have taken them into consideration and they will help us to develop an exciting new look Parklife that we are sure you will enjoy.

The next edition of Parklife is due to be published in Spring/Summer 2008.

*** The winner of the book, 'Wild Land: Images of nature from the Cairngorms' by Peter Cairns and Mark Hamblin was Roger Searle from Ballater.**

COMMUNICATIONS

Parklife

DON'T forget that Parklife is available in a variety of formats. You can read the newsletter on our website, at www.cairngorms.co.uk, or we can provide copies of all the articles in large print. It's also available on audio cassette.

We're always pleased to receive feedback about Parklife from our readers. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us at: Communications Team, Cairngorms National Park Authority, 14 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey, Moray PH26 3HG, tel: 01479 873535, email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk



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www.cairngorms.co.uk

WHAT'S ON?

Park Authority meetings

2007

16 November

Planning committee, Ballater

29 November

Open evening with CNPA board and staff, Strathdon

30 November

Finance committee, Planning committee and board meeting, Strathdon

14 December

Audit committee, Planning committee and board meeting, Nethy Bridge

2008

11 January

Planning committee, Nethy Bridge

8 February

Planning committee, Ballater

21 February

Open evening with CNPA board and staff, Carr-Bridge

22 February

Finance committee, Planning committee and board meeting, Aviemore

7 March

Planning committee, Nethy Bridge

21 March

Audit committee, Ballater

4 April

Planning committee, Ballater

18 April

Open evening with CNPA board and staff, Tomintoul

19 April

Board meeting, Tomintoul

2 May

Planning committee, Boat of Garten

30 May

Planning committee, Ballater

12 June

Open evening with CNPA board and staff, Glen Clova

13 June

Finance committee and board meeting, Glen Clova

27 June

Planning committee, Nethy Bridge

Please check local press or the CNPA website for further details of dates, times and venues.

www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority