



Cairngorms
NATIONAL PARK

Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaigh Ruaidh

MANAGEMENT PLANS

Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017



Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017

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Foreword



Scotland's National Parks are two of our greatest national assets. From the high mountains and straths of the Cairngorms to the lochs and woodlands of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, these areas of outstanding natural beauty provide some of our most iconic landscapes. They are important for their contribution to the Scottish tourist industry and wider economy, their rich cultural heritage and for the health and social benefits they bring our citizens. They are valued by the communities and people that live, work and find recreation and enjoyment in them.

Our National Park Authorities play a vital role in managing the Parks, in supporting sustainable rural development, in promoting and enhancing the visitor experience and ensuring that the Parks' stunning landscapes and special qualities are conserved and enhanced for future generations.

Success for our National Parks relies on close and effective partnership working – by Government, national agencies, local authorities, private businesses, charities, land managers and community organisations. I am confident that everyone will play their part, working together to make the most of the tremendous opportunities that the National Parks offer and to ensure that these special areas of Scotland achieve their full potential. We aspire to them being 'must visit' destinations – renowned for their landscapes, welcoming visitor experience and thriving communities.

The new five-year National Park Partnership Plans have been produced following extensive consultation and discussion. They set out in detail how the National Parks, and what they offer to the people of Scotland and visitors, will be enhanced over the next few years. We should be proud of our National Parks and, in partnership, work to ensure they stand as two of the best in the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stevenson', written in a cursive style.

Stewart Stevenson

Minister for Environment and Climate Change

Facal-tòiseachaidh

Tha dà Phàirc Nàiseanta na h-Alba air an fheadhainn as cudromaiche nar dùthaich. O bheanntan àrda is srathan a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh gu lochan is coilltean Loch Laomainn is nan Tròisichean, tha na sgìrean fìor àlainn seo mar phàirt den dreach-tìre as suaicheantaiche a th' againn. Tha iad cudromach a thaobh na chuireas iad ri gnìomhachas turasachd na h-Alba cho math ris an eaconamaidh san fharsaingeachd, ris an dualchas shaidhbhir chultarach agus air sgàth nam buannachdan slàinte is sòisealta a bheir iad dhar muinntir. Tha luach air a chur annta leis na coimhearsnachdan is na daoine a bhios a' fuireach, ag obair agus a' dèanamh caitheamh-aimsire annta.

Tha ròl cudromach aig Ùghdarrasan nam Pàircean Nàiseanta againn a thaobh a bhith a' stiùireadh nam Pàircean, a' cumail taic ri leasachadh dùthchail leantainneach, ag adhartachadh is a' cur ris na dh'fhiosraicheas luchd-tadhail agus a' dèanamh cinnteach gum bithear a' glèidheadh 's a' cur ri dreach-tìre is àilleachd àraid nam Pàircean air sgàth nan ginealachdan ri teachd.

Tha mar a shoirbhicheas le ar Pàircean Nàiseanta a' crochadh air co-obrachadh dlùth is èifeachdach - eadar an Riaghaltas, buidhnean nàiseanta, ùghdarrasan ionadaile, gnìomhachasan prìobhaideach, buidhnean-cathrannais, luchd-stiùiridh fearainn agus buidhnean coimhearsnachd. Tha mi glè chinnteach gun coilean na h-uile an ròl fhèin, ag obair còmhla gus làn-chothrom a ghabhail air na cothroman mìorbhaileach a thig an cois nam Pàircean Nàiseanta agus gus dèanamh cinnteach gun tèid na ghabhas coileanadh ann an sgìrean sònraichte seo na h-Alba a thoirt a-mach gu h-iomlan. 'S e ar n-amas gum bi iad mar àiteachan 'a dh'fheumar tadhal orra' - àiteachan a tha ainmeil a thaobh dreach-tìre, mar a dhèiligear ri luchd-tadhail agus air sgàth nan coimhearsnachdan soirbheachail annta.

Chaidh Planaichean Com-pàirteach còig-bliadhna nam Pàircean Nàiseanta a chur air dòigh an dèidh tòrr co-chomhairleachaidh is deasbaid. Tha iad a' cur an cèill gu mionaideach mar a thèid cur ris na Pàircean Nàiseanta, agus na bhios iad a' tabhann do mhuinntir na h-Alba 's do luchd-tadhail, sna beagan bhliadhnaichean a tha romhainn. Bu chòir dhuinn a bhith pròiseil às ar Pàircean Nàiseanta, agus ann an com-pàirteachas, a bhith ag obair còmhla gus dèanamh cinnteach gum bi iad mar an dà phàirc is fheàrr air an t-saoghal.



Stiùbhart Stevenson

Minister na h-Àrainneachd is Atharrachadh Sìde

I. National Parks in Scotland

Scottish National Park Principles:

- Our environment
- Parks for All
- Innovation
- Tourism and visitor management
- Acting on climate change
- Partnership



Scotland's National Parks are national assets. They are internationally recognised visitor destinations that showcase the very best of Scotland's environment.

Our National Parks can be models of sustainable rural development, generating growth, enhancing landscapes and biodiversity, supporting thriving communities and getting the best from our land. They are models of a collaborative approach to management delivering for people and place. The collective management of Scotland's National Parks contributes directly to the central purpose of the Scottish Government, creating sustainable economic growth and Scottish Government outcomes.

Scotland's National Parks share four aims set out by Parliament:

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
- To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
- To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
- To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

Both National Parks have a partnership plan which sets out the approach to managing each National Park, reflecting the special qualities, challenges and opportunities of each. The plans are therefore different but they share some basic principles that guide the management of both of Scotland's National Parks.

Scottish National Park Principles

Our environment

The conservation and enhancement of the environment is central to National Parks achieving their purpose. It underpins delivery of all four aims (see page 7) and is integral to the sustainable development needed to support communities and businesses to protect and enhance these areas for future generations.

Parks for All

National Parks are for all of Scotland's people and its visitors from around the world to enjoy. They should offer opportunities for all, regardless of physical ability, age, income or background. Thriving local communities and successful businesses are particularly important to sustaining the Park in the long-term and providing the services and facilities needed for a thriving rural economy.

Innovation

National Parks are a real opportunity to trial new approaches to public service delivery, visitor management, destination development and landscape-scale conservation that meet the needs of these places. They are geographical areas that provide significant but discrete areas to trial approaches that can then potentially be rolled out across Scotland.

Tourism and visitor management

National Parks are national tourism assets with international appeal that need sustainable approaches to visitor management and tourism development, balancing the needs of visitors, communities, businesses and conservation to deliver high quality destinations.

Acting on climate change

As Scotland's largest protected landscapes, National Parks have a significant role to play in mitigating and adapting to climate change, including appropriate and sensitive renewable energy development.

Partnership

Looking after National Parks is the responsibility of all, not just the National Park Authorities. All relevant organisations will be asked annually to report against delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan. Key partner public bodies should identify and report in their corporate plans how they contribute to delivering the Partnership Plan and, through that, the four National Park statutory aims, their own organisation's key aims and the Scottish Government outcomes.

- 1 Our environment – Path to Coire an Lochain
- 2 Parks for All – Bird watching near Loch Garten
- 3 Innovation – Deer mapping, Abernethy
- 4 Tourism and visitor management – Glenshee Ski Centre
- 5 Acting on climate change – Wood chipping, Alvie Estate
- 6 Partnership – VisitScotland Information Centre, Aviemore



2. Welcome to the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017

The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017:

- Sets out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the Park;
- Provides focus and priorities at a time of limited financial resources;
- Provides a strategic context for the Local Development Plan;
- Shows how the four aims of the National Park can be achieved together, benefiting people and place.



This is the management plan for the Cairngorms National Park¹. It is a plan for all those with an interest in and responsibility for managing the National Park. That includes public bodies that must have regard to the Plan in carrying out their functions and the private and voluntary sectors including businesses, land managers and communities who are all integral to managing the Park.

These interests come together in a National Park Partnership and this Plan identifies the direction and priorities to which partners agree to direct their effort and resources in the National Park over the next five years.

In particular the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017:

- Sets out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the Park;
- Provides focus and priorities at a time of limited financial resources;
- Provides a strategic context for the Local Development Plan;
- Shows how the four aims of the National Park can be achieved together, benefiting people and place.

The Plan is not about trying to capture everything that happens in the National Park. It sets out the strategic direction and priorities, identifying the things that we think will make the biggest contribution to a successful National Park over the coming years.

The Plan has been informed by a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Appraisal and an Equalities Impact Assessment. All of these documents are available at www.cairngorms.co.uk

¹ The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 is the National Park Plan required under section 11 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

3. Our vision for the Cairngorms National Park

A detailed photograph of a peregrine falcon perched on a rocky outcrop. The falcon is shown in profile, facing left, with its sharp yellow beak and intense yellow eyes clearly visible. Its feathers are intricately patterned with grey, white, and black. The background is a clear, deep blue sky. The foreground and middle ground are filled with autumnal vegetation, including brown and orange shrubs and trees, which are slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth.

Our three long-term outcomes address the interaction of three characteristics of the National Park:

- The Cairngorms National Park is an internationally important area for nature conservation;
- The Cairngorms National Park is a fragile rural economy;
- The Cairngorms National Park is an internationally known tourism destination.

Our long-term vision for the Cairngorms National Park is:

An outstanding National Park, enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together.

We set out three long-term outcomes (see below) that we want to achieve and that will guide the work of this Plan from 2012-2017 and beyond, to deliver our vision for the Park. These continue the direction set by the first National Park Plan (2007-12) and together deliver the four aims of the National Park.



The ambition to become a low carbon National Park runs through the whole Plan. This is a headline ambition for this area to play our part in delivering Scotland's climate change targets. It means responding and adapting to climate change and its practical implications for people and place, developing the opportunities of a low carbon economy and securing stewardship of the significant carbon stores locked into the land and forests of the Cairngorms National Park.

What success looks like

Our three long-term outcomes address the interaction of three characteristics of the National Park:

- The Cairngorms National Park is an internationally important area for nature conservation;
- The Cairngorms National Park is a fragile rural economy;
- The Cairngorms National Park is an internationally known tourism destination.

The way these three characteristics interact together set the challenges for managing this area. Success is delivering for all three long-term outcomes together, for people and place. Recognising the interdependence of all three outcomes, managing and reducing the tensions, and keeping a clear sense of long-term direction is at the heart of being a National Park.



Success in being a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities means that:

1. The special qualities of the Park will have stimulated **growth and diversification in the economy** and the Park will be an economic asset to the Scottish economy.
2. There will be **fast and reliable IT and telecommunications** as well as **fast, safe transport links** from the Park to other parts of Scotland that meet the needs of residents, visitors and business.
3. There will be **more jobs and a wider range of employment opportunities** for people in the National Park. People will be able to develop their skills from school onwards to meet their own and business needs.
4. Households and businesses will be successfully **adapting to a low carbon economy** – minimising energy use, waste and greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing their environmental sustainability.
5. There will be **thriving and sustainable communities** throughout the Park that are confident to share their ideas, experience and culture in actively shaping their own future and enjoying a sense of ownership of the National Park.
6. The **workforce of the Park will have grown** – young people will find it easier to train and to work in the Park, to return to the Park, and the Park will continue to attract workers.
7. People working in the Park will find it easier to **access housing that meets their needs**.
8. Many people living in the Park and visiting it will save money and maintain their health by **using safe routes to travel** between many communities and places in the Park instead of private car.
9. New development will be as sustainable as possible and **good design** that fits the landscapes and heritage of the Park will be standard. Older buildings and development will be adapting to modern standards of efficiency and design through improvements and renovations.



Cairngorms National Park branded bus, Grantown-on-Spey

Success in being a special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced means that:

1. The distinct character of the Park's **landscape** and its diverse mix of mountains, straths, glens, forests and farmland will continue to be conserved and enhanced, shaped by natural processes and positive management.
2. The sense of **wildness**, particularly in the high montane areas, will be enhanced and renowned as a particular special quality of the area that continues to be enjoyed by many.
3. The Park will continue to have a rich and enhanced **biodiversity** which will be better connected and able to adapt to a changing climate. Areas of national and international importance will be exemplars of good management, set within a broader network of well managed habitats.
4. The important **geodiversity** record in the Park will be better interpreted and valued more.
5. The importance of natural systems to maintaining what we need and value in the Park will be better understood and will lead to better management to maintain healthy **ecosystems** and the benefits they provide us with.
6. There will continue to be an **active and productive land management** sector that conserves and enhances the special qualities; produces high quality local and seasonal food; timber and woodfuel; and helps mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.



Cattle at Dulnain Bridge

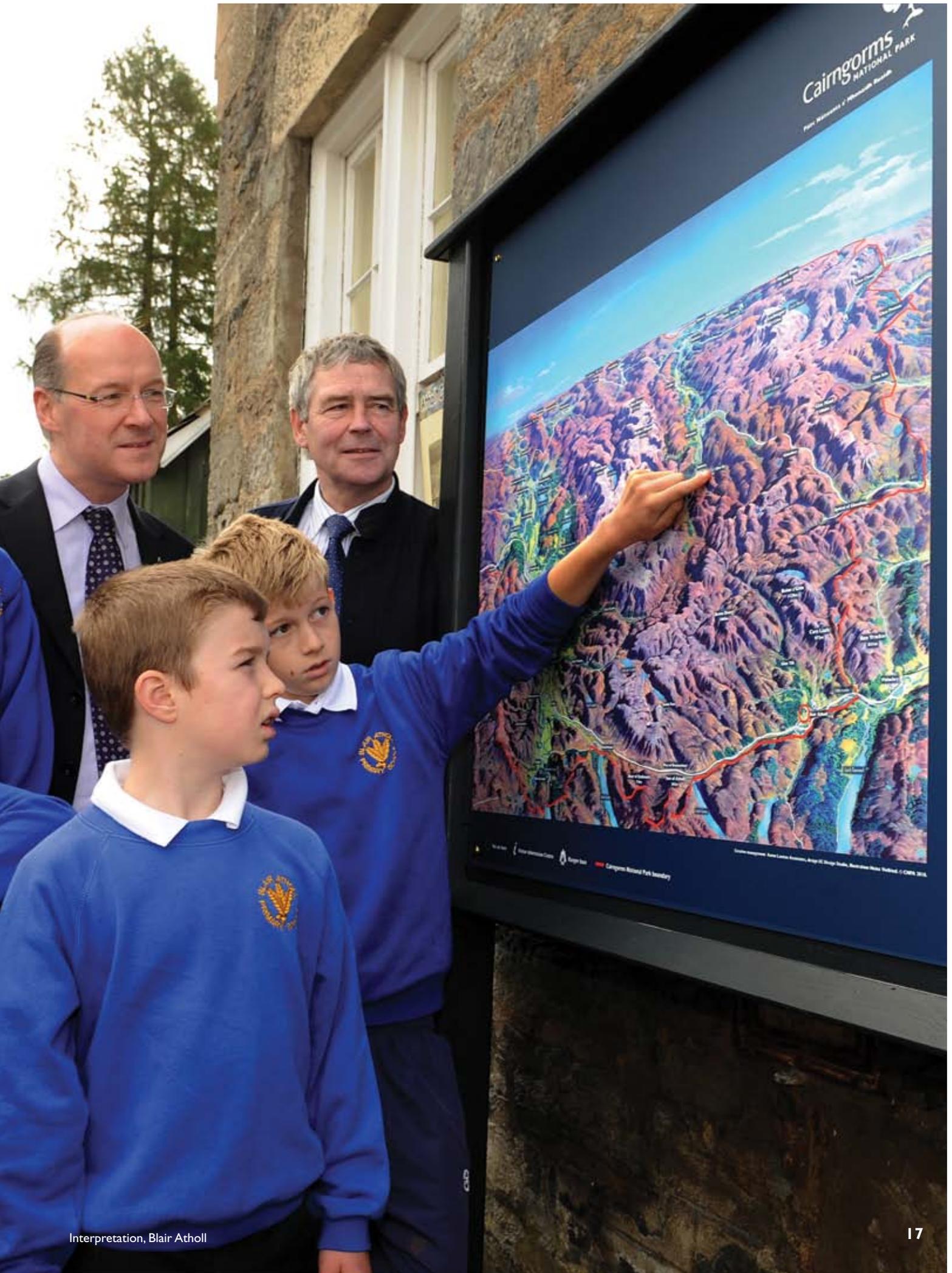
7. The **built heritage** of the Park will be safeguarded and adapting to changed uses and needs. New buildings will complement or enhance the setting of older buildings, including the settlement pattern and character.
8. The **archaeological evidence and material records** of previous generations will be well recorded, cared for and safeguarded in the most appropriate ways. It will be easy for communities and visitors to discover the significance and importance of past ways of life in the Park.
9. The **cultures and traditions** associated with the people and communities of the Park will be well recognised and continue to evolve as part of a living culture that secures tomorrow's cultural heritage.

Success in people enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences means that:

1. The Cairngorms National Park will be **renowned** in Scotland and internationally as a protected area and will be an important part of Scotland's national identity.
2. The Cairngorms National Park will be an internationally recognised **world class sustainable tourism destination** that consistently exceeds residents' and visitors' expectations in terms of quality of environment, services and experience.
3. There will continue to be an excellent and integrated network of routes to enjoy **outdoor access** across the Park that meets the needs of residents and visitors.
4. There will be an even higher quality and increased range of **outdoor recreation** activities available and accessible to a wider range of people of all abilities to enjoy the Park.
5. People enjoying outdoor access and recreation in the Park, as well as those who manage the Park will understand **responsible behaviour**, and why it supports the enjoyment and management of the Park by all.
6. **Interpretation** of the National Park will be of an internationally high standard, helping people to understand and enjoy the area by revealing the significance and meaning of the National Park and its special qualities.
7. The Park will be a significant **national learning resource** that provides opportunities to develop and to learn from school onwards about the special qualities, sustainable development, and its special management needs.
8. The Park will be a focus for **research and knowledge exchange** that provides useful information to those who manage the Park and work in it, leading to better management and more sustainable business and communities.



Enjoying the Park at Abernethy Trust



4. About the Cairngorms National Park

Facts and figures about the Cairngorms National Park

- About 17,000 people live in the National Park. The population, including the proportion of 18-24 year olds, has been growing steadily since 2001.
- About 1.4million people visit the National Park each year.
- The National Park is home to 25 per cent of the UK's threatened bird, animal and plant species.
- Half of the area of the National Park is designated as being of European importance for nature conservation.
- The National Park is centred on the largest area of arctic mountain landscape in the UK and contains the largest extent of semi-natural pine forest in the UK.
- Five of Scotland's six highest mountains are within the National Park.

The Cairngorms National Park is the UK's largest National Park at 4,528 square kilometres, comprising about six per cent of Scotland's land area. National Parks are Scotland's most extensive protected landscapes, underpinned by the distinctive character and coherent identity of the area.

The special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park

The Mountains:

Unique and influencing

There are no other mountains in Britain like the Cairngorms. Massive granite domes with corries and passes scooped out; broad rolling plateaux more like the arctic than the UK; nowhere else is consistently higher, colder or wilder. The mountains dominate the Park and have an effect on the way people live and the landscapes they live in.

The Wildlife:

Exceptional quality and variety

The National Park is a hotspot for British wildlife: a collection of very big, highly natural and well connected different types of habitat that are a wildlife stronghold for Britain's rare and endangered species.

The People:

Life amongst the mountains and forests

The common experiences of life in and around the mountains, forests, moorlands and straths bring together people kept apart by the high mountains. People may be miles apart by road, go shopping to a different city and even have different words for the same things but people all share the challenges and joys of finding work, managing the land and living with the climate and the environment in the Cairngorms National Park.

Recreation:

Enjoying the wildness and space

The National Park is Britain's wild heart: an accessible wilderness with a sense of remoteness and naturalness that inspires passion both in those who live here and those that visit. And lots of different people enjoy it in lots of different ways. The quality and variety of landscapes mean there's a huge range of activities, made exceptional because of their setting.

Further analysis of the special qualities can be found in a range of sources (available at www.cairngorms.co.uk) including:

- Cairngorms Wildness Mapping (see page 20)
- The Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan
- The Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park; Scottish Natural Heritage; Commissioned Report No. 375 (see summary on page 21)

The special qualities underpin the designation of the National Park and the delivery of all four aims together. All partners should seek to conserve and enhance the special qualities by applying the principles below.

Principles for conserving and enhancing the special qualities

Recognise the value of the special qualities

to all – the special qualities underpin the area's designation as a National Park, but also its appeal as a visitor destination, a place to live and work, and much of the economy. Conserving and enhancing the special qualities is not a standalone action, but underpins delivery of all four aims of the National Park.

Plan for change – places change and evolve over time. The special qualities we value today are the result of long running changes in the past and that evolution should continue. Some

change is unforeseen, at other times we actively seek to make change. We should plan for and actively manage change to ensure that the National Park continues to evolve while keeping what gives the area its special character.

Think through the generations – some kinds of change can have near immediate effect, whereas others may take years and possibly generations to have a noticeable effect. When planning for change we should look to achieving not only short-term benefits but make longer-term changes that benefit our own and future generations.

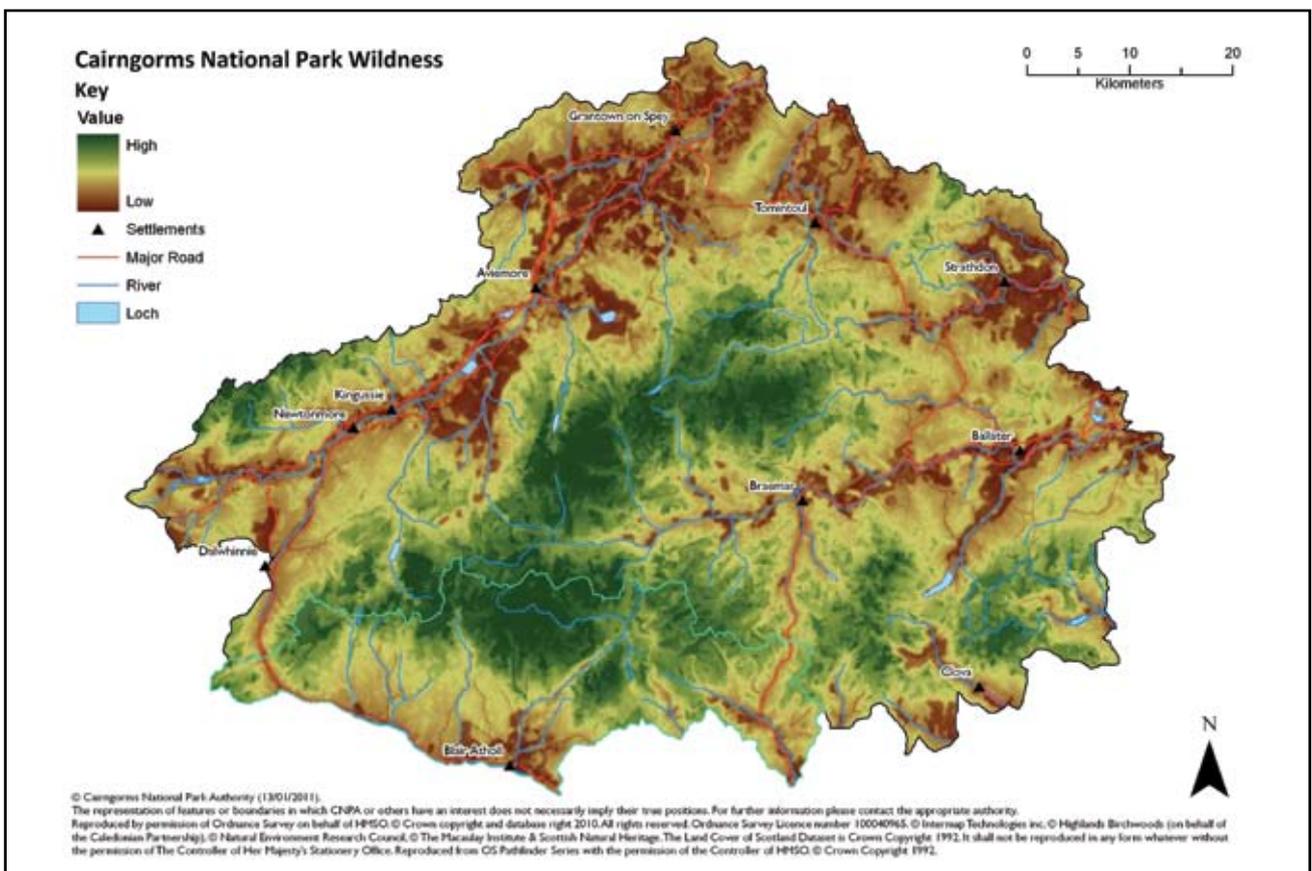
Think local, national and international – the national and international status of the National Park and its special qualities mean we have a responsibility to take account of the local, national and international interests in conserving and enhancing the special qualities.

Valued by many, managed by few – the role of land managers with direct responsibility for conserving and enhancing the special qualities should be recognised, supported and communicated. Conserving and enhancing the special qualities needs active management.

Think beyond the boundary – the special qualities of the National Park are connected to and benefit the surrounding areas, as well as being influenced by what happens around the Park. Cross boundary effects of activities on the special qualities of the National Park should be considered in managing change both in and around the National Park.

Use and share clear information – clear, transparent and understandable information should be used and made available to all to guide planning, action and decisions affecting the special qualities.

Qualities of wildness in the Park.



Summary of the Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| The Mountains and Plateaux | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unifying presence of the central mountains • An imposing massif of strong dramatic character • The unique plateaux of vast scale, distinctive landforms and exposed boulder-strewn high ground • The surrounding hills • The drama of deep corries • Exceptional glacial landforms • Snowscapes |
| Moorlands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive moorland, linking the farmland, woodland and the high tops • A patchwork of muirburn |
| Glens and Straths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep glens and high passes • Broad farmed straths • Renowned rivers • Beautiful lochs |
| Trees, Woods and Forests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark and venerable pine forest • Light and airy birch woods • Parkland and policy woodlands • Long association with forestry |
| Wildlife and Nature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dominance of natural landforms • Extensive tracts of natural vegetation • Association with iconic animals • Wildness |
| Visual and Sensory Qualities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layers of receding ridge lines • Grand panoramas and framed views • A landscape of many colours • Dark skies • Attractive and contrasting textures • The dominance of natural sounds |
| Culture and History | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinctive planned towns • Vernacular stone buildings • Dramatic historical routes • The wistfulness of abandoned settlements • Focal cultural landmarks of castles, distilleries and bridges • The Royal connection |
| Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A landscape of opportunities • Spirituality |

5. Our challenges in the Cairngorms National Park

**Delivering the aims together
(page 23)**

**Landscape, habitats and species
(pages 23-24)**

The economy (pages 24-25)

Population (pages 25-26)

**Climate change and weather
events (page 26)**



Delivering the aims together

The overarching challenge in managing a successful National Park is the challenge of delivering all four aims together, as they were intended when set out by the Scottish Parliament. The Cairngorms National Park combines an internationally important environment with a fragile rural economy and a renowned visitor destination. This brings inevitable tensions, and it is the approach to resolving these tensions and achieving the aims collectively that underpins the purpose of the National Park designation.

Where there appears to the National Park Authority to be a conflict between the aims of the Park, the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 requires that greater weight be given to conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage. This is a sustainable development approach in action, which all partners should take to ensure that the environment, with which the economy and visitor experience is so interwoven, remains special for future generations.

Landscape, habitats and species

The Cairngorms National Park is Scotland's largest protected landscape with wildness at its heart. The National Park is home to rare habitats, particularly Caledonian pine woodland and arctic-alpine habitats, and includes an important proportion of Scotland's moorland habitats. The Park is also home to over a quarter of the UK's rare and threatened species. For some, including wading birds, invertebrates, and Scottish wildcat, it is the most important area in the UK. Perhaps the most striking statistic is that the Park holds 80 per cent of the UK capercaillie population, with most of them in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Over half of the area of the National Park is designated through the Natura 2000 network as being of European importance for specific nature conservation interests. These range from river systems flowing through the Park to forests, moorland and the highest arctic-like summits, and from species such as salmon and otter, to golden eagle and capercaillie.

The long-term challenge is to enhance the landscapes, habitats and species of the Cairngorms National Park while also delivering social and economic benefits for businesses, communities and visitors. There are particular challenges to retaining and enhancing the sense of wildness that is characteristic of the Park, affected by development outside of it as well as within it, and to maintaining the landscape quality of settlements while accommodating new development. In the short-term there are challenges facing particular species, such as capercaillie, for which innovative management approaches, both to habitat management and managing impacts from recreation and other pressures are needed.

The high proportion of land designated through national and European networks is a particular characteristic of the Park. There remains a significant challenge to bring all these sites into favourable condition, particularly in relation to grazing management, recreation, wildlife crime and climate change impacts. The extent of designations itself also poses longer-term challenges in our ability to manage change and adaptation in habitats and species and in managing the interaction of different habitat types that are all of national importance but where expansion of one is inevitably at the expense of another – for example montane woodland and moorland.

The challenge is to implement an ecosystems approach to management, collaborating across ownership boundaries and also to engage support for the value of the natural systems of the Cairngorms National Park.

The economy

The Park's economy is based around a series of fragile sectors with relatively low wage structures. Tourism is a real strength, but compared with other parts of Scotland, it is a disproportionate part of the economy of the Park, in terms of value and employment, particularly in Badenoch and Strathspey. Farming, forestry and wild game are also distinctive parts of the employment structure of the Park².

The dominance of these low paid sectors has straightforward implications for the amount of money spent in the local economy by people employed in them, and for their ability to pay for necessities such as housing, transport and energy. It is exacerbated by the attractiveness of the Park as a place to move to by those who have generated wealth elsewhere.



Salmon processing, Grantown-on-Spey

² The Economic and Social Health of the Cairngorms National Park 2010, www.cairngorms.co.uk

The economy of the Park is also closely linked to surrounding areas, particularly the Inverness area and parts of Moray, Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen. It is estimated that as much as 20 per cent of the working population of the Park commute to work in other places and that more than 15 per cent of the workers in the Park commute to it from other places. The links with Inverness are particularly strong for commuters to the Park. Around 10 per cent of workers in the Park live in the Inverness area.

The long-term challenge is to help develop a strong and sustainable economy within the Park that is resilient to future pressures and increases prosperity and opportunity for the people and communities who work and live here. Our definition of a sustainable economy is one characterised by economic growth and development delivered within the limits of the environment; supporting the special qualities of the Park; a strong, healthy and just society; good governance; and responsible use of science.

To get there we need to strengthen the existing sectors and businesses, as well as broaden the economic opportunities of the Park, encouraging new business sectors to start up and to grow. This growth and diversification needs to take place within the framework of special qualities of the Park, the natural systems and outstanding environment that make it a special place. It means careful planning and support for business that exploits the best opportunities and helps business deliver environmental sustainability.

In the short-term, there are clear challenges facing the Park over the next few years. Public sector finances will be constrained and private sector finances are likely to be constrained for the period of this Plan, bringing real challenges

for people and businesses in and around the Park. Increasing fuel, energy and other commodity prices impact the profitability and viability of business and living costs for everyone. This requires all sectors to work together to stimulate economic growth and secure the most effective investment in a period of change.

Population

The population of the National Park has grown since it was established in 2003. It was estimated to be around 15,500 people in 2003 and around 17,000 people in 2012³. The growth in population has largely been in Badenoch and Strathspey, which has around three quarters of the total population of the Park, and has been driven by people moving to the area either to work or to retire.

Without the migration of people to the Park, the population would shrink and the proportion of older people would grow as young people leave the Park for work, education and training. The migration of people to the Park and to Badenoch and Strathspey in particular has helped to slow the overall ageing of the population, with new young workers and families replacing those who move away. In other parts of the Park there has been less inward migration (there are fewer jobs and fewer homes in these areas) and it is likely that the populations are ageing more than in Badenoch and Strathspey.

A challenge for much of rural Scotland is how to slow the loss of young people and workers from rural areas towards the city regions. Economies need people to work, and active communities have a mix of people of different ages, skills and interests.

³ Of which approximately 600 is the result of an increase in the area of the Park in 2010.

The economy of the Park and the communities of the Park need working age people. If the economy is to grow, the Park needs to at least maintain the numbers of working age people and probably increase their numbers.

There are two sides to this challenge. The first is providing the right conditions to help young people stay in the Park. That means providing more and better opportunities to train, develop, work and live in the area in ways that encourage them to stay. The second challenge is how to continue to attract workers to come to or to return to the Park. That also means providing opportunities to work and live in the area that are attractive to them.



Glenmore Visitor Centre

Climate change and weather events

National trends show that in general, Scotland will be getting warmer; wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. Further analysis of the national climate change projections shows that the Cairngorms National Park may well be facing a slightly different series of changes. The trends show that summers will be hotter and drier, winters will be warmer, but they do not show the same increases in precipitation predicted for the rest of Scotland.

Changes in the current climate will affect both our economy and environment. Winter sports are a key part of the tourism offering in the National Park, and businesses are already adapting to less reliable snowfall and diversifying their activities accordingly.

A changing climate and changing weather events can also have serious implications for flood risk. Although the climate change projections do not see the Park facing the same overall levels of increase in precipitation during the winter months, they do show a spike in the amount of precipitation in November. Due to the nature of the rivers in the Cairngorms National Park, and their current fluctuations due to precipitation and snow melt, the implications of this projected change in one month may be significant.

Changes in climate will have an impact on the habitats and species currently seen in the Park. Making sure our habitats remain in good health and well connected will give species the best opportunities to adapt to the changing climate.

While we will have to adapt to change, the Cairngorms National Park is well placed to contribute to climate change mitigation, through the significant carbon stores locked into the peat, soils and woodlands of the Park.



6. Delivery

For each of the three long-term outcomes, this section sets out the five-year outcomes we want to achieve by 2017 and the indicators and targets that will judge how successful these have been.

Policy priorities and programmes of work that will help achieve the five-year outcomes are also detailed.

Overview of delivery

The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 will not be delivered in isolation. Delivery will be an integral part of the partners' wider contributions to delivering the Scottish Government's outcomes (see Table 3 on page 34) and its central purpose to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

As outlined on page 13, there are three long-term outcomes that we want to achieve and that will guide the work of this Plan from 2012-2017 and beyond:

1. A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities (see pages 38 to 47)
2. A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced (see pages 48 to 57)
3. People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences (see pages 58 to 66)

For each of these three long-term outcomes, this section of the Plan sets out:

- the 10 **five-year outcomes** we want to achieve by 2017;
- the **indicators and targets** we will use to judge how successful we have been in achieving the five-year outcomes;
- the **policy priorities** that will help to achieve the five-year outcomes – several maps supporting these priorities are provided;
- the **programmes of work** that will help achieve the five-year outcomes and the partners responsible.

Table 1 (overleaf) summarises the 10 five-year outcomes along with indicators and targets. Table 3 on page 34 outlines where these are intended to have a direct contribution to Scottish Government outcomes by 2017.

Table 2 on pages 32-33 then summarises the work programmes and key work packages identified in 2012 that stem from the five-year outcomes outlined in Table 1. The work packages identified in each programme are not intended to be exhaustive or to detail all activity, but are the core of delivery action that we are collectively committed to deliver over the next five years. They should not restrict the development of other projects and proposals that may deliver more, or more effective ways of delivering the outcomes that may emerge. We expect the focus of work packages and programmes to adapt to changing circumstances, challenges and opportunities over the life of the Plan.

Table 1
Summary of the Plan's five-year outcomes, indicators and targets

| Five-year outcomes | How will we measure progress? (indicators) | What does success look like? (2017 targets) |
|---|---|---|
| Long-term outcome 1: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities | | |
| 1. The economy of the Park will have grown and diversified, drawing on the Park's special qualities | Business confidence reported through Cairngorms Business Barometer | Increase |
| | Number of jobs created in the Park | To have grown by more than the rate of population growth |
| 2. Businesses and communities will be successfully adapting to a low carbon economy | % population living within connection of high speed broadband or equivalent | 75% |
| | Renewable energy production | To increase year on year |
| 3. Communities will be more empowered and able to develop their own models of sustainability | The number of community enterprises generating income | Increase by at least 50% |
| Long-term outcome 2: A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced | | |
| 4. The quality and connectivity of habitats is enhanced | Area of woodland | Increase of 5% (c.4,000 Ha) in total woodland area |
| | Water quality | Maintenance or increase in water quality status |
| 5. The species for which the Park is most important are in better conservation status | Active conservation for LBAP priority species | Targets identified in LBAP achieved |
| | Estates participating in Wildlife Estates Initiative | 75% of estates in the Park |
| 6. The special landscape qualities, including wildness, are conserved and enhanced | Qualities of wildness | Equivalent or increased area of the Park characterised as high or medium wildness |
| 7. Settlements and built development will retain and enhance the distinct sense of place and identity in the Park | Number of conservation area improvement projects | To cover all conservation areas |

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Table I continued

| Five-year outcomes | How will we measure progress? (indicators) | What does success look like? (2017 targets) |
|---|---|---|
| Long-term outcome 3: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences | | |
| 8. More people will enjoy, learn about and help to conserve and enhance the Park | Number of volunteer days spent caring for the Park per year | Increase by 50% by 2017 |
| 9. The expectations of visitors are met or exceeded | Visitor satisfaction reported in Cairngorms Visitor Survey | Increase |
| 10. The Park's recreation opportunities have improved the health and enjoyment of residents and visitors | Number of people using promoted core paths | Increased path use overall and more even spread throughout year |



Blair Atholl village

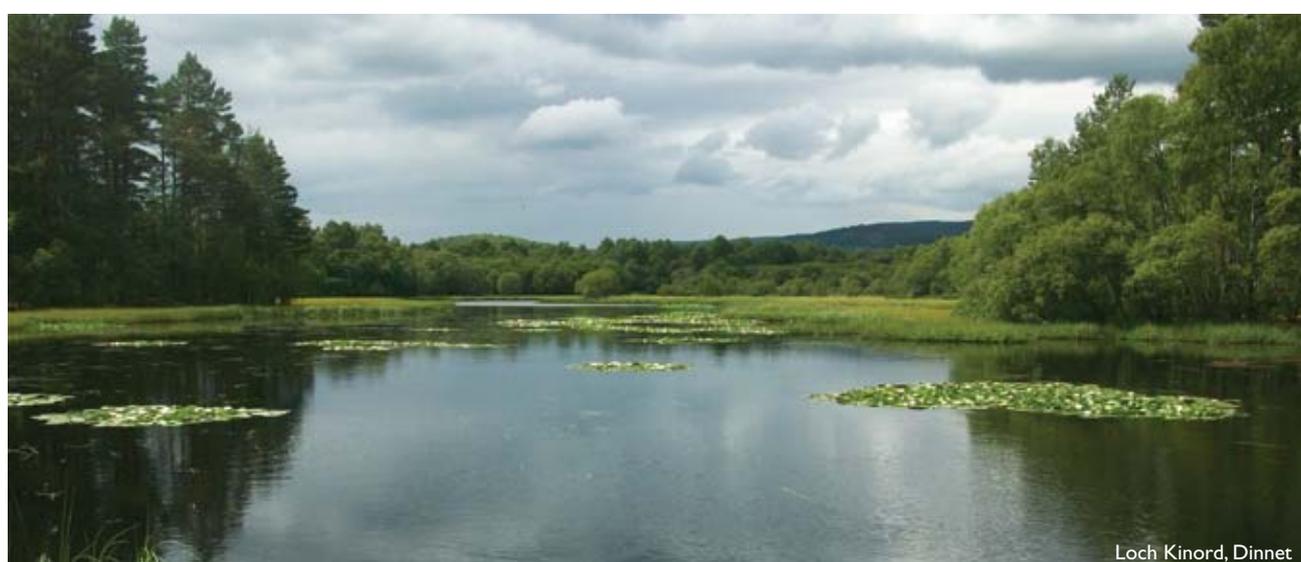
Table 2
Summary of work programmes and key work packages

| Programme | Key work packages |
|---|--|
| Long-term outcome 1: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities | |
| 1. Supporting business (pages 44-45) | 1a. Enterprise Forum, economic strategy development and implementation 1b. Skills and training 1c. Food and drink development 1d. Growing the Cairngorms Business Partnership |
| 2. Infrastructure and communications improvements (page 45) | 2a. Improving IT and mobile communications connectivity 2b. Improving access to housing for local needs |
| 3. Low Carbon Cairngorms (page 46) | 3a. Renewable energy generation 3b. Low carbon living 3c. Low carbon land management |
| 4. Community empowerment (pages 46-47) | 4a. Community action planning 4b. Community capacity building 4c. Cairngorms LEADER |
| 5. Building vibrant places (page 47) | 5a. Planning the best development 5b. Delivering the most effective planning service 5c. Supporting the regeneration of Tomintoul and Glenlivet |
| Long-term outcome 2: A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced | |
| 5. Building vibrant places (cont) (page 55) | 5d. Quality in design 5e. Townscape enhancement |
| 6. Nature and landscapes (pages 55-56) | 6a. Cairngorms Wildlife Partnership 6b. Cairngorms landscapes 6c. Designated sites management |
| 7. Supporting land management (pages 56-57) | 7a. Land management training 7b. Advice and support services 7c. Wildlife Estates Scotland Initiative 7d. Catchment management |

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Table 2 continued

| Programme | Key work packages |
|---|---|
| Long-term outcome 3: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences | |
| 8. Leading sustainable tourism (page 63) | 8a. Implementing the strategy and action plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park 8b. Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Strategy |
| 9. Active Cairngorms (page 64) | 9a. Delivering and reviewing the Cairngorms National Park Outdoor Access Strategy 9b. Promoting active enjoyment 9c. Developing cycling |
| 10. Outdoor learning (pages 64-65) | 10a. Using National Parks in the curriculum 10b. Learning from the Park 10c. Volunteering to support nature |
| 11. Sharing the stories (page 65) | 11a. Co-ordinating training and support for visitor managers/communicators 11b. Developing and delivering inspiring campaigns 11c. Community Heritage Project 11d. Experiencing National Nature Reserves |
| 12. Visitor and access infrastructure (page 66) | 12a. Management of core paths and outdoor access 12b. Maintaining and improving high quality visitor facilities 12c. Scotland's National Parks Mountain Paths Restoration Project |



Loch Kinord, Dinnet

Table 3
Contribution of Plan's five-year outcomes to Scottish Government outcomes

| | National Park Partnership Plan five-year outcomes | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Scottish Government National Outcomes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe. | X | | | | | | | | X | |
| 2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people. | X | X | X | | | | | | X | |
| 3. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation. | X | | X | | | | | X | | |
| 4. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. | X | | | | | | | X | | |
| 5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. We live longer, healthier lives. | | | | | | | | | | X |
| 7. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society. | X | X | X | | | | | X | | X |
| 8. We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need. | X | X | X | | | | X | | | |
| 11. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others. | X | X | X | | | | | | | X |
| 12. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | |
| 13. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity. | | | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X |
| 14. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production. | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | |
| 15. Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it. | | | X | | | | | | | X |
| 16. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs. | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Delivering outcomes together

Delivery relies on effective partnership between organisations but also between individuals, businesses, customers and visitors, all sharing both the responsibilities and benefits of being in a National Park. It also relies on effective joining up between this Plan and other regional plans and strategies that influence key issues in the National Park, such as housing strategies and community planning partnerships.

Other plans and strategies for particular topics or issues will show how parts of this National Park Partnership Plan will be delivered, for example through the Local Development Plan, the strategy and action plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park, and Outdoor Access Strategy. The corporate and operational plans of partners will set out their contributions to delivery as part of their business. The diagram below outlines these relationships.



The outcomes of the Plan, just like the aims of the Park, should be delivered collectively and in a co-ordinated way. It is this integration that lies at the heart of being a National Park, and at the heart of realising the benefits for both people and place. A practical management plan has to break down the overall whole into coherent parts, but success requires all partners to take a co-ordinated approach to delivery of the Plan.

Delivery structures

Delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 will be overseen by the partnership which will meet each year to review and report progress of the Plan as a whole.

Delivery of programmes identified in the Plan will be led by those partners identified here as co-ordinating partners, with the support of other partners, land managers, communities and businesses as appropriate. In many cases, programme teams or project groups will be the most effective way to bring together the necessary partners to plan, co-ordinate and monitor delivery.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) will lead co-ordination of delivery arrangements, monitoring and reporting.

Advisory forums

In addition to partners directly involved in delivery, there is a much wider range of organisations and representative groups that have an interest in influencing the management of the Park and can contribute significant expertise and advice. To provide a focus for these interests to engage in the Park the CNPA facilitate the following advisory forums:

- Deer Advisory Forum
- Enterprise Forum
- Inclusive Cairngorms
- Land Management Forum
- Outdoor Access Forum
- Sustainable Tourism Forum

There is a range of other groups that come together in the Park for particular sectors and interest groups to engage with such as the Farmers Forum, Developers Forum and the Association of Cairngorms Communities.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 comprises two strands:

- State of the Park review – monitoring long-term trends against a small number of key indicators;
- Progress review – monitoring delivery of what the Partnership Plan says we will do.

Monitoring information will be reported on the National Park performance pages of www.cairngorms.co.uk

The State of the Park indicators will be reviewed fully at five-yearly intervals. Individual indicators will be updated in the meantime at varied intervals, according to the data availability.

National Park Partnership Plan progress will be reported annually following the end of the financial year. Reporting will include progress of delivery of the work packages within each programme and the progress being made towards the five-year outcomes and targets identified in the Plan.

Research strategy

The Cairngorms National Park Authority will co-ordinate a research strategy to support delivery and long-term planning.

The National Park has long been a focus for natural science research, creating a rich set of information already informing management. Increasingly, researchers are interested in the socio-economic context of the Park, and in the collaborative management model of the National Park itself which is relevant to approaches to protected area management around the world. As part of an international network of protected areas, management of the Cairngorms National Park should draw on the resource of research and lessons from elsewhere, as well as continuing to contribute experience to current debates.

Partners want to promote cross discipline research that addresses the management issues of the Park; to encourage connections between researchers and those working to manage the Park that informs the research as well as sharing its results; and to make the most of the opportunity the Park presents to contribute to wider research agendas.

A web-based research forum will be established to connect researchers with an interest in or working in the Cairngorms National Park; provide an easy way to share and access relevant research; and share current research needs and priorities. Partners will also seek to establish the National Park as Scotland's first 'Long-Term Socio-Ecological Research' (LTSER) site, part of a European network of areas promoting integrated cross-discipline research. LTSER status will help bring together the range of research institutions working in the Park to share information and collaborate.



Delivering long-term outcome I: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities



Our approach, acting on climate change and overall delivery context (pages 39-40)

Five-year outcomes, indicators and targets (page 41)

Policy priorities (pages 41-43)

Programmes and key work packages (pages 44-47)

Introduction

A thriving economy underpins thriving communities, and is the basis for continued investment by both public and private sectors in the environment, infrastructure and facilities that make the Cairngorms National Park a special place. Supporting the economy is therefore integral to achieving our vision and all four aims of the National Park.

The communities and economy of the National Park, like that of Scotland, face a real challenge and opportunity in adapting to a global economic downturn over the next few years. The Park has many economic assets from its distinctive economic sectors; strong businesses, and attractiveness as a place to live and visit; connections to other parts of Scotland; and its recent history of young inward migration that is unusual in rural Scotland. The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 can help to make the most of these assets by setting a clear direction to support and develop this positive position.

Our approach

This Plan sets a clear aspiration for growth of the economy of the Park that matches the Scottish Government's purpose. This is not growth at the expense of what makes the Park a special place. It is growth that builds on, conserves and enhances those special qualities. It is growth that supports the Park and its communities, which means in turn that we can make the most of the National Park as an asset for Scotland.

It will mean growing existing business sectors and encouraging new sectors to start up. We want this to lead to more jobs and better paid jobs within the Park. We also want to increase

the opportunities for young people and existing workers to become better skilled for work within the Park and be able to take up new opportunities. At the same time, we want to maintain the migration of young workers and families to the Park to fill existing and new jobs, start new businesses, and maintain the younger parts of the population. This is likely to mean that the population of the Park increases.

There are approximately 17,000 people currently living in the National Park. Although the population of the Park is getting older, the majority of the population is of working age and there are many children growing up in the Park. For these people in particular, a strong and diverse economy, with opportunities to work in rewarding, well paid jobs, is an important part of life. It helps people to live fulfilling lives, to plan for their future and those of their families. It is also important in the Park because it helps to provide some financial parity with others, particularly older households, who come to the Park from elsewhere and who may be able to pay more for services and basic requirements such as housing.

Strengthening the economy, through supporting and diversifying business, and helping people develop and train towards employment will help support current and future workers and will help support vibrant communities. In order to do this, there needs to be a supply of skilled workers. Over time, more skills should be developed within the Park as training and development matches the needs of people and business in it. At this point in time however, many people leave the Park to develop skills and employment opportunities, and are replaced by other workers who see opportunities in the Park. Migration of people to the Park (both workers and retired people) has helped to support the economy and communities of the Park.

The Local Development Plan and planning services will support the delivery of this long-term outcome by providing:

- sufficient land for housing to meet identified need and demand, including inward migration of workers;
- the necessary land and support for business development and diversification;
- sites for future development that support attractive, vibrant communities and that minimise the need to use energy;
- clear guidance on where, when and how the best development will be supported.

Acting on climate change

Both business and communities will be affected by climate change during the life of this Plan and beyond. The government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through policy and action, and fossil fuel prices are likely to rise and to be volatile. Both of these will increase costs to businesses and households unless they adapt by becoming more efficient, and using alternative sources of energy.

There are opportunities for business and households to adapt well and even to profit from changes. Work to deliver this outcome includes the ambition to move towards a low carbon economy. Being more efficient in using energy and generating renewable energy can both save money and generate income. The planned action includes promotion of renewable energy generation in ways that are consistent with the special qualities of the Park. This will help contribute to national targets, improve energy efficiency and reduce energy costs in households and businesses.

Delivery context

Our delivery will contribute to delivering wider regional and national policy including:

- a) Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)
- b) National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2)
- c) Land Use Strategy for Scotland
- d) Speak up for Rural Scotland
- e) Scottish Government Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- f) Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreements
- g) National Zero Waste Strategy
- h) Fresh Thinking New Ideas
- i) Local Authority Strategic Housing Investment Plans, Local Housing and Transport Strategies
- j) Regional Transport Strategies

Affordable housing, Nethy Bridge



Delivering long-term outcome 1

A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities

Our work will focus on the following five-year outcomes by 2017:

| Five-year outcomes | How will we measure progress? (indicators) | What does success look like? (2017 targets) |
|--|---|--|
| Long-term outcome 1: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities | | |
| 1. The economy of the Park will have grown and diversified, drawing on the Park's special qualities | Business confidence reported through Cairngorms Business Barometer | Increase |
| | Number of jobs created in the Park | To have grown by more than the rate of population growth |
| 2. Businesses and communities will be successfully adapting to a low carbon economy | % population living within connection of high speed broadband or equivalent | 75% |
| | Renewable energy production | To increase year on year |
| 3. Communities will be more empowered and able to develop their own models of sustainability | The number of community enterprises generating income | Increase by at least 50% |

Policy priorities to help deliver the five-year outcomes above:

Policy 1.1 Grow the economy of the Park by strengthening existing business sectors, supporting business start-ups and diversification, and increasing the number of workers employed in the Park through:

- a) supporting the diversification of existing land-based businesses;
- b) encouraging growth of business sectors that draw on the special qualities of the Park such as sustainable tourism and food and drink;
- c) broadening the economic base of the Park into sectors such as creative industries, renewable energy, and making stronger links with higher and further education;
- d) increased provision for business land where there is an identified need and demand; and to support the use of land for small business, particularly within settlements;
- e) slowing outward migration of young people; to encourage their return; and the inward migration of workers to the Park to meet business and community needs;
- f) provision of a housing land supply that meets identified need and demand⁴, supports migration of young people and workers to the Park, and maintains vibrant communities.

⁴ Housing Need & Demand Assessments are prepared by Local Authorities as Housing Authorities.

Policy I.2 Enable sustainable patterns of settlement growth, infrastructure and communications by:

- a) consolidating the role of the existing main settlements of Aviemore, Ballater, Grantown-on-Spey, Kingussie and Newtonmore, as well as a new community at An Camas Mòr, as the most sustainable places for future growth and the focus for housing land supply while maintaining the integrity of designated sites;
- b) providing any additional flexibility in future land supply for housing at small sites around a wider range of settlements;
- c) supporting sensitively designed improvements to the A9 and other trunk roads and main railway line as an integral part of enhancing the connectivity of the Highlands;
- d) planning and improving integrated and sustainable local transport networks that allow for safe travel off-road and link with public transport;
- e) planning and supporting improvements to the information technology network;
- f) planning and supporting improvements to the mobile communications network that improve access to new generation technology and minimise the need for visually intrusive infrastructure.

Policy I.3 Support development of a low carbon economy, with a particular focus on:

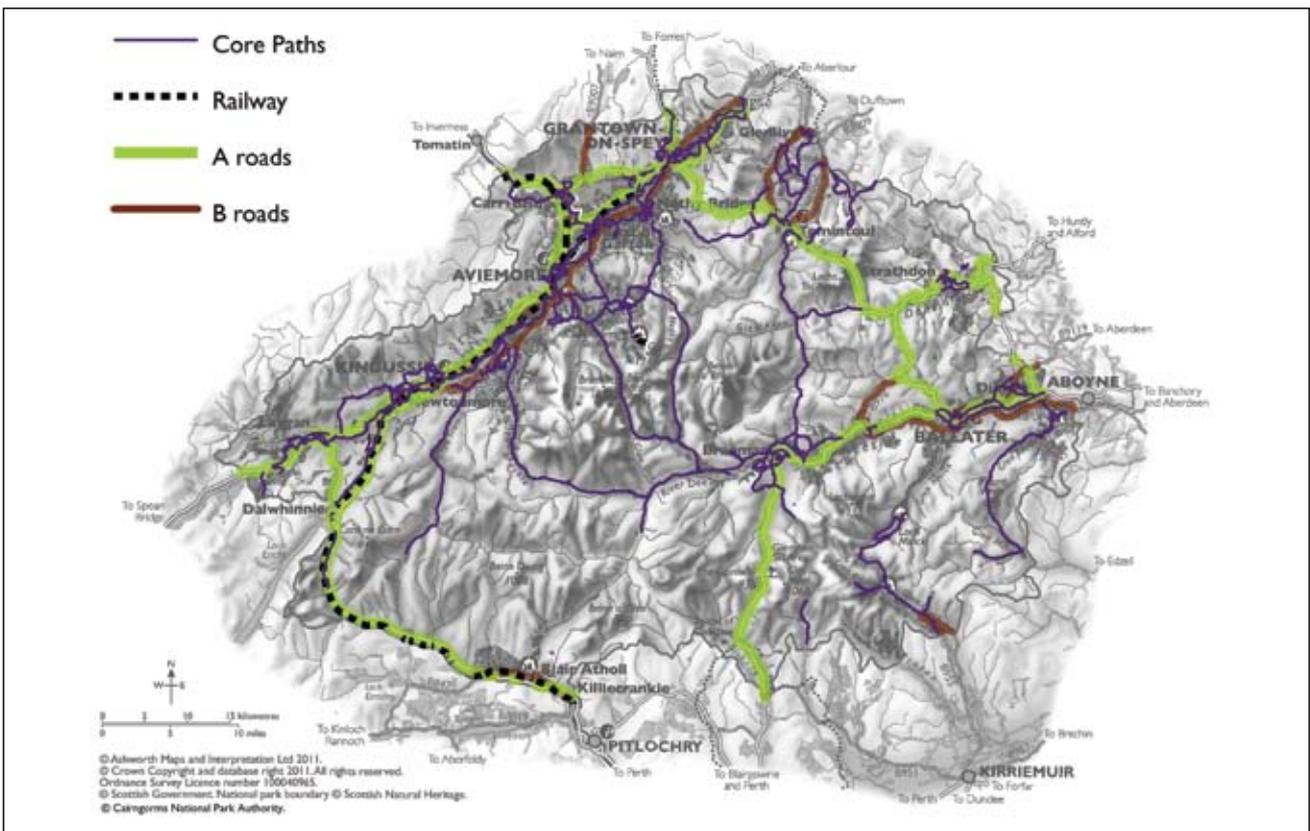
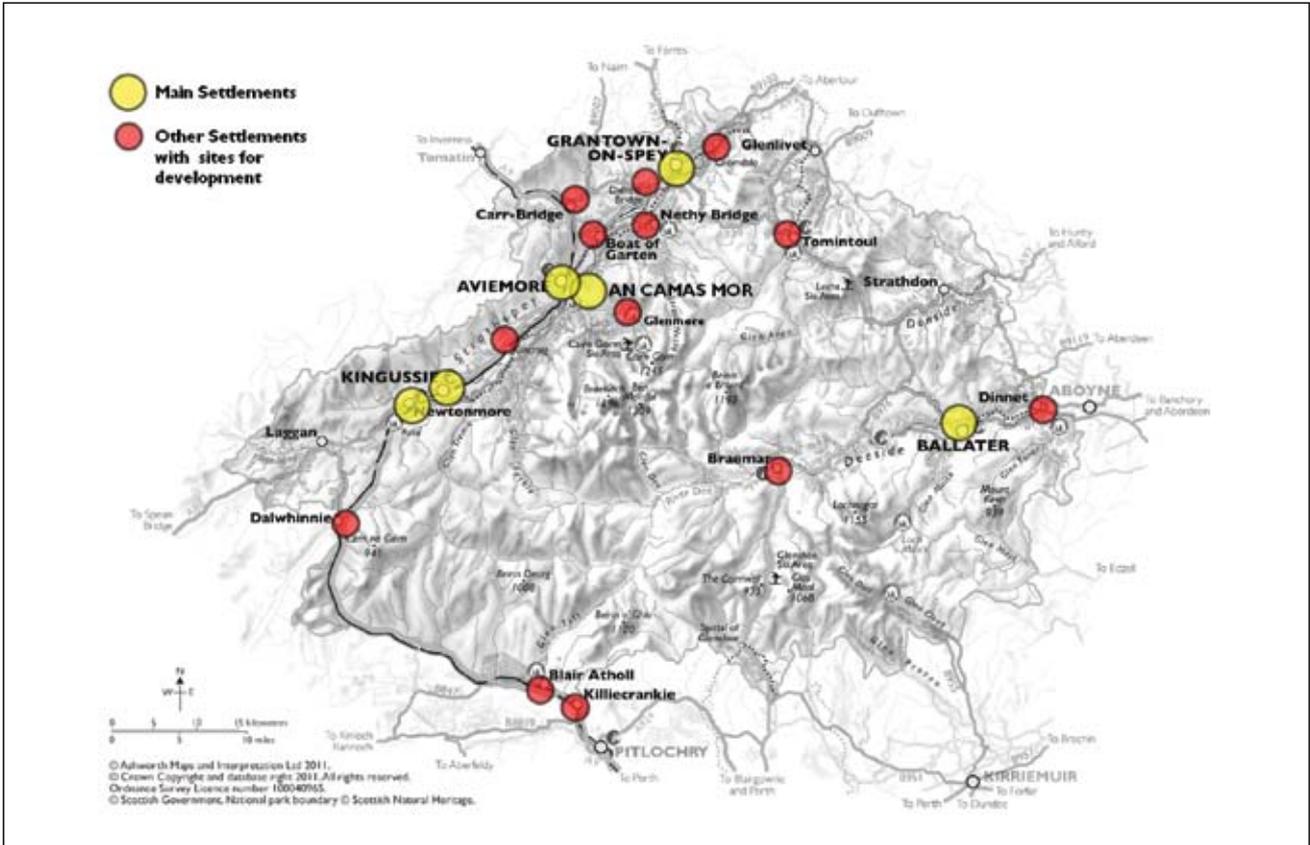
- a) increasing renewable energy generation, especially biomass and hydro, that is compatible with conserving the special qualities of the National Park and maintaining the integrity of designated sites. Large-scale commercial wind turbines⁵ are not compatible with the special qualities of the National Park and are not considered to be appropriate within the National Park or where outside the Park they affect its landscape setting;
- b) supporting businesses and communities to use less energy, reduce emissions, generate low impact renewable energy and plan for a changing climate;
- c) maximising the benefits to communities through direct use of locally generated energy or where sold to the grid, reinvesting income to support community development;
- d) promoting high standards of sustainable design and efficient use of energy and materials in construction.

Policy I.4 Support and build the capacity of communities to deliver their aspirations, with a particular focus on:

- a) supporting communities to plan for their own futures, develop and implement projects, engage the support of partners and share good practice;
- b) supporting innovative approaches to providing affordable housing to meet local needs;
- c) aligning community planning processes to simplify support to communities;
- d) engaging communities effectively in the long-term management of the National Park and in projects or programmes that affect them.

⁵ Defined as more than one turbine and more than 30m in height.

Settlement hierarchy and transport infrastructure which support policy priorities.



Delivering long-term outcome I (cont)

The following work programmes will help deliver the five-year outcomes (see page 41):

| Programme | Key work packages |
|--|--|
| Long-term outcome I: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities | |
| 1. Supporting business | 1a. Enterprise Forum, economic strategy development and implementation 1b. Skills and training 1c. Food and drink development 1d. Growing the Cairngorms Business Partnership |
| 2. Infrastructure and communications improvements | 2a. Improving IT and mobile communications connectivity 2b. Improving access to housing for local needs |
| 3. Low Carbon Cairngorms | 3a. Renewable energy generation 3b. Low carbon living 3c. Low carbon land management |
| 4. Community empowerment | 4a. Community action planning 4b. Community capacity building 4c. Cairngorms LEADER |
| 5. Building vibrant places | 5a. Planning the best development 5b. Delivering the most effective planning service 5c. Supporting the regeneration of Tomintoul and Glenlivet |

I. Supporting business

This programme is about growing and diversifying the economy of the Park. It should help lead to more businesses starting up, more and better paid jobs, particularly for young people in the Park, and businesses becoming more confident in their ability to succeed.

Ia. Enterprise Forum, economic strategy development and implementation

- Establish a private sector-led Enterprise Forum for the National Park bringing together private, public and voluntary sector interests.
- Develop and implement an Economic Development and Diversification Strategy, through the Enterprise Forum, to deliver growth and diversification within the context of the aims of the National Park.

Co-ordinating Partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise

Ib. Skills and training

- Co-ordinate the delivery of training, support and advice that is tailored to the needs of businesses in the Park wherever possible.
- Co-ordinate youth training and development through rural and wider business skills apprenticeships that lead to employment within the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, LANTRA, Local Authorities and Business Gateway, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland

Ic. Food and drink development

- Build on the successful establishment of the Cairngorms Food for Life project, developing local and regional networks of producers, processors and consumers of food and drink products leading to more resilient business, lower energy use and costs, and more local spend on local food and drink products.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scotland Food and Drink, Scottish Enterprise, Soil Association Scotland

Id. Growing the Cairngorms Business Partnership

- Continue the development of the Cairngorms Business Partnership to maintain and improve the services it provides, increase its financial independence, and reduce its reliance on public sector support.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, VisitScotland

2. Infrastructure and communications improvements

This programme will deliver improvements to infrastructure and communications in the Park. It does not specifically tackle transport or public transport. There are long-term plans to improve and upgrade trunk roads, the rail line, local road networks, and public transport links that are led by national and local government, and these will happen when resources permit. Instead, the programme focuses on two critical areas for the next five years: to improve IT and mobile communications speed and connections; and to develop bespoke housing solutions for the needs of communities.

2a. Improving IT and mobile communications connectivity

- Identify and deliver short-term improvements to IT connections where needed to support business, communities and visitors in the Park.
- Identify and deliver longer-term high speed IT connections to meet the current and future needs of business, communities and visitors throughout the Park.
- Identify and deliver mobile communications improvements to meet current and future needs of business, communities and visitors in the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Government, Telecoms Companies

2b. Improving access to housing for local needs

- Pilot new approaches to delivering housing for the needs of communities.

Co-ordinating partners: Community Trusts and Companies, Developers, Land Owners, Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords, Rural Housing Enablers

3. Low Carbon Cairngorms

This programme is about making sure the National Park demonstrates its contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as helping people adapt to the effects of climate change and increasing costs of energy. There are opportunities to significantly change the way households and businesses use energy to reduce waste and increase efficiency as well as moving energy production to renewable sources that fit the Park and its outstanding natural and cultural heritage.

3a. Renewable energy generation

- Research and guidance on opportunities for renewable energy generation.
- Help for communities, households, land managers and businesses to install appropriate renewable energy generation technologies through practical advice, support and information.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Community Energy Scotland

3b. Low carbon living

- Increase the energy efficiency of old and traditional buildings by identifying suitable improvements and developing a programme of affordable measures to help the people who live or work in them improve their energy efficiency.
- Maintain the established schemes and incentives that improve the energy efficiency of 'quick win' modern and easy to improve buildings.
- Research on carbon footprint to inform management and demonstrate change.

Co-ordinating partners: Community Energy Scotland, Energy Savings Trusts, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Historic Scotland, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, Zero Waste Scotland

3c. Low carbon land management

- Provide targeted advice and support for land managers on good practice, the benefits and rewards of storing carbon in the soils, peatland and woodland of the National Park.
- Research on management options and land management support for carbon storage.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland, National Farmers Union Scotland, Scottish Government, Scottish Land and Estates, Scottish Natural Heritage

4. Community empowerment

Each community in the Park has its own unique character, set of needs and hopes for the future. However, most are faced with similar challenges such as maintaining and improving community assets; improving the way local services are delivered; maintaining or improving the quality of life for different groups of the community; all against a backdrop of less public money to help pay. This programme is about supporting the communities of the National Park in planning for their future needs and tackling the issues or challenges they face as well as dealing with the responsibility it brings.

4a. Community action planning

- Continue support for communities to plan for their own futures, helping improve the ways it is carried out and the opportunities that effective planning provides the whole community.
- Share best practice and the most successful examples of community plans and projects between communities and public agencies.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Community Development Officers, Local Authorities

4b. Community capacity building

- Deliver skills and training, advice and support to help communities develop their aspirations and adapt to changing circumstances through social enterprise; and encourage the formation of more community owned and operated businesses that provide revenue or other community benefits.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Community Development Officers, Community Development Trusts and Companies, Community Voluntary Services and Rural Partnerships, Local Authorities, Robertson Trust

4c. Cairngorms LEADER

- Establish a Cairngorms LEADER fund from 2013 as part of the next LEADER Programme.
- Continue to provide support for community and rural development projects in the Park.

Co-ordinating partner: Cairngorms LEADER and Local Action Group

5. Building vibrant places

This programme spans outcomes 1 and 2 (see page 55). It is about getting the right kinds of development in the right places at the right times to support the economy and communities of the Park. It is about sensible planning for future needs, about maintaining what is special about the Park, and making sure the places we live and work in are safe, attractive places we want to stay. It is also about improving the effectiveness and efficiency of planning services provided by the public sector to help customers of the services whether they are communities, businesses or individuals.

5a. Planning the best development

- Prepare and deliver the Cairngorms Local Development Plan to set out where, when and how good development should happen in the right places in the National Park to support the economy, communities and special qualities of the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Local Authorities

5b. Delivering the most effective planning service

- Identify and deliver practical improvements to the planning service for the customers of planning services in the Park with the help of customer groups such as communities and developers.
- Investigate alternative ways of providing the service to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Local Authorities

5c. Supporting the regeneration of Tomintoul and Glenlivet

- Deliver projects and long-term planning solutions to support the regeneration of Tomintoul and Glenlivet to ensure they are vibrant and thriving communities into the future.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Moray Council, The Crown Estate, Tomintoul Community and Development Trust

Delivering long-term outcome 2:
A special place for people
and nature with natural and
cultural heritage enhanced

**Our approach, acting on
climate change and overall
delivery context (pages 49-50)**

**Five-year outcomes, indicators
and targets (page 51)**

Policy priorities (pages 51-54)

**Programmes and key work
packages (pages 54-57)**



Introduction

Conserving and enhancing natural and cultural heritage is central to being a National Park. The landscape, wildlife, towns and villages of the Cairngorms National Park all make up the special character and identity that underpin the area's designation. They are the result of natural processes, land use and settlement development over time and they will continue to change. We want to make sure that as it changes, the Park keeps its special character and identity, continuing to be a special place to live, work and visit for future generations.

The natural heritage and land use of the National Park is also a resource that delivers multiple benefits for the economy, environment and enjoyment. We should manage these resources carefully to get the most from them, to support investment in them and to conserve and enhance their underlying value.

Our approach

Given the scale of the Park and the interconnections between the aims of the Park, the principles of an ecosystems approach should guide work to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Park. This approach recognises the connections between natural systems, the way we use them and the things we depend on them for such as clean water, timber or recreation opportunities. It means we need to collaborate beyond the boundaries of individual ownership or management units, at a catchment or landscape scale.

We want to keep the mix of landscapes and land uses, while enhancing some particular habitats including woodland, moorland and wetland. Woodland expansion brings significant benefits including carbon storage, landscape enhancement, habitat connections, timber and economic returns and flood management, where it is well planned. The challenge is to target changes so that they do not compromise the benefits delivered by the farmland of the straths or the extensive moorlands. There is however, significant room to retain and develop a patchwork of habitats that delivers an even more effective mix of benefits, by combining sound science with the wide ranging motivations of land managers.

The Park is a working landscape. Many of the special qualities we enjoy today are the result of past land use management as well as natural processes. Its evolution as a working landscape will continue, with farms, crofts and estates playing a central role in shaping the landscape, habitats and species. They will also continue to provide many economic and recreation opportunities and continue to be integral to the cultural fabric of the Park.

The towns and villages of the Park, including fine examples of the planned town tradition, are integral to the sense of place and identity. They are the spaces where residents and visitors spend much of their time. The public spaces and built environment in settlements need investment, in some cases conservation, and in other cases innovative new approaches to ensure they remain well functioning places with a distinct sense of identity.

The Local Development Plan and planning services will support the delivery of this long-term outcome by making sure:

- new development helps to reinforce the valued built heritage of the Park and communities in it to maintain and enhance attractive places;
- the special qualities of the Park are enhanced by new development where possible and protected from new development that would significantly erode or harm them;
- there is clear guidance on where, when and how the best development will be supported.

Acting on climate change

Managing and responding to the effects of climate change on natural systems is vital to achieving this long-term outcome. The policies and work packages below support work to manage peatlands, woods and moorlands to store and secure more carbon. They also support action to improve the health of habitats and the connections between habitats to help them and the species that rely on them adapt to changes in climate.

Other work such as catchment management planning will help to make sure the decisions we take about the management of land are considered on a big enough scale; maintain the high water quality; reduce the effects of temperature rises on rivers; and reduce flood risks to towns and villages.

Delivery context

Our delivery will contribute to delivering wider regional and national policy including:

- a) Land Use Strategy for Scotland
- b) Scottish Biodiversity Strategy
- c) Scottish Forestry Strategy
- d) Scottish Historic Environment Policy
- e) National Food and Drink Policy for Scotland
- f) European Landscape Convention and Scottish Landscape Charter
- g) Scottish Rural Development Programme
- h) Community Planning Partnerships Single Outcome Agreements
- i) Water Framework Directive
- j) River Basin Management Plans



Delivering long-term outcome 2

A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced

Our work will focus on the following five-year outcomes by 2017:

| Five-year outcomes | How will we measure progress? (indicators) | What does success look like? (2017 targets) |
|---|--|---|
| Long-term outcome 2: A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced | | |
| 4. The quality and connectivity of habitats is enhanced | Area of woodland | Increase of 5% (c.4,000 Ha) in total woodland area |
| | Water quality | Maintenance or increase in water quality status |
| 5. The species for which the Park is most important are in better conservation status | Active conservation for LBAP priority species | Targets identified in LBAP achieved |
| | Estates participating in Wildlife Estates Initiative | 75% of estates in the Park |
| 6. The special landscape qualities, including wildness, are conserved and enhanced | Qualities of wildness | Equivalent or increased area of the Park characterised as high or medium wildness |
| 7. Settlements and built development will retain and enhance the distinct sense of place and identity in the Park | Number of conservation area improvement projects | To cover all conservation areas |

Policy priorities to help deliver the five-year outcomes above:

Policy 2.1 The management and use of land should deliver multiple benefits – delivering the best possible combination of the National Park Partnership Plan's long-term outcomes, always ensuring that the integrity of designated sites is maintained; and that the special qualities are conserved and, where possible, enhanced. This will be supported by:

- a) a long-term planned approach by land-based businesses to delivering environmental, economic and social benefits;

- b) support for land managers to plan and deliver environmental and social benefits underpinned by sound economic businesses;
- c) research to support an ecosystems approach to management.

Policy 2.2 Enhance the resilience of habitats, species and land use to climate change with a particular focus on:

- a) collaborating on land use and flood management through river catchment management plans;

- b) enhancing the health and connectivity of habitats;
- c) securing effective management of peat and carbon-rich soils.

Policy 2.3 Conserve and enhance the special landscape qualities with a particular focus on:

- a) conserving and enhancing wildness qualities;
- b) maintaining and promoting dark skies;
- c) enhancements that also deliver habitat improvements;
- d) enhancing opportunities to enjoy and experience the landscapes of the Park.

Policy 2.4 Conserve and enhance habitat quality and connectivity, with a particular focus on:

- a) woodland enhancement and expansion, especially montane, farm and riparian woodlands;
- b) wetland enhancement;
- c) delivering a combination of ecosystem services including flood management, carbon sequestration and storage, timber and food production.

Policy 2.5 Conserve and enhance the species for which the Cairngorms National Park is most important, with a particular focus on:

- a) species whose conservation status is in decline or at risk;
- b) tackling and reducing the impacts of invasive non-native species;
- c) engaging people on species that are important in the National Park.

Policy 2.6 Support collaboration across ownership boundaries and between interests to reduce conflicts in species and wildlife management including:

- a) deer management;
- b) wildlife crime;
- c) species reintroductions.

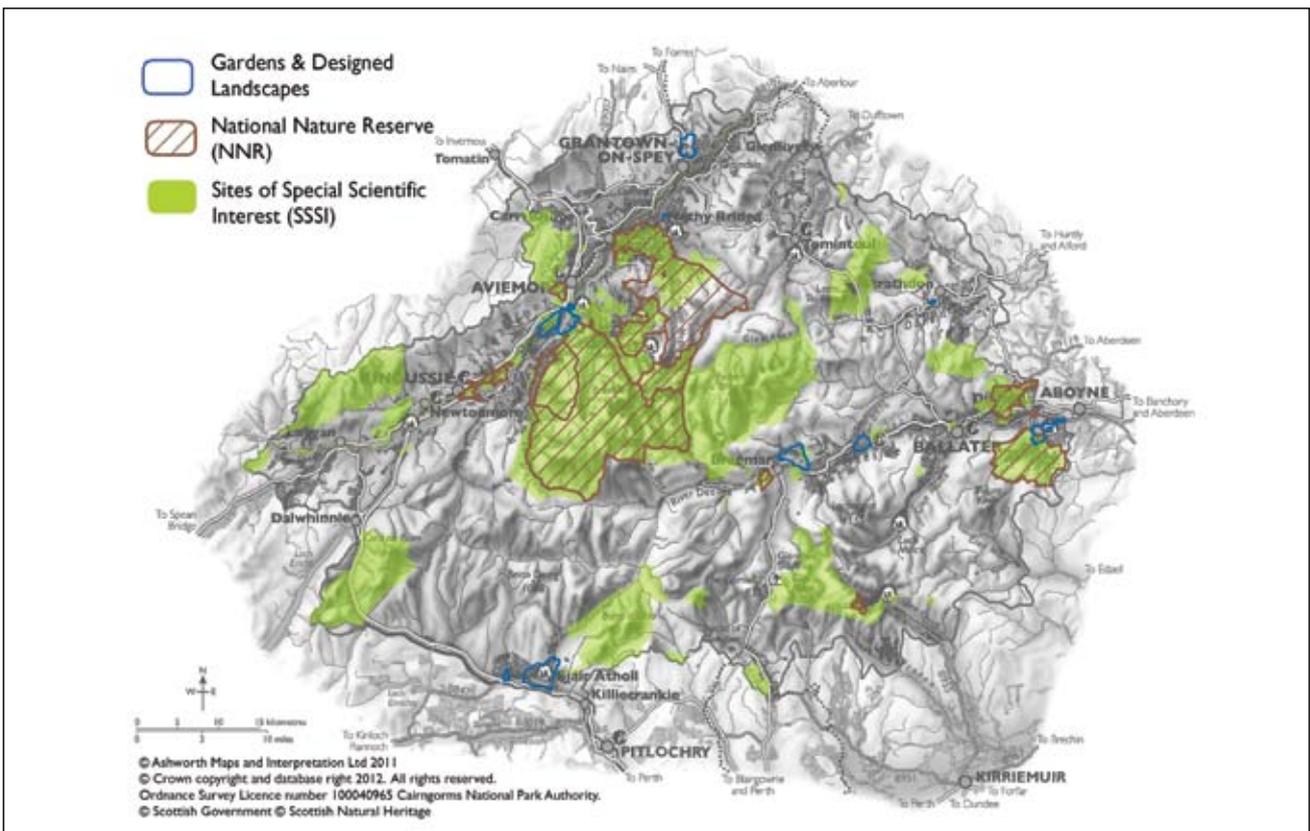
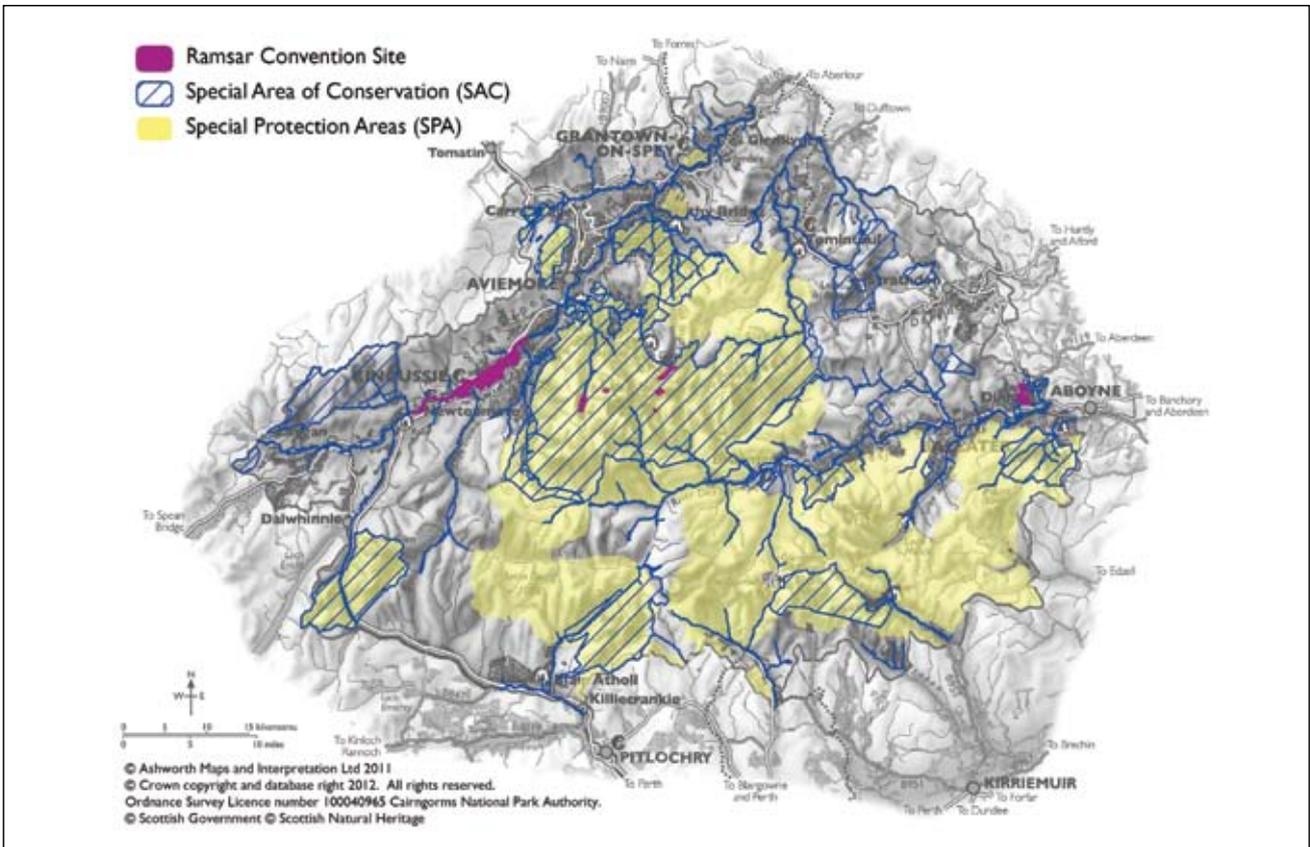
Policy 2.7 Conserve and enhance the cultural heritage that helps to create the sense of place and identity of communities within the Park by:

- a) protecting archaeological sites and their settings and promoting understanding of their significance;
- b) ensuring appropriate advice and investigation for archaeology is used to inform proposals for land use change;
- c) protecting and enhancing the built heritage and designed landscapes;
- d) promoting opportunities to enjoy and celebrate the cultural heritage of the Park.

Policy 2.8 Enhance the design and sense of place in new development and existing settlements, in particular:

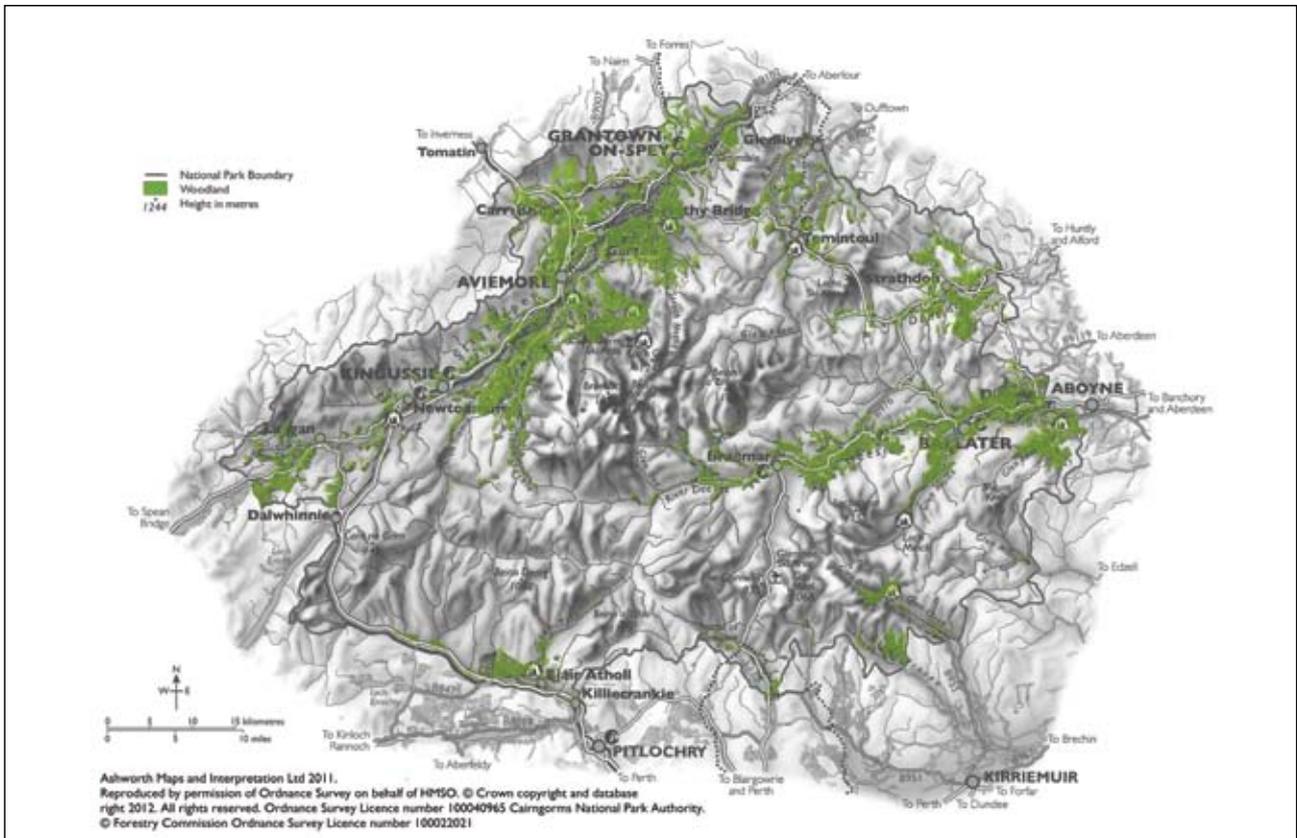
- a) enabling new development which contributes positively to the sense of place;
- b) promoting a high standard of sustainable design, energy efficiency, sustainably sourced materials and construction in new development;
- c) supporting the retention and enhancement of local character;
- d) facilitating the rehabilitation of redundant rural buildings and recycling of resources;
- e) ensuring road upgrades and improvements respond to local landscape character.

Nature conservation designations which support policy priorities.



Long-term outcome 2

Current woodland cover based on Forestry Commission's National Inventory of Woodland and Trees.



Delivering long-term outcome 2 (cont)

The following work programmes will help deliver the five-year outcomes (see page 51):

| Programme | Key work packages |
|---|---|
| Long-term outcome 2: A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced | |
| 5. Building vibrant places (cont) | 5d. Quality in design 5e. Townscape enhancement |
| 6. Nature and landscapes | 6a. Cairngorms Wildlife Partnership 6b. Cairngorms landscapes 6c. Designated sites management |
| 7. Supporting land management | 7a. Land management training 7b. Advice and support services 7c. Wildlife Estates Scotland Initiative 7d. Catchment management |

5. Building vibrant places (cont)

This programme spans outcomes 1 and 2 (see page 47). As well as getting the right kinds of development in the right places to support the economy of the Park, it is also about maintaining and improving the quality of design and sense of place that characterises towns and villages in the Park.

5d. Quality in design

- Promote higher standards of design for new development and public spaces.
- Support skills development to encourage use of more sustainable design approaches.
- Promote good design through the Cairngorms National Park Design Award.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Local Authorities

5e. Townscape enhancement

- Identify opportunities to enhance the sense of place, public space and amenity within the towns and villages of the Park.
- Undertake conservation area appraisals and deliver improvements to conservation areas in settlements.
- Seek conservation area status for Tomintoul to support implementation of the Tomintoul Regeneration Strategy.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Historic Scotland, Local Authorities

6. Nature and landscapes

This programme focuses work to conserve and enhance the natural heritage of the Park. In particular, it includes action to enhance landscapes; improve the condition of habitats; support species that require special management measures; and to manage the nationally and internationally important nature conservation sites in the Park. It includes work to improve the overall health of ecosystems in the Park, connecting beyond the Park's boundaries.

6a. Cairngorms Wildlife Partnership

- Establish a new partnership to build on the work of the Local Biodiversity Action Partnership, bringing together the effort, expertise and resources of a wide range of public, private and voluntary organisations delivering nature conservation in the Cairngorms National Park.
- Review and publish a new Local Biodiversity Action Plan for 2012-17.
- Prioritise, co-ordinate and deliver projects to conserve and enhance habitats and species, implementing the revised Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Develop partnerships to raise awareness of and enhance management for raptors.
- Develop initiatives to tackle wildlife crime.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland, National Trust for Scotland, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Land and Estates, Scottish Natural Heritage

6b. Cairngorms landscapes

- Promote and support an ecosystems approach to management across ownership boundaries through research, guidance and engagement.

- Deliver the Cairngorms Woodland Futurescape project to promote and support woodland expansion, including riparian, farm and montane woodland.
- Deliver the Strathspey wetland and waders project.
- Develop a landscape partnership project to deliver landscape enhancement and community benefits to the Glenlivet and Tomintoul areas.
- Identify further opportunities to enhance the wildness and special landscape qualities of the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland, National Trust for Scotland, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Crown Estate

6c. Designated sites management

- Work to achieve favourable condition on all designated sites, monitor and report progress.
- Research, develop, trial and monitor innovative approaches to managing the impacts of recreation on designated features.
- Resolve conflicting management requirements between designated features.

Co-ordinating partners: Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage

7. Supporting land management

Most land within the Park is owned and managed by private individuals or businesses. The management of the land shapes the landscapes we value, the habitats and species, and special qualities, as well as being an integral part of the economy and employment opportunity in the Park.

7a. Land management training

- Deliver training to support land management businesses improve performance and deliver public benefits for conservation, recreation and the economy.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland, National Farmers Union Scotland, Scottish Land and Estates, Scottish Natural Heritage

7b. Advice and support services

- Improve co-ordination of land management advice through a range of providers.
- Target advice and support to help land managers contribute to National Park Partnership Plan delivery, including support for land management planning.
- Support networks for communication and collaboration including the Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group (CDAG), Deer Management Groups, the Cairngorms Land Management Forum, the Cairngorms Farmers Forum, catchment management and wildfire groups.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Fisheries Boards, Forestry Commission Scotland, National Farmers Union Scotland, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Land and Estates, Scottish Natural Heritage

7c. Wildlife Estates Scotland Initiative

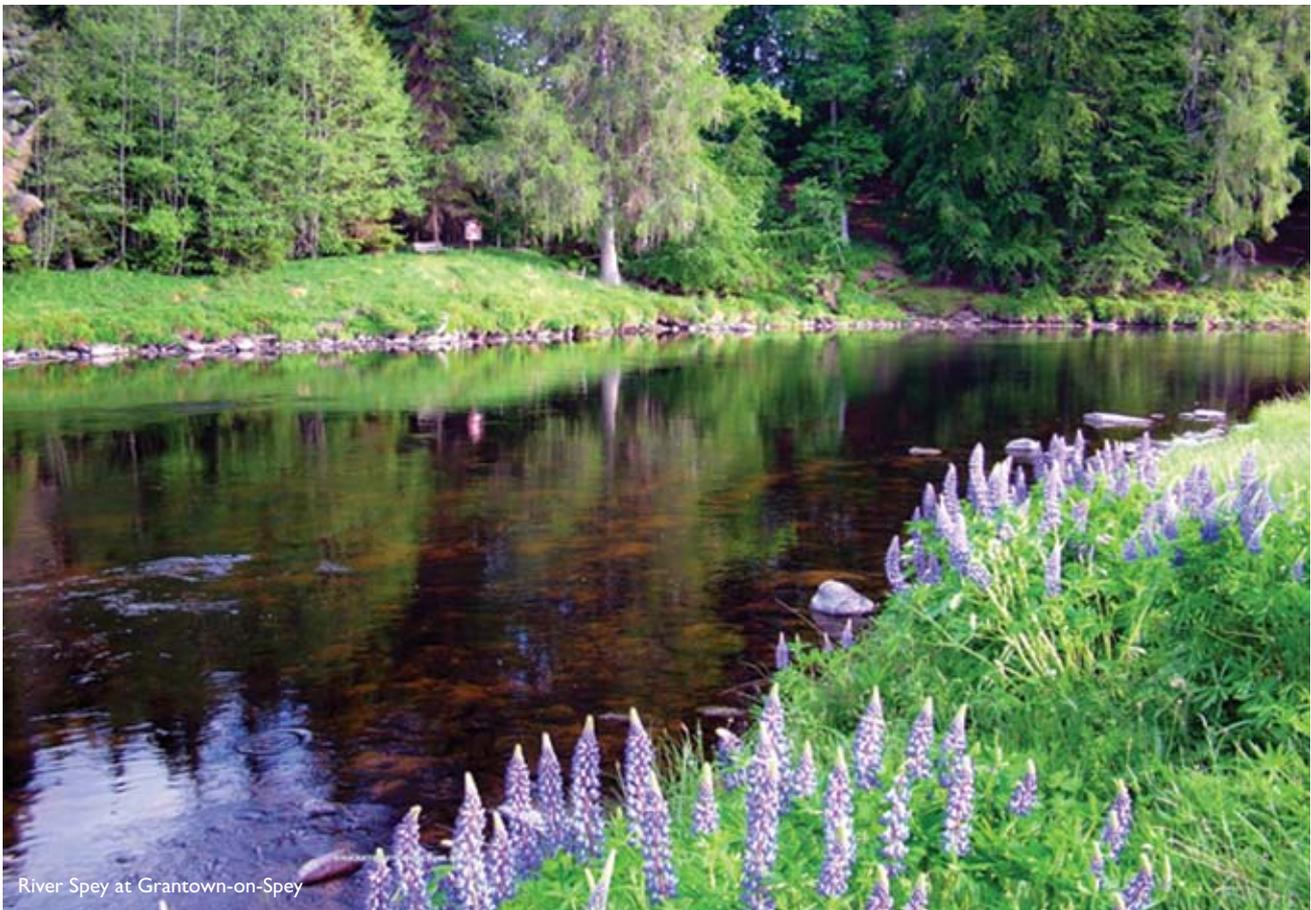
- Encourage estates across the Park to participate in level two of the Wildlife Estates Scotland Initiative.
- Share best practice and demonstrate good wildlife management by estates.
- Support estates' delivery of wildlife management with training and advice.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, Scottish Land and Estates

7d. Catchment management

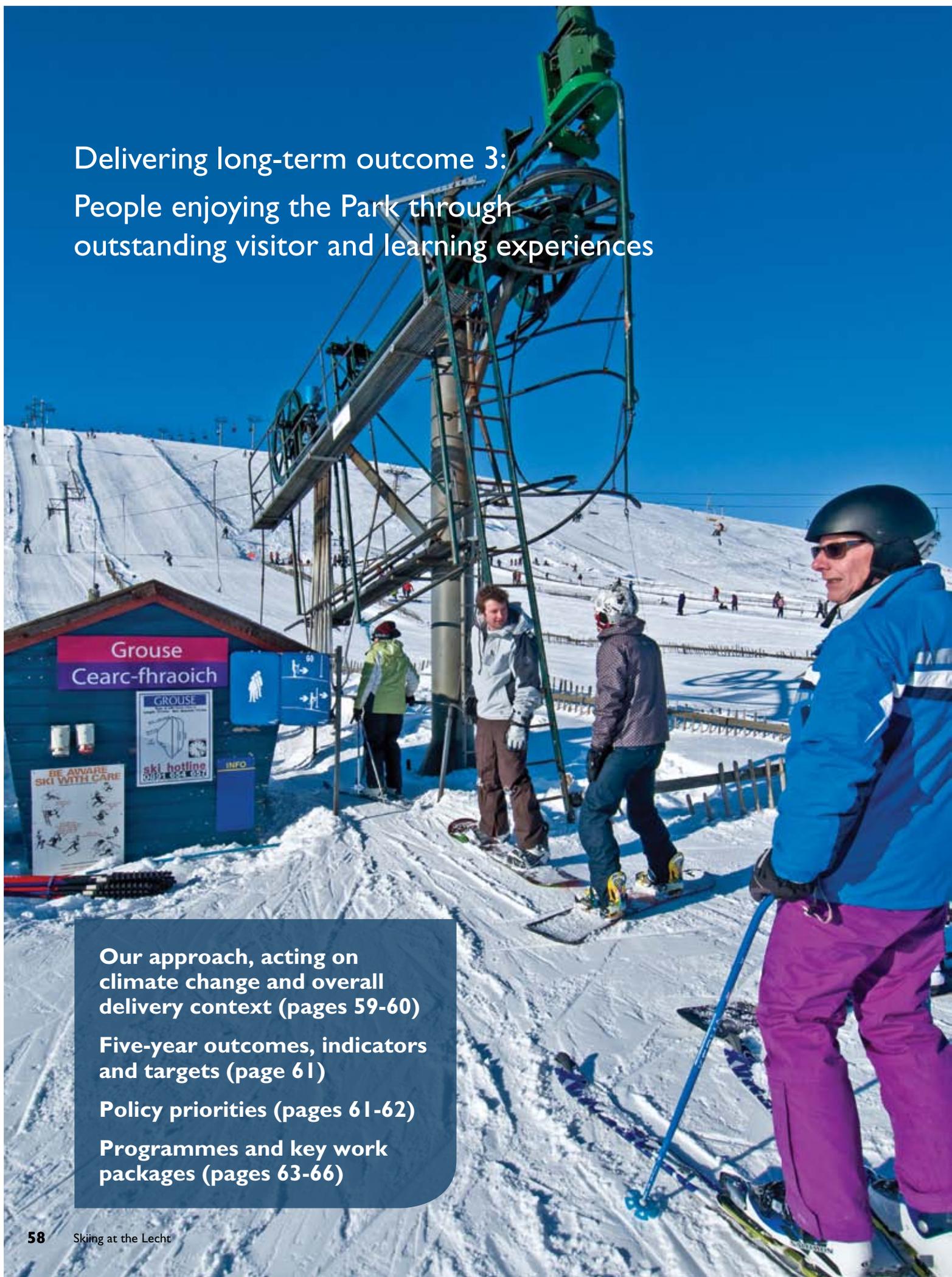
- Support existing catchment management initiatives on the Rivers Spey, Dee and South Esk as effective ways to collaborate in managing water systems at a meaningful scale.
- Support development of a catchment management approach for the River Don.
- Communicate and demonstrate the value of river systems and the benefits delivered to the catchments beyond the National Park's boundary.

Co-ordinating partners: River Dee Catchment Management Partnership (CMP), River Don Fisheries Trust, River South Esk CMP, River Spey CMP, Scottish Environment Protection Agency



River Spey at Granttown-on-Spey

Delivering long-term outcome 3: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences



**Our approach, acting on
climate change and overall
delivery context (pages 59-60)**

**Five-year outcomes, indicators
and targets (page 61)**

Policy priorities (pages 61-62)

**Programmes and key work
packages (pages 63-66)**

Introduction

People visiting and enjoying the National Park expect a high quality experience, whatever their particular interests. A National Park is an international brand that carries a high level of expectation for all aspects of people's experience, from their very first contact with the National Park. Whether you are a child at school, a resident, a nearby frequent visitor or a one-off tourist, you can enjoy the Park; learn about it and from it.

Our approach

High quality visitor experiences are supported by the infrastructure of visitor centres, car parks, promoted and core paths throughout the Park and by the welcome experienced by people. Investment in the development and maintenance of infrastructure helps to manage the impacts of visitors, and provide high quality experiences of the Park and its special qualities. We also need to invest in the people that engage with visitors, to support them in delivering the high quality promise of the Cairngorms National Park brand.

The fantastic outdoor recreation opportunities are an asset for residents and visitors that are enjoyable and help people live healthy lifestyles. Encouraging more use of them by people who would benefit most has potential to improve the health of many people through exercise.

The growth of tourism business in the Park has happened because people enjoy coming here and experiencing it for themselves. The potential benefits of tourism and the potential problems of unmanaged visitors to the Park are recognised and planned for through the strategy and action

plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park. It sets a path for how tourism can develop sustainably and how to avoid problems associated with it. It also makes a strong case for the use of the Cairngorms National Park brand as a way of both attracting customers, and reinforcing what is special about the Park and why it needs special management.

We want to see continued development of sustainable tourism, increasing the quality of experience for visitors and their understanding of what makes the Park special. This means promotion of opportunities and development of products, but it also means providing the highest possible standards of service, good advice, clear information and tailored interpretation and engagement with customers. This requires co-ordination between organisations and businesses and putting the customer's experience above organisational boundaries.

National Parks have been successfully embedded in the Curriculum for Excellence for school pupils in the National Park and throughout Scotland. Pupils can learn about the Park and why it's special to them as well as about other subjects through being outside. We want this support to continue to help today's pupils become the future custodians of the Park with opportunities for further training, development and employment in the Park. Beyond school, there are many organisations that provide structured learning and development opportunities in the Park. Helping people find the experiences they want, whether that is a commercial service or product, a structured experience, or an opportunity to volunteer and help manage the Park, helps them get the most from it.

The Local Development Plan and planning services will support the delivery of this long-term outcome by making sure:

- new development is well connected to core paths and other off-road routes, as well as creating attractive places to live and visit;
- new or improved visitor infrastructure is integrated with other visitor sites, services and communities;
- there is clear guidance on where, when and how the best development will be supported.

Acting on climate change

Although it is possible to travel to the Park without using a private car, it will always be hard to travel between remote places without a private vehicle. Public transport options are often too costly to provide on routes that are infrequently travelled. However, as far as possible, people should be able to travel between neighbouring villages and between nearby visitor attractions by off-road routes.

Most neighbouring communities in the Park are linked by off-road routes and many could be in future. These routes can provide an opportunity to travel (particularly by bike) without cars for many visitors as well as residents. We want to improve this network and the supporting infrastructure so that travel by bicycle in particular becomes a cheap and easy option for visitors to the Park as well as residents travelling between places.

Delivery context

Our delivery will contribute to delivering wider regional and national policy including:

- a) Scottish Outdoor Access Code
- b) Scottish Natural Heritage – Enjoying the Outdoors
- c) Community Planning Partnerships Single Outcome Agreements
- d) Tourism Framework for Change
- e) Scottish Transport Strategy
- f) Local Authorities Transport Strategies
- g) Cycling Action Plan for Scotland
- h) Curriculum for Excellence (through outdoor learning)
- i) Scottish Executive Volunteer Strategy
- j) Better Health, Better Care: Action Plan
- k) Reaching Higher, Scotland's National Strategy for Sport
- l) Out There
- m) Let's Make Scotland More Active
- n) Regional Transport Strategies



The Old Logging Way, off-road route, Glenmore

Delivering long-term outcome 3

People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences

Our work will focus on the following five-year outcomes by 2017:

| Five-year outcomes | How will we measure progress? (indicators) | What does success look like? (2017 targets) |
|---|---|---|
| Long-term outcome 3: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences | | |
| 8. More people will enjoy, learn about and help to conserve and enhance the Park | Number of volunteer days spent caring for the Park per year | Increase by 50% by 2017 |
| 9. The expectations of visitors are met or exceeded | Visitor satisfaction reported in Cairngorms Visitor Survey | Increase |
| 10. The Park's recreation opportunities have improved the health and enjoyment of residents and visitors | Number of people using promoted core paths | Increased path use overall and more even spread throughout year |

Policy priorities to help deliver the five-year outcomes above:

Policy 3.1 Provide a welcoming and high quality National Park experience for all by:

- delivering a visitor/customer experience that spans organisational boundaries;
- providing high quality co-ordinated information setting visitor experiences in the context of the National Park;
- supporting the network of ranger services in the National Park;
- building on the National Park brand and the promise it delivers.

Policy 3.2 Promote sustainable tourism management with a particular focus on:

- co-ordinated promotion and management of the Cairngorms National Park as a visitor destination;
- ensuring high quality facilities and infrastructure are designed to manage the effects of visitor pressures on the natural heritage and communities;
- implementing and reviewing the strategy and action plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park.

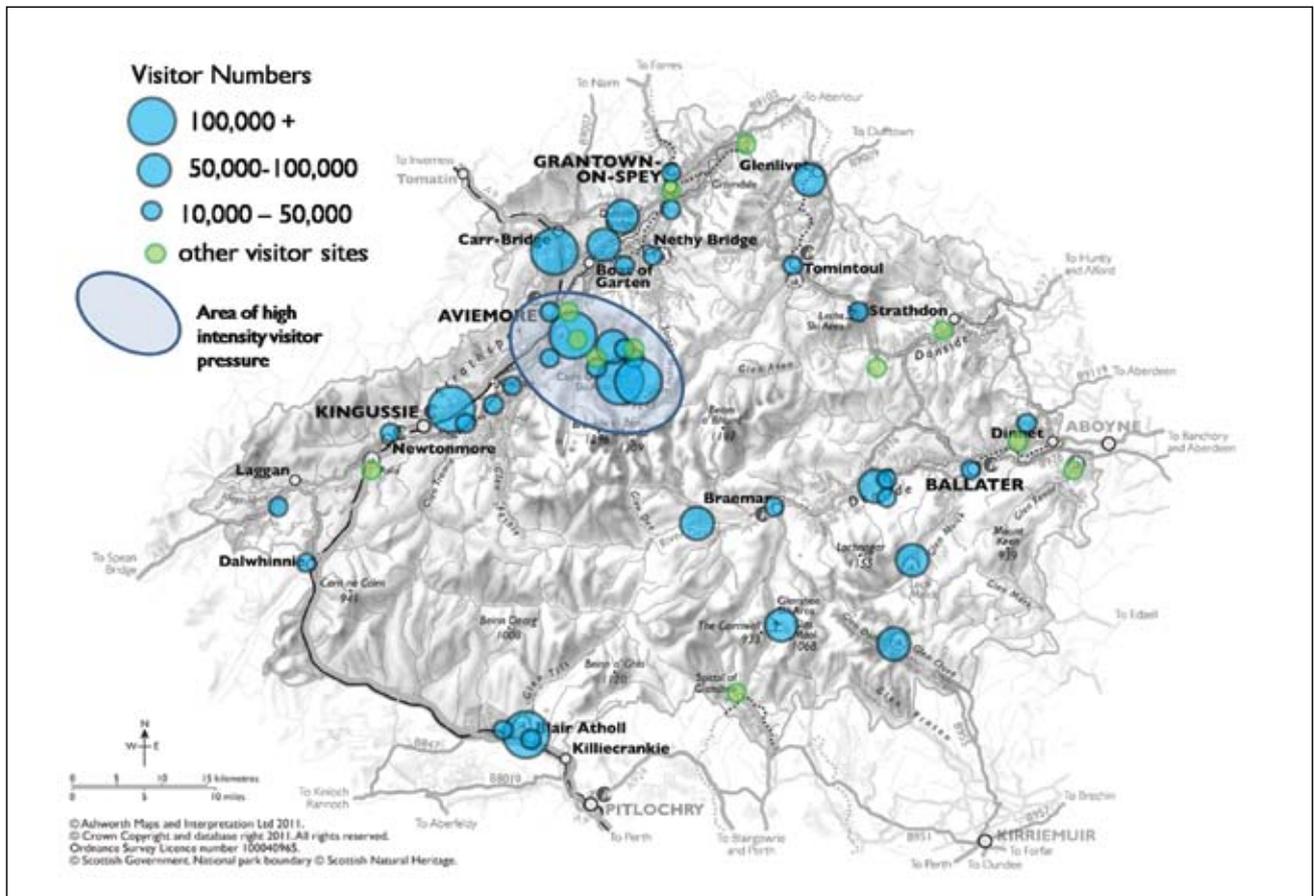
Policy 3.3 Provide high quality opportunities for access and recreation, with a particular focus on:

- a) ensuring a high quality functional network of core paths and long distance routes;
- b) promoting the health benefits of outdoor recreation;
- c) identifying areas where particular management measures are needed in relation to delivering a high quality visitor experience, safeguarding sensitive environments and maintaining the integrity of designated sites;
- d) promoting responsible behaviour in enjoying and managing access.

Policy 3.4 Provide opportunities for inspiration, learning and understanding through engaging with people, with a particular focus on:

- a) young people;
- b) opportunities to deliver the curriculum for excellence;
- c) promoting a sense of shared ownership and responsibility towards Scotland's National Parks and rural environment.

Visitor numbers and pressures (based on available information) which support policy priorities.



Delivering long-term outcome 3 (cont)

The following work programmes will help deliver the five-year outcomes (see page 61):

| Programme | Key work packages |
|---|---|
| Long-term outcome 3: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences | |
| 8. Leading sustainable tourism | 8a. Implementing the strategy and action plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park 8b. Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Strategy |
| 9. Active Cairngorms | 9a. Delivering and reviewing the Cairngorms National Park Outdoor Access Strategy 9b. Promoting active enjoyment 9c. Developing cycling |
| 10. Outdoor learning | 10a. Using National Parks in the curriculum 10b. Learning from the Park 10c. Volunteering to support nature |
| 11. Sharing the stories | 11a. Co-ordinating training and support for visitor managers/communicators 11b. Developing and delivering inspiring campaigns 11c. Community Heritage Project 11d. Experiencing National Nature Reserves |
| 12. Visitor and access infrastructure | 12a. Management of core paths and outdoor access 12b. Maintaining and improving high quality visitor facilities 12c. Scotland's National Parks Mountain Paths Restoration Project |

8. Leading sustainable tourism

Tourism is a key part of the economy of the Park. This programme is to ensure that tourism develops sustainably, contributing to a strong sustainable economy and that we manage the potential impacts of visitors to the Park to keep it a special place.

8a. Implementing the strategy and action plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park

- Deliver and review the strategy and action plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority,

Cairngorms Sustainable Tourism Forum, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, VisitScotland

8b. Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Strategy

- Review, update and implement a strategy for the Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore area to improve the quality of visitor experience, sense of place and the environment as well as maintaining the integrity of designated sites.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Group (CRAGG) partners

9. Active Cairngorms

The Park is a fantastic recreation resource, with many opportunities for different physical activities in a spectacular place. It has places for wintersports, water sports, and outstanding outdoor access opportunities that allow people to enjoy being outside and taking physical exercise in all sorts of ways from gentle to strenuous activities. This programme is about making sure the potential health benefits for residents and visitors to the Park are exploited, through encouraging people to be more active in sport and outdoor recreation, maintaining a healthy and active population.

9a. Delivering and reviewing the Cairngorms National Park Outdoor Access Strategy

- Review, update and implement the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Strategy to help promote the health benefits of sport and outdoor recreation, improve management of conflict between recreational use and sensitive species or habitats and other land management activities.

Co-ordinating partner: Cairngorms National Park Authority

9b. Promoting active enjoyment

- Develop and build on the existing health walks projects in the Park to help people who would otherwise not be active gain physical and mental health benefits through increased participation in sport and outdoor recreation.
- Increase the numbers and activity levels of people who are less active through promotional campaigns and improved joint working between clubs, schools, voluntary organisations, health professionals and through community sports hubs.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust, SportScotland

9c. Developing cycling

- Promote existing cycling activity products throughout the Park and linking to the Park.
- Improving access to and awareness of the network of safe on and off-road routes in the Park for recreation and for active travel between communities; establishing missing links in the network of routes; ensure trunk roads improvements provide suitable off-road links; and developing the wider infrastructure and support services for cyclists in the Park, while maintaining the integrity of designated sites.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Scottish Mountain Bike Development Cluster, SportScotland, Sustrans, Transport Scotland

10. Outdoor learning

This programme is about making sure the opportunities to learn about and learn from the Park are promoted, supported and co-ordinated as effectively as possible. The various ranger services around the Park as well as visitor management staff at sites and centres support this programme through their work.

10a. Using National Parks in the curriculum

- Continue to develop and support outdoor learning in National Parks through the Curriculum for Excellence in schools near the Park and throughout Scotland.

Co-ordinating partners: Education Scotland, Local Authorities

10b. Learning from the Park

- Support for community-based and adult learning opportunities that use the Park.
- Support for schemes such as the John Muir Award and Cairngorms Junior Rangers to provide structured ways of developing skills and knowledge based around the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms National Park Authority, John Muir Trust, Local Authorities

10c. Volunteering to support nature

- Develop the opportunities for practical volunteering to support nature and outdoor access in the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust, National Trust for Scotland, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Natural Heritage

11. Sharing the stories

This programme is about helping people find out about the special qualities of the Park, getting their own insight into what makes it a special place and why it needs special care.

11a. Co-ordinating training and support for visitor managers/communicators

- Co-ordinate the training, materials and support for visitor and customer facing staff of businesses, visitor centres and ranger services in order to help them provide a good service to visitors to the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, VisitScotland

11b. Developing and delivering inspiring campaigns

- Co-ordinate and implement targeted and inspiring campaigns within the Park to deliver consistent messages about the Park and the Park brand; engage people; raise awareness or promote opportunity; and promote appropriate behaviour.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

11c. Community Heritage Project

- Deliver the Aviemore and Kingussie Community Heritage Project to give expert training to local people that will help the local communities find and record sites and discover the stories attached to those sites.
- Extend the approach to support other communities to explore and understand their cultural and natural heritage.

Co-ordinating partners: Historic Scotland, The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland

11d. Experiencing National Nature Reserves

- Ensure that the National Nature Reserves in the Park provide an outstanding visitor experience that demonstrates their contribution to the special qualities of the Park.

Co-ordinating partners: Forestry Commission Scotland, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Natural Heritage

12. Visitor and access infrastructure

This programme is about making sure the visitor and access infrastructure (that is used by residents and visitors to the Park), is maintained and developed to provide these customers with the high quality services they need. It also provides the first line of management to avoid conflict between people enjoying the Park and those who are managing it or working it day to day.

12a. Management of core paths and outdoor access

- Ensure management and appropriate improvement and maintenance of core paths and other promoted paths within the Park.
- Uphold access rights and encourage responsible behaviour.

Co-ordinating partner: Cairngorms National Park Authority

12b. Maintaining and improving high quality visitor facilities

- Develop, maintain, update and improve visitor facilities throughout the Park to deliver high quality visitor experiences.

Co-ordinating partners: Cairngorms Business Partnership, Cairngorms National Park Authority, VisitScotland

12c. Scotland's National Parks Mountain Paths Restoration Project

- Improve mountain paths in both the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Parks to reduce the visual scars of erosion as well as future erosion on some of Scotland's most famous and spectacular mountains.
- Secure long-term funding for for upkeep of the paths in future.

Co-ordinating partner: Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust



Glenshee Church, Spittal of Glenshee

Cairngorms National Park





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