

# Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan

## Consultation and Engagement Process - Stage 1

### Community Engagement & Results – Lower Badenoch & Strathspey

#### Introduction

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

#### Engaging with the public for the Lower Badenoch & Strathspey area

The engagement period ran from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006. Questionnaires for the Strathspey Area and also for the north east Badenoch area were made available on the CNPA website, through contacting the CNPA directly and at drop-in events across the National Park. In Lower Badenoch & Strathspey, community drop-in events were run in Grantown-on-Spey, Dulnain Bridge, Carr-Bridge, Boat of Garten, Nethy Bridge, Aviemore, Kincaig and Kingussie to enable people to find out more about core paths planning and to advise the CNPA of the routes, paths and areas that are important to

them and why. Feedback reports for these settlements are also available. Questionnaires were also made available for settlements within Lower Badenoch & Strathspey, including Grantown-on-Spey, Cromdale, Dulnain Bridge, Carr-Bridge, Boat of Garten, Nethy Bridge, Aviemore, Kincaig and Kingussie and also for the Glenmore & Rothiemurchus area.

## Participants in the Engagement Process

Throughout the 3 month period a total of 16 questionnaires were completed for the Strathspey area and 13 were completed for the North East Badenoch area. Within the area, a total of 229 questionnaires were completed for the settlements of Grantown-on-Spey, Cromdale, Dulnain Bridge, Carr-Bridge, Boat of Garten, Nethy Bridge, Aviemore, Kincaig and Kingussie. To help the CNPA gauge whether or not the process successfully engaged with a wide enough cross section of people, the questionnaires asked people to provide information on their gender, age group and where they live. The results are shown below.

### Participants by Gender

Male	50%	Female	50%
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### Participants by Age Group

Under 16	0%	16 - 24	0%	25 - 44	15%	45 - 64	54%	65 - 74	19%	Over 75	12%
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### Where people came from

% of people from each place who completed questionnaires			
Lower Badenoch & Strathspey	81%	Elsewhere	19%

## Results of the Engagement Process

### Map Results

People were given the opportunity to provide their views on the Lower Badenoch & Strathspey area via questionnaires and at events. People were asked to identify the paths that are important to them on a map in the questionnaire, they were also asked to identify any new routes or

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

### Questionnaire Results

A total of 29 questionnaires were received for the Lower Badenoch & Strathspey area (including the Strathspey questionnaire and the North East Badenoch questionnaire). The responses to each of the questions are outlined below.

*What outdoor activities do you currently do in and around Lower Badenoch & Strathspey?*

Activity	% of respondents who undertake the activity
Low level walking	86%
Dog walking	17%
Hill walking	72%
Running	14%
Getting about in a wheelchair	0%
Walking with a pushchair	0%
Cycling on-road	52%
Cycling off-road*	59%
Horse-riding	10%
Watersports	21%
Winter sports	48%
None	0%
Other**	10%

\* Comment: not mountain biking

\*\* Other activities identified were 'Canoeing, skiing, cycling on tracks', 'Photography Bird Watching', and 'Orienteering'.

*Why do you do these activities?*

Reason	% of respondents who identified the reason
To keep fit/healthy	83%
Enjoying the Countryside	90%
Travel to work/school	10%
Getting about	41%
Other*	14%

\*Other reasons identified were 'Natural History, photography', 'work', 'Going to the shop' and 'Walking the dog'.

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

Activity	% of respondents who identified the activity
Low level walking	34%
Dog walking	10%
Hill walking	21%
Running	3%
Getting about in a wheelchair	3%
Walking with a pushchair	3%
Cycling on-road	28%
Cycling off-road	45%
Horse-riding	10%
Watersports	3%
Winter sports	17%

None	0%
Other*	10%

\*Other activities identified were 'Mid-level walking in forests overlooking strath', 'guided walks from ptarmigan to top of cairngorm' and 'Circular Walks. Getting from A to B'

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

Reason	% of respondents who identified each activity
Walk to work/school	3%
Cycle to work/school	21%
Try new activities	24%
Get fit	31%
Get outdoors more	55%
Other*	7%

\*Other reasons/comments identified were 'Not personally' and 'expand business'.

### Summary

During the public engagement process it was found that there is a requirement for improved off-road links between communities, similar to the popular Sustrans Route between Newtonmore and Kingussie. The Speyside Way should be multi-use, removing barriers for different activities, there are also a lot of issues with locked gates, particularly to the west of the A9 between Carr-Bridge & Aviemore. There is some demand for more promoted links in the areas of woodland between Feshiebirdge and Lochan Eilein and also Insh.

The most popular paths identified are from Carr-Bridge to Sluggan Bridge and along the River Dulnain (identified by 39% of respondents) or up to Slochd along the Sustrans Route. The Badenoch Way, Drumguish to Glen Feshie and Inshriach Forest were popular (38%) as were the Burma Road, An Slugan and routes at Kinveachy (26%).

Most activities proved popular in the area although low-level walking was by far the most popular, followed by Hillwalking and then cycling both on and off-road. To enjoy the countryside was the main reason that respondents chose for doing activities in the area, closely followed by to keep fit and healthy. There was demand for better off-road cycling opportunities.

## **Reflections**

There was a reasonable response for the Lower Badenoch & Strathspey area although it came from a fairly limited age group although the responses from the communities within the area balance this out. There was a high response rate from visitors in the area and a lot of information was compiled on maps at many of the events both in North East Badenoch and at events throughout the National Park. In particular there was a good response from people who attended the outdoor activities workshops that were held in Ballater and Aviemore.

## **Next Steps**

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

**Cairngorms National Park Authority**  
**1 March 2007**

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

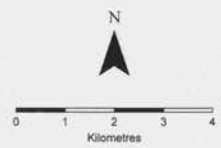
Where the comment relates to a geographic area on the map the number of the comment has been written on to the map in Annex 2.	
No.	Comment (as written by respondent)
1	Safe off-road routes linking <u>all</u> communities like the one between Kingussie and Newtonmore.
2	Need safer cycle way
3	A link is required on the N.W. of the Spey from Boat of Garten to Grantown on Spey
4	We need non-road links for cyclists & pedestrians to link all towns
5	Skyline walk
6	It can be difficult to know where to go to get the relevant information – e.g. library, TIC, Council Offices, CNP? Museum. Could one place be a designated info centre where leaflets + info are guaranteed to be up to date?
7	Is it possible to walk alongside all the roads without getting run over? (if cycle path along A9)
8	The Dava Way isn't very nice to walk on
9	This is an alternative route to Forres
10	Obstructive landowner! Has waged a war of attrition on access
11	Years ago I took a bunch of cyclists from Loch Morlich SYHA, via Ryvoan, over R. Nethy ford (NJ 022 143) by Loch a'Chluiric, Thieves Pass (Carn na Loine/Eag Mhor), Dorback Lo across to Glen Brown to reach road @ Bridge of Avon for Tomintoul SYHA. This was on lightweight road bikes, before mountain bikes were even invented.
12	Historic Iron Ore Route
13	Old Dorback/Nethy Track
14	Good cycle and walking route.
15	Fantastic cycle route first hand experience of the special qualities of the area
16	River Spey – best canoe touring river in Britain, very unusual that it meanders at the start (easy) and gets harder from Grantown. Fantastic
17	Speyside Way – upgraded as cycleway along full length, functional route for school access to Grantown from Cromdale & Nethy & Boat.

18	Speyside Way not complete here up to bridge
19	Old Pack Horse line to Nethy smelter (Rathan Ass Donley's pass)
20	Cycle Route to Aviemore
21	Cycle route (part of road upgrade by Bear) – yes brilliant idea! Agree with this agreement with road construction will need to be made within the next year if it is to happen when road is upgraded.
22	New path (Section missing)
23	Needs repairing after felling
24	Great cycle route but bit missing on A95
25	Please leave <u>ALL</u> wild areas that are currently path free exactly the way they are
26	Speyside Way + NCN 7 not accurately mapped
27	Start of Speyside Way in Aviemore not adequately marked on ground
28	Need better access through Kinrara
29	Better access to Kinrara required
30	Better walking route from Kinraig to Aviemore
31	Path along edge of Insh Marshes to north of Insh would be nice
32	Protect walking in field at Croftmartin – its beautiful!
33	The folding gates along the Speyside Way are a real pain if cycling or x-country skiing. Even running, they interrupt the pace. I agree, esp btw Nethy & GoS
34	DB – GoS Achnahannet – 1 + GoS Falconer
35	Biking – Lochindorb - & half mile push
36	Cycle from D.B. via forestry tracks Creag Ducharn DB – Carrbridge
37	Connected and accessible paths/tracks between Carr-Bridge & Dulnain Bridge
38	Need off-road cycle path between all villages esp. between Carrbridge & Aviemore. Agree.
39	Track opposite Kincardine House along Moor/bogside over bog into RSPB and then back along forest track in woods behind Mullingaroch & RSPB.
40	Auchgourish via river path to Boat of Garten Bridge marked in green.

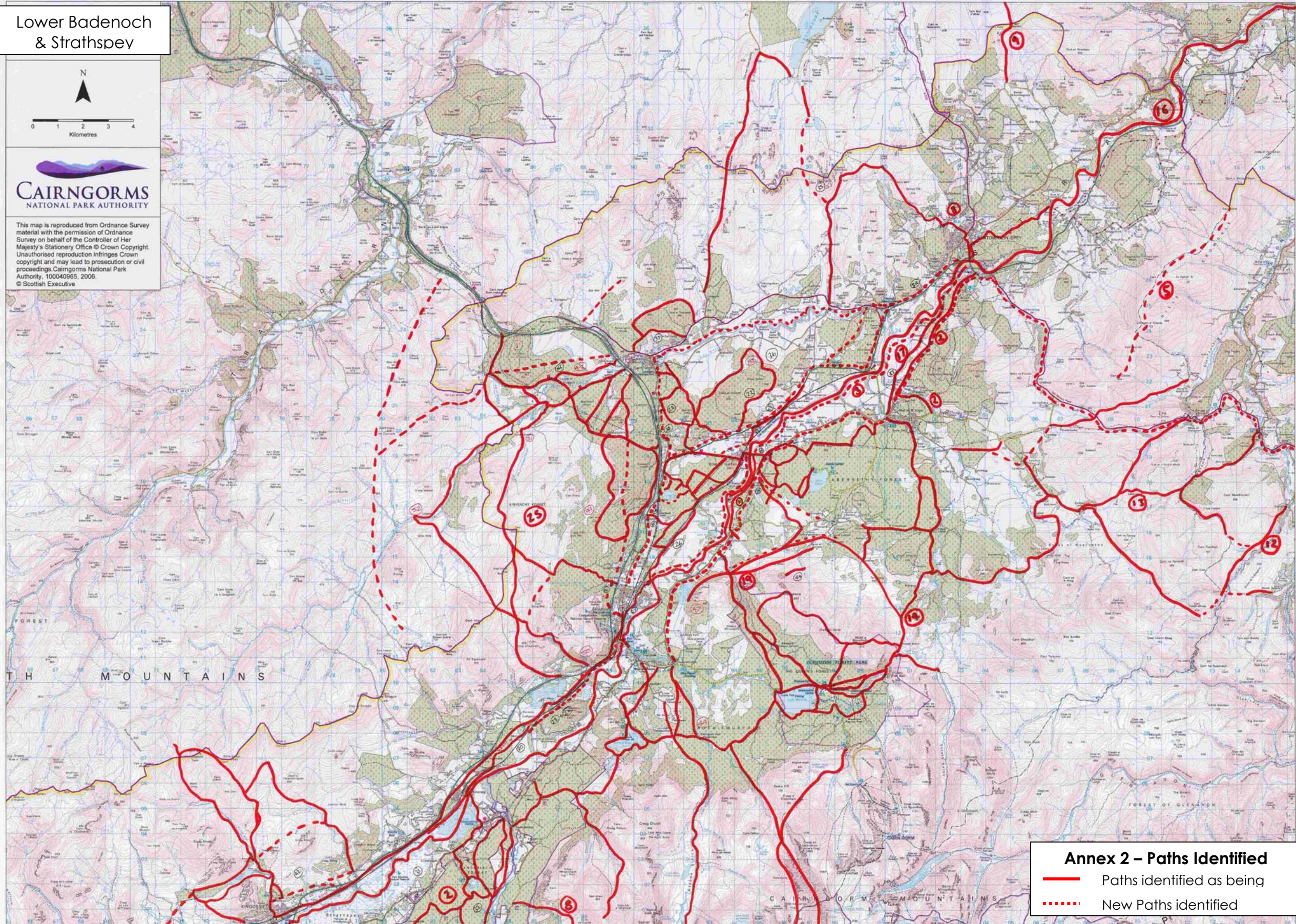


41	Aviemore is poorly served with paths – this needs to be addressed but will require funds, land & education.
42	Safe, off-road fenced paths linking all the communities together such as between Newtonmore & Kingussie.
43	I've come across this locked gate too.
44	Ref: 92 08 new path/very good but lot of gates make it difficult to use by cyclists
45	Locked gates
46	Path needs hard core
47	Great potential for trails for all ability
48	Locked gate
49	Several locked gate issues with this route.
50	Locked gate
51	Needs bridge for walkers
52	Locked gate
53	Lots of bike single track
54	Existing lots of bike single track

Lower Badenoch  
& Strathspey



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**Annex 2 – Paths Identified**

- Paths identified as being
- - - - New Paths identified