

Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan

Consultation and Engagement Process - Stage 1

Community Engagement & Results – Dinnet and Ordie

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 Dinnet & Ordie community, the people who participated in the engagement process and the feedback and results that they provided.

Engaging with the Dinnet and Ordie Community

The engagement period ran from 1st September to 30th November 2006. Questionnaires for the community were made available on the CNPA website, through contacting the CNPA directly and at a drop-in event. The community drop-in event was run to enable people in Dinnet and Ordie and the surrounding area 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.

The drop-in event was held at the Dinnet Hall on Thursday, 28th September from 2:00pm to 4pm and from 6.00pm to 8.00pm. CNPA staff Adam Streeter-Smith, Bob Grant and Sandra Middleton ran the event with assistance from Community Liaison Officer Jean Henretty.

Drop-in Event Promotion

The event was advertised in the Deeside Piper and was also the subject of a press release. Invitations were sent out to all local land owners/tenants and the community council. Posters were displayed around the village a week in advance of the event and fresh posters were put up on the day of the meeting including a large board outside the event. In addition, contact was made with schools and the community through Community Liaison Officer Jean Henretty.

Drop-in Event Format

Participants were provided with a core paths planning leaflet which included details of the core paths plan process in the Cairngorms National Park and Frequently Asked Questions. The leaflet was made available to participants along with questionnaires and maps to record their views. A questionnaire containing a map was available for each settlement in the National Park as well as for the wider areas of the National Park. Large maps of the wider area were also available to help people identify routes out with settlements. There was also an opportunity for people to record their views on the path network in the area in relation to what they thought was good or bad about it or what could be improved, this was recorded in an 'H-Diagram' format.

Drop-in Event Feedback

Approximately 18 people attended the event, a total of 6 questionnaires were completed at the event and a number of people took questionnaires away to complete in their own time. Participants were asked to complete an evaluation sheet of the Dinnet and Ordie event, the results recorded are as follows:

	% of Participants Responding			
	Very Useful	Useful	Not Useful	Waste of Time
Location	75%	25%	0%	0%
Venue	100%	0%	0%	0%
Timing	86%	14%	0%	0%
Questionnaires	86%	14%	0%	0%
Information Available	100%	100%	0%	0%
Opportunity to speak to staff	83%	17%	0%	0%

Comments on the Dinnet and Ordie Network		
What is bad about the network?	What is good about the network?	How the network could be improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many fences around loch • Loch Kinord not accessible by buggy because of gate • Ambiguous water access management • Road dangerous for walking with children • Where walks involve use of main road and Tarland road it is quite dangerous • Loch Kinord path upgrading • No path by side of road between Logie Coldstone and Dinnet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of over 30kms of new paths around the Nature Reserve • There are plenty of existing paths and a new one around Loch Kinord • Good informal network around Loch • Loch Kinord paths are good • Good low level paths good for most abilities • Paths around Loch Kinord are not bad? • Good potential to link local circuits to LDW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better signage and interpretation • Better signs and maps • SNH – NNR signs and maps for NNR need renewing • More paths along roadsides • Path from Ordie to Loch Kinord • Firmounth north of river some boggy bits (between Clearfield ford past Mullochdhu up to Gallow hill are very boggy and deep old wheel ruts. Difficult for cycling. • Paths from Ordie to Loch Kinord • Paths for scramblers quads etc. Dinnet to around the Loch and back.

In general discussion with participants at the drop-in event, people were very positive about the path network. In particular they welcomed the newly developed path network around Loch Kinord but hoped that surfacing could be improved and barriers removed to make them more accessible to wheel chairs and buggies.

Map Results

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 the event were given the opportunity 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 can be viewed on a map 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 18 questionnaires were received for the Dinnet and Ordie area. The responses to each of the questions are outlined below.

What outdoor activities do you currently do in and around Dinnet & Ordie?

Activity	% of respondents who undertake the activity
Low level walking	81%
Dog walking	38%
Hill walking	44%
Running	6%
Getting about in a wheelchair	6%
Walking with a pushchair	31%
Cycling on-road	38%
Cycling off-road	63%
Horse-riding	31%
Watersports	19%
Winter sports	13%
None	6%
Other	0%

Why do you do these activities?

Reason	% of respondents who identified the reason
To keep fit/healthy	94%
Enjoying the Countryside	81%

Travel to work/school	6%
Getting about	50%
Other*	6*%

*Other reasons identified were 'views'.

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	50%
Dog walking	31%
Hill walking	13%
Running	0%
Getting about in a wheelchair	13%
Walking with a pushchair	38%
Cycling on-road	0%
Cycling off-road	25%
Horse-riding	19%
Watersports	13%
Winter sports	13%
None	6%
Other*	6%

*Other activities identified were 'Take photographs – landscape & nature'.

Would better opportunities for these activities encourage you to;

Reason	% of respondents who identified each activity
Walk to work/school	6%
Cycle to work/school	31%
Try new activities	25%

Get fit	50%
Get outdoors more	63%
Other	0%

Summary

During the public engagement process it was found that there is support for the good network of trails at Loch Kinord although they could be improved by making them more accessible for a wider range of users (including pushchairs, wheelchairs, bikes etc.) by removing barriers. There is a certain level of confusion over access to the water at Loch Kinord in relation to rights and accessibility.

The most popular paths identified were those around and accessing Loch Kinord, and the Old Deeside Line. There was some demand for an off-road route alongside the A97 between Dinnet & Ordie.

Most activities proved popular in the area although low-level walking was by far the most popular, followed by cycling off-road. Most people doing activities did so to keep fit and healthy and also to enjoy the countryside, a lot of people also did them just to get about but few people do so to get to work or school. There was some demand for better low-level walking routes and a comparatively high demand for better opportunities for pushchair users.

Reflections

The drop-in was relatively well attended with positive feedback regarding the event and the core paths planning process itself. A number of people have returned questionnaires since. Whilst it was encouraging to receive completed questionnaires from 4 participant under the age of 16, it was disappointing to have no participants in the 16 to 24 age group and only 2 in the 24 to 44 age group.

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

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Annex 1 - Comments received on maps at the 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	V. boggy bit – upgrade to cycle-able surface?
2	New cattle gate (locked) across paths. Old kissing gate lying beside path.
3	Gate impassible for buggies.
4	Give us a chance to install a new gate!!!
5	Boats
6	Pedal boats, canoes, kayaks
7	Good for mountain bikes, quads & scramblers – good jumps & muddy & bumpy.
8	As you can see, we enjoy our walking – and all the routes marked are important to us. <i>(not numbered on map in Annex 2)</i>
9	This section from Coatmore (well from Tarland really) could be made more walker friendly.
10	I have always used this path (since 1955) but it could do with improvement.
11	This would be a worthwhile link to create from the Kinord network more directly towards Cambus O'May.
12	Actually I think this <u>does</u> exist.
13	No path on road
14	Walking on road can be dangerous/ would like to see road side path.
15	Gate obstacle for buggies.
16	Upgrade
17	To? Dust upgrade
18	Upgrade
19	New walk not good no access for wheelchairs + pushchairs
20	Would love to bring horse to hack round from the car park.
21	Gate by New Kinord often locked, side gate not suitable for horses.

