

Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan

Consultation and Engagement Process - Stage 1

Community Engagement & Results – Carr-Bridge

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 Carr-Bridge community, the people who participated in the engagement process and the feedback and results that they provided.

Engaging with the Carr-Bridge 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. Questionnaires were also distributed to all households in the area through the community newsletter. The community drop-in event was run to enable people in Carr-Bridge 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 World Porridge Making Championships in Carr-Bridge on Sunday 8th October from 10am to 3pm. CNPA staff members Bob Grant and Sandra Middleton and Community Liaison Officer Anna Barton ran the event.

Drop-in Event Promotion

The drop-in was run as a part of the wider 'World Porridge Making Championship'. The event was advertised in the Badenoch & Strathspey Herald and was also the subject of a press release. Invitations were sent out to all local land owners/tenants and the community council. An email invitation was sent out to a wide range of local activity providers, businesses and individuals. 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.

Drop-in Event Format

The drop-in was held in a tent at the World Porridge Making Championships. 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 outwith 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 100 people attended the event, many of them visitors to the area as well as visitors from the surrounding villages and there was a good attendance of Carr-Bridge residents. A total of 21 questionnaires were completed at the event and a further 26 were returned by post or via the CNPA website. Participants were asked to complete an evaluation sheet of the Carr-Bridge event, the results recorded are as follows:

	% of Participants Responding			
	Very Useful	Useful	Not Useful	Waste of Time
Location	100%	0%	0%	0%
Venue	93%	7%	0%	0%
Timing	93%	7%	0%	0%

Questionnaires	100%	0%	0%	0%
Information Available	100%	0%	0%	0%
Opportunity to speak to staff	100%	0%	0%	0%

*Comment – ‘the outcome is more important than the process – agree’

Participants in the Engagement Process

Throughout the 3 month period a total of 47 questionnaires were completed for the Carr-Bridge settlement. To help the CNPA gauge whether or not the process successfully engaged with a wide enough cross section of the community, 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	41%	Female	59%
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Participants by Age Group

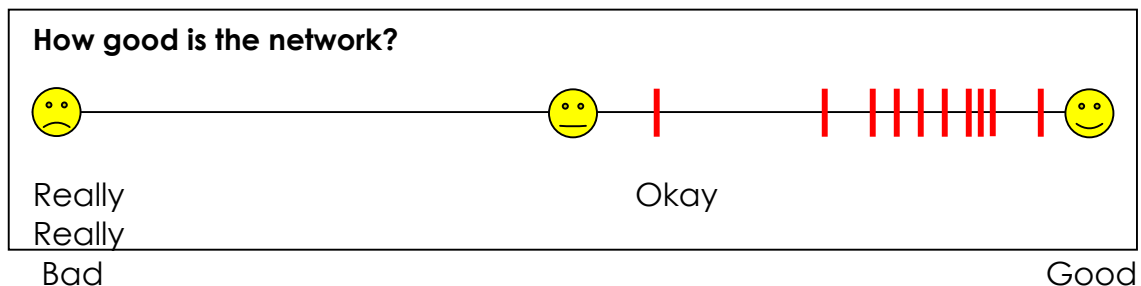
Under 16	2%	16 - 24	2%	25 - 44	36%	45 - 64	38%	65 - 74	18%	Over 75	4%
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Where people came from

% of people from each place who completed questionnaires					
Carr-Bridge	79%	Carr-Bridge Community Council Area	4%	Elsewhere	17%

Results of the Engagement Process

At the drop-in event people were asked their views about the path network in and around Carr-Bridge. Participants were asked to place a mark on a line to show what they thought of the network



People were also asked what they think is good and bad about the network and what could be improved. The results are shown below, the comments are recorded exactly as written by participants.

Comments on the Carr-Bridge 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"> • Dog poo everywhere • Dig dirt • Dog mess • Not enough cycle paths • Don't know where to go • Track from stables to Urquharts Brae needs more suitable surface for horses • Bad information • Some of walkways could be improved • Locked gates • Very variable condition – who should maintain • Footbridges need repaired • Bulls in fields with paths through them • Path off station road into woods is through fencing and I cannot get my buggy through "chicane" • Cannot walk right along river due to private house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good network of varied paths and tracks • Many varied walks • Lovely walks • Fantastic woodlands and scenery • Lots of paths are pushchair accessible • Variety • Good & varied • Beautiful views • Plenty of paths • Lots of paths • Big area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better info • More smoother paths please • More information where to go please • Better maps • Maintenance required for some bridges • Need more pushchair/wheelchair accessible paths • More signposts • More paths and tree swings • A bit more maintenance 2B more accessible to pushchair etc • More linked paths • Mix of smooth and rough paths • Drain & improve farm track to Docharn • Off-road cycle link between villages especially CB & Aviemore • Better signposting • Don't surface too many paths – seconded!

In general discussion with participants at the drop-in event, people were happy with the existing path network although there was some demand for better promotion of it.

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 47 questionnaires were received for the Carr-Bridge area. The responses to each of the questions are outlined below.

What outdoor activities do you currently do in and around Carr-Bridge?

Activity	% of respondents who undertake the activity
Low level walking	85%
Dog walking	43%
Hill walking	38%
Running	21%
Getting about in a wheelchair	0%
Walking with a pushchair	13%
Cycling on-road	53%
Cycling off-road	62%
Horse-riding	6%
Watersports	6%
Winter sports	38%
None	0%
Other*	13%

*Other activities identified were, 'Gathering Wildfruit & Mushrooms', 'golf', '(walking dogs) usually other people's dogs', 'Walking with small children' and 'Photography, Birdwatching'.

Why do you do these activities?

Reason	% of respondents who identified the reason
To keep fit/healthy	87%
Enjoying the Countryside	87%
Travel to work/school	21%
Getting about	28%
Other*	28%

*Other reasons identified were 'to play', 'family activity', 'Childminder taking kids out', 'Exercise the dog', 'Keeping kids amused' 'Shopping (bike)' and 'less damage to environment', 'Natural History', 'Enjoy the activity', 'Bird and deer watching', 'Education' and 'Recreational'.

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	47%
Dog walking	19%
Hill walking	4%
Running	13%
Getting about in a wheelchair	17%
Walking with a pushchair	13%
Cycling on-road	23%
Cycling off-road	34%
Horse-riding	4%
Watersports	0%
Winter sports	11%
None	0%
Other*	23%

*Comments: 'path to the station', 'Path along riverside need work. Used to be a lovely walk!', 'Direct cycle track from Carrbridge to Aviemore', 'More cycle tracks e.g. Aviemore, Grantown', 'Less heavy

lorries, i.e. access to sawmill. Cycle routes linked to adjoining villages similar to Kingussie & Newtonmore', 'less lorries through village (access from A9 to Industrial Estate) creating a safer environment for above activities', 'Cycle route to Aviemore', 'Icerink - Aviemore would do', 'We are well served as it is for my needs' and 'Minor improvements could be made to the above facilities but they are already pretty good in Carrbridge. (I already do them - but would do them more...)'.

Would better opportunities for these activities encourage you to;

Reason	% of respondents who identified each activity
Walk to work/school	13%
Cycle to work/school	17%
Try new activities	17%
Get fit	45%
Get outdoors more	57%
Other*	9%

*Other reasons identified were, 'Would enhance existing activities more than add new', 'Cycle to shop in Aviemore', 'Cycle on road safely', and 'More paths easier to get to'.

Summary

During the public engagement process it was found that after low-level walking, off-road cycling is the most popular activity and there is demand for improved opportunities, particularly linking communities with off-road cycling routes. The Sustrans route is in need of work due to fallen trees and mud. There are a number of issues with bridges some in disrepair and some that have disappeared completely. There is some concern over the re-routing of the riverside path and demand for it to be more formalised. There is some demand to improve access to the Baddengorm and Tolquhonie woods.

The most popular paths identified were the walks in Ellan Woods (70%), the Sustrans Route (65%), the River path to Ellan Bridge and Tolquhonie Wood (both identified by 51% of respondents) and the Baddengorm Woods (46%).

All activities were reasonably popular in the area, low-level walking was by far the most popular activity followed by cycling off-road. Most people doing activities did so to keep fit and healthy and equally to enjoy the countryside and a reasonable number did so to get to work

or school. There was a reasonably high demand for better opportunities for low level walking and for off-road cycling and a comparatively high demand for better opportunities for wheelchairs.

Reflections

The drop-in event was very well attended and the response rate on questionnaires was very high and there was positive feedback from those attended the event. There was a good response from people living in Carr-Bridge and the surrounding area, as well as from visitors. There was a good level of response from a variety of age groups.

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 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	To the dry ski slope
2	Cycling
3	We've only been in the village for six months so haven't explored everything 1. Would like quiet/interesting route to station 2. Would appreciate further bridging points (foot) on River Dulnain 3. Desire cycle track along stretch of A95 013254 to 023262 and/or use of farm track to lower Gaich 016254.
4	Lack of access, paths & information
5	Needs pathed
6	Staying @ hotel
7	Needs path
8	Used this path due to inclusion in 'Walks around the Cairngorms' book
9	General Wade's Road
10	Sluggain Bridge
11	Wet – example of short section which is frequently wet & boggy
12	Ravine
13	And other paths deeper in the wood out to moorland boundary
14	Creating a new link would complete a circular boundary routes for Carr-Bridge which could be linked to a variety of Annual Events – fun runs, rides, skiing etc.
15	Poorhouse – site of former village – could be marked with small interpretive sign/bench/table
16	Link – perhaps alternative route around trekking centre, etc.
17	To gate at junction of A938 & A9
18	Previously River walk to Dalrachney
19	To Sluggain
20	?Path from left off Wade Road
21	Improve path/construct new path to cross low fence + go down slope between railway & high fence onto platform

22	Crossing of railway to link up paths on each side
23	Riverside walks downstream for centre of village with footbridges
24	Paths to link up existing paths/tracks to make circular walks possible to N of village
25	To Duthil from Carr-Bridge
26	To Sluggain Bridge
27	On the stretch of path between Inverlaiden and Eil, on the north side of the River Dulnain, there are two high stiles which are difficult to get a bike over. <i>(not numbered on map in Annex 2)</i>
28	This path often inches deep in mud and manure. The bridge is an improvised construction often with water on the surface.
29	The path from the north end of Ellan Bridge and the Dalrachney Road is indistinct and could be signposted.
30	The path from Carr-Bridge village to Ellan Bridge could be given a better surface with drainage.
31	A national cycle way goes from the B9153 through Docharn farm to the A95. This path is often deep in mud and manure above Docharn farm. If the surface was improved on this section, and the construction through the woods on the Speyside Way it would make for an enjoyable and safe off road route between Carr-Bridge & Aviemore.
32	Dry ski slope no longer there
33	Footbridge no longer in place
34	Boggy unmade path, heavily used by cattle.
35	Off-road cycle routes used regularly by a small group of cyclists
36	A footbridge across the Dulnain to the south of Duthil would allow a circular cycle route of Carr-Bridge to be developed. The river at Wester Gallovie is no longer fordable.
37	Footbridge is in poor condition.
38	Path dug up during summer months
39	Locked deer gate
40	Broken bridge over burn
41	A way-marked circular route of Carr-Bridge for off-road visitors would benefit. <i>(not numbered on map in Annex 2)</i>
42	Path has had to change route here due to new house by river.
43	Footbridge on point of collapse

44	Track not all shown on map. High fence and locked gate – not easy.
45	Boggy area – could be made into a better track.
46	I walked in this area a lot between Oct '05 & feb '06, when I lived in Carr-Bridge. It was a very good path network; just one rather dangerous footbridge over a ditch near the railway line – it was very tilted sideways & very slippery when wet. Otherwise excellent paths.
47	Very important linking path to Boat of Garten (for cycling)
48	Map is naturally big enough. We run in the area between Slochd – Sluggain-Carr-Bridge + walk up to Dalnahaitnach – this area is used by a lot of walkers & cyclists
49	I walk and run using his area – Sluggain & Dalnahaitnach
50	I think there are enough paths in the woods but would like to see a river walk right through the village, plus upgrading of existing small river walk through farmland.
51	For such an important task it is a shame you have accepted an old map from the OS. Surprised to see several old established paths not on the map either. <i>(not numbered on map in Annex 2)</i>
52	Houses missing from map they are at least 15 years old This is a very old map! Many others missing as well. <i>(not numbered on map in Annex 2)</i>
53	Old path removed where cycle track made
54	New line
55	Way-marked path missing
56	Tillhill way-marked routes
57	It would be nice to have a good path from the village through Baddengorm Wood and up to 'Carn Iain Ruaidh' and 'Carn nan Eagan' maybe.
58	The other mega important path is 'the Burma Road' from Dalnahaitnach, Carr-Bridge over the top past Geal-charn Mór to Craigellachie.
59	Area difficult to access
60	Sluggain Bridge walk very important. (short linear)
61	To Dalrachney
62	Footbridge marked has fallen in – reinstatement would introduce a new valuable route.

63	Access to road/path confusing here – the path takes you to a fence or into someone's garden.
64	Road junction here very difficult to negotiate on bike or foot – improvement would open up more paths to North & East of village.
65	General point is that in the paths in Carr-Bridge woods are not well marked on the map. We frequently use many paths that are not marked (<i>not numbered on map in Annex 2</i>)
66	Paths in Ellan Wood are too wide and too numerous – locals should be consulted on means of extending ground flora to cover some of them.
67	New link?
68	Almost extinct! New link suggested.
69	Bridge needed
70	Steps too steep
71	Realign path
72	New link suggested
73	Can be very muddy
74	Can the Dulnain be bridged before Dalrachney (x2)
75	Poor access and overgrown
76	Sustrans cycle path currently in poor condition due to forestry operations
77	Poor access
78	Can bridge be built over the Dulnain at Carr Farm
79	Tree down
80	Path to give access to station from village centre
81	Good cycling 'more swings'
82	House preventing access to riverside footpath
83	More detailed path – if one exists! There appears to be no link here when you look at an OS map
84	Path on OS side of Dulnain would be good
85	Landmark car park no access to paths
86	Bridge needs repaired
87	Should be core paths
88	erosion

In addition to the above, a member of the public contacted the CNPA to note that there is a development of new houses (and a new potential development) behind the Carr-Bridge Hotel. A condition of the planning permission is that the developer puts in new pavements/paths.

