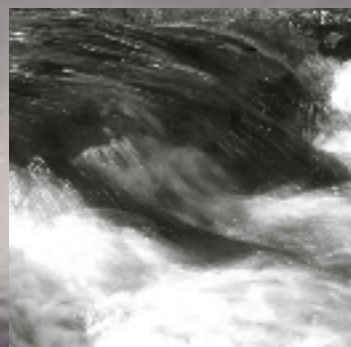


Cairngorms National Park Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2005/06



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Introduction

The Cairngorms became a National Park in September 2003 because it is a unique and special place that needs to be cared for – both for the wildlife and countryside it contains and for the people that live within, manage and visit it.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority promotes partnership, gives leadership and ensures those involved in the development and growth of the Cairngorms act in a co-ordinated way so that people can enjoy its special qualities for generations to come.

This annual report of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) highlights the key activities and reports the progress it has made in delivering its corporate plan during 2005-2006.

www.cairngorms.co.uk



Foreword

Andrew Thin, Convener

From time to time I receive letters from people critically comparing the Cairngorms with internationally renowned National Parks in other parts of the world – Yellowstone, Mount Cook and Banff among others. My reply is always the same. Simply giving the area a new name changes nothing on the ground. It will take decades to fully realise the potential that this place has as a National Park. One thing is certain however – the Cairngorms really does have world class potential. What you see now is only work in progress.

2005/06 saw some important achievements along the road to this vision. In collaboration with other public agencies and local authorities, we published a draft of the first National Park Plan for the Cairngorms giving detail to the vision and setting out key short term priorities for the next five years. We also published a Consultative Draft Local Plan, a vital step towards ensuring development planning policies across the National Park that are consistent with the statutory aims that underpin it. And in parallel with all this work to shape the future, our staff were

busy on a wide range of more immediate initiatives – improving visitor information and services; making land management more sustainable; developing the skills that we will need here in the future; and of course implementing the wide range of biodiversity projects that lie at the heart of ensuring that this place continues to be of international significance for generations to come.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority is a very small organisation. Our staff and board work immensely hard and we are very fortunate to have such a dedicated and thoughtful team. But we do not work alone. Our core function is as a co-ordinator, and it is the enthusiastic co-operation of all the public agencies, local authorities and other partners that really makes the difference on the ground. After more than three years in this role I

will hand over the role of Convener to David Green in September 2006. In these early stages of creating a National Park of truly world class standing for Scotland, it is above all the willingness of everyone to so constructively pull together that has really inspired me. When history comes to judge these early years of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, I hope that we will be remembered above all for helping to build these strong co-operative foundations.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Andrew Thin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



Cairngorms
NATIONAL PARK

Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaich Ruaidh

Home to 16,000 people

The Cairngorms National Park and its special qualities

Although the area covering the Cairngorms is a quintessential symbol of everything Scottish, its unique combination of natural and cultural heritage and distinctive character and coherent identity single it out as something quite special.

Whilst several areas of Scotland may boast peaks over 3,000ft or the presence of rare or threatened species, it is the sheer concentration of these that makes the Cairngorms so deserving of National Park status.

- The Cairngorms is nationally and internationally recognised for nature conservation; has four of Scotland's five highest mountains; 49 summits over 3,000ft (914m); and has internationally important geological features and landforms.
- It is home to 25 per cent of the nation's rare and threatened species; has the largest area of semi-natural woodland in Britain; and is the only extensive area of arctic-alpine habitat to be found in the UK.

- With 424 listed buildings across an area covering 1,467 sq miles, the largest National Park in the UK also has 60 scheduled monuments and is home to 16,000 people.

Whilst these facts help underline the Cairngorms as a truly special place, it is the combination of the special qualities of the area that make the Cairngorms National Park truly distinctive.

The patchwork of mountain plateaux, open moorland, extensive forests, rivers, lochs and farmland give the Cairngorms a unique character. These distinctive landscapes give residents and visitors alike a sense of wildness and tranquillity, adventure, inspiration, rest and reflection.



The human interaction with the landscape is recorded through a diverse pattern of crofts, farms, estates, designed landscapes and settlements. These range from larger towns like Grantown-on-Spey in Highland and Ballater in Aberdeenshire, to more traditional single-street settlements which form a distinctive character of their own.

Traditional materials from granite to timber are used and many of the characteristic roofs of slate to corrugated sheeting have been determined by local availability, weather patterns and craftsmanship.

The combination of montane and woodland, and high quality freshwater and farmland habitats give the Cairngorms a rich biodiversity with many of the UK's priority species living within the Park. From the Capercaillie to the freshwater pearl mussel, these distinct, rare and protected species highlight how unusual and therefore important the Cairngorms is for their future preservation.

Straths and glens are managed for a range of farming, sporting management and recreational activities from walking to mountain biking. Rivers and lochs in the

Cairngorms which are recognised as being of European importance for their biodiversity are also an important economic resource providing fishing and a range of water based activities.

These pastimes and others from snow sports to mountaineering means there are opportunities for most people to enjoy the quite outstanding natural environment of the Cairngorms.



Lowland areas give way to dramatic moorland and the mountains – some of which are over 4,000ft high – underline the wild and remote character of this special area. Set against these mountains are the woodland areas of Strathspey and Deeside which form an iconic identity with their semi-natural and Caledonian pine woodlands.

The common denominator in all this is the vibrancy of the people and communities around the Park that have formed their own distinct identities. The quality of

life and connection to the area is a vital component to making the Cairngorms a great place to live, work and play.

Such a special place doesn't just appear overnight. It has been here for millions of years and the landscape as we know it today for thousands of years. As the world changes at an ever increasing rate, it is essential the area is safeguarded so that future generations can enjoy the Cairngorms National Park tomorrow as much as ours do today.

A wide range of publicly funded organisations are key to making this happen, from local authorities and local enterprise companies to VisitScotland and Scottish Natural Heritage.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has been formed to ensure there is a joined-up and sustainable approach to projects and initiatives that help meet the aims of the Park.



Aims and role of the Cairngorms National Park Authority

The statutory purpose of the Park Authority is to ensure that all four aims of the Park are achieved collectively and in a co-ordinated way.

Those aims are to:

- conserve and enhance the area's natural and cultural heritage;
- promote sustainable use of the area's natural resources;
- promote understanding and enjoyment of the Park's special qualities; and
- promote sustainable economic and social development of local communities.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority receives its core funding from Scottish Ministers and agrees a three year corporate plan and annual operational plan with its sponsoring department at the Environment and Rural Affairs Department of the Scottish Executive.

It has several statutory duties including managing outdoor access in the Park; planning and

development control in conjunction with adjacent authorities; the production of a Local Plan; and the publication in conjunction with others of a National Park Plan.

In addition, it has a range of powers enabling it to give grants and loans; provide information, educational services and facilities to promote understanding and enjoyment of the Park; provide facilities to encourage tourism; secure the provision of nature reserves; carry out research; respond to consultations on a range of matters; and enter into land agreements.



The way the Cairngorms National Park Authority exercises its functions and duties is set out in a corporate plan which is submitted to Scottish Ministers. This annual report provides details of activities for the first year of the 2005-2008 corporate plan.

The corporate plan which is available separately sets out five strategic themes to guide its long-term strategic policy and plans. Three of these reflect policy areas – understanding and enjoyment, natural resources and social and economic development. The other two support delivery of policy – one reflects the role of the CNPA in setting long-term strategic policy, and the other addresses the need to develop the CNPA as an effective organisation.

The five themes are:

Theme 1
Pages 9-12

To enable current and future generations to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the Park in a way which fosters those qualities and supports the activities of others.

Theme 2
Pages 13-16

To promote sustainable resource, land and water management; and to protect and enhance our wildlife and landscapes.

Theme 3
Pages 17-20

To support and stimulate economic and social development within the Park that sustains and is sustained by its special natural and cultural qualities.

Theme 4
Pages 21-24

To ensure our commitment to future generations we will look beyond the horizon and put in place plans to guide and co-ordinate the long-term integrated management of the Park.

Theme 5
Pages 25-28

To be an open, innovative and professional organisation that engages effectively with the public and behaves with integrity.

Three cross cutting themes have been identified that run through all activities. These include sustainability which ensures that our actions do not compromise those of future generations; a 'Park for All' which ensures a Park accessible by everyone, not just the fit and the few; and ensuring economy, effectiveness and efficiency in our use of resources.

Theme 1

"To enable current and future generations to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the Park in a way which fosters those qualities and supports the activities of others."

Achievements under this theme during 2005/06 include:

- Exceeded target of John Muir Awards (JMA) achieved and number of registered JMA providers
- Increasing effectiveness of the Local Outdoor Access Forum (LOAF)
- Initiation of an Outdoor Access Strategy involving key stakeholders
- Major financial contributions to a number of outdoor access projects
- Ten temporary markers erected at key entry points in the Park
- Production of permanent granite markers for key entry points
- Detailed survey commissioned to review co-ordination of Ranger services
- Production of a range of visitor promotional and interpretation material.

Key Highlight: John Muir Award

In 2005, the John Muir Award which is the main educational initiative of the conservation charity the John Muir Trust continued to go from strength to strength in the Cairngorms National Park. During the year 831 awards were made against a target of 600. Perhaps the more significant success was that 43 providers of the Award were registered against a target of 30, demonstrating the very high degree of partnership involved in the delivery of this initiative.

Increasing numbers of people from socially excluded backgrounds took part in the Award which invites groups and individuals of any age to discover, explore, conserve and share their experiences of wild places. Overall, 17 per cent of all participants were from this category with the aim for 2006 to increase the figure to 25 per cent. This means more people than ever before are learning about and enjoying the wild places of the Cairngorms that previously may not have had the opportunity to do so.

45,000 people enter the Park every day

Outdoor Access

As the outdoor access authority for the Park, we established a Local Outdoor Access Forum (LOAF) and around 60 different issues concerning access rights were brought to the attention of the CNPA during 2005/06, mainly by recreational users. Periodic updates on the resolution of these were provided to the LOAF and the Forum gave useful advice on several of these issues.

Representing a range of recreational, land management and community interests in the Park, the 21 members of the LOAF developed their new roles during 2005/06, and advised the Park Authority and others on matters to do with access rights and rights of way. The Forum will also assist with formulating a plan for developing a network of core paths in the Park.

Two successful community-based pilot exercises on core paths planning took place in Newtonmore and Strathdon to get people involved in developing path networks. Several outdoor access projects were also assisted. These included the development of an all-abilities trail at Ballater and near Laggan, 4km of new horse trails helped complement the nearby mountain biking facility.

The CNPA undertook a major campaign in conjunction with others to raise awareness and promote understanding of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. This involved giving presentations to specialist groups like land-based workers (see page 13) and posting information about the Code to all accommodation providers in the Park.

Spotlight: Speyside Way Extension

CNPA led a range of public sector partners on plans to extend the Speyside Way from Aviemore to Newtonmore during 2005/06. Currently stretching from the Moray coast to Aviemore, the extension of this popular route has been provisionally agreed subject to some final discussion. The next

step is for the line of the proposed route to be agreed and then for SNH to formally present the route to Ministers for approval. Partners will need to identify a funding package to develop the route extension.

As well as providing an enhanced route for users, it will also provide a valuable economic boost for nearby communities making the Park an even more attractive place to live in and visit.

Entry Point Markers

Plans progressed during 2005/06 to ensure the 45,000 people who pass the road entry points to the Cairngorms National Park every day get a good impression on entering the Park which will encourage them to stop and enjoy it. The CNPA erected ten temporary signs at key entry points in the Park until permanent granite markers are put in place during two installation phases planned in 2006 and 2007.

Work on the initial 21 high quality granite markers on non-trunk roads was started using granite sourced from within the Park. The second phase will see four additional markers on the area's trunk roads completed in 2007. The £1.3 million project includes associated landscaping, upgrade of lay-bys and provision of interpretation facilities.

The boulder-style granite markers will feature the osprey image from the Park brand and will be manufactured from stone sourced from within the National Park at Deeside.

Ranger Service Co-ordination

In 2005/06, the CNPA commissioned a detailed study to review arrangements for the 13 ranger services in the Park. Employers of the 26 rangers currently working in the Park, public bodies and the Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association all fed into the work. As a result, a more consistent, co-ordinated and proactive role for rangers in the management of the Park is envisaged in the future.

In addition, CNPA contributed funds to ensure continued provision of a ranger service covering the Angus Glens on an interim basis.

A number of measures were also used to promote integrated provision of ranger services in the Park, including an annual gathering, co-ordination of a joint events programme and inclusion of their contact details on the CNPA website.



Visitor Information

Since its formation in 2003, the CNPA has developed a number of publications to ensure visitors get the most out of their visit to the Park. During 2005/06 these were re-printed in time for the 2006 visitor season to promote the Park as a destination.



The 'Cairngorms Countryside Events Booklet' was produced in conjunction with the ranger services, the National Trust for Scotland and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. It provides information on the numerous activities, guided walks, events and talks that take place in the Park and includes everything from meanders through ancient pine forests to treks on the high mountain tops.

Providing a wealth of information on what to see and do in the Park, 'The Cairngorms Visitor Guide' on the other hand was produced to provide information about a wide range of subjects from the Park's communities, outdoor activities, and heritage to its wildlife, arts, crafts and galleries.

Visitor Interpretation

Following on from the work that has been undertaken on the Interpretation Framework and the development of interpretive themes, CNPA provided all tourist information centres in the Cairngorms with Park branded interpretation panels in time for the start of the 2006 visitor season.

Cairngorm Mountain, Glenlivet and Glen Muick ranger bases also had Cairngorms National Park interpretation panels installed to raise awareness of the Park with as many people as possible.

A range of leaflet dispensers made from Scots pine, were distributed to information providers in the Park. This helped ensure that information relating to the Cairngorms was given both a higher profile and provided a greater sense of co-ordination across the area.

Theme 2

“To promote sustainable resource, land and water management; and to protect and enhance our wildlife and landscapes.”

Achievements under this theme during 2005/06 include:

- Ongoing success of the Land Based Business Training Project (LBBTP)
- Successful application for European Social Fund to deliver LBBTP for 2006
- A wide range of projects undertaken under the Cairngorms LBAP
- Successful reintroduction of fresh water pearl mussels to two Cairngorms rivers
- Completion of Cairngorms Moorland Project
- Organisation of a seminar on deer management
- The formation of a Deer Advisory Group
- Implementation of Communications and Consultation Grant Scheme for Land Managers
- Development of policy on integrated land management and the Rural Development Regulation, including a draft prioritisation statement
- Review and update of the Cairngorms Forestry and Woodland Framework
- Co-ordination of an agri-waste project to recycle around 100 tons of plastic agricultural waste in the Park.

Key Highlight: Land Based Business Training Project (LBBTP)

A wide range of training was undertaken during 2005/06 under the European funded LBBTP by those working on estates, crofts, farms, woodlands and nurseries in the Park. From machinery maintenance to health and safety courses, 132 land based businesses received support under the project to help make their businesses more viable whilst delivering ‘public benefits’ and contributing towards the Park aims. The project also organised several popular courses including one on the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and another on fire fighting in the Cairngorms. A one-day conference on tick control and heather management drew an audience of over 100 people.

The project was recognised as an example of national best practice in the Forward Scotland report 2005 on ‘Skills, Training and Recruitment in Rural Natural Heritage Organisations’. It suggested the programme as a role model that could be rolled out in other areas to increase access to training in rural Scotland.

132 land based businesses received training support

Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)

During 2005/06 a number of initiatives took place under the LBAP which raises awareness of protecting, enhancing and appreciating the biodiversity of the Cairngorms.

One of these involved working with estates, SNH and the University of Aberdeen to conserve water vole populations in the Park. Effective habitat management and control of mink which preys on water voles was undertaken as part of the project.

CNPA continued discussions with the North East Biological Records Centre to investigate the possibility of establishing LBAP coverage for the whole Park area, and SNH and Grampian Police asked the CNPA to help establish a Grampian partnership to combat wildlife crime.

The Cairngorms Biodiversity Grant Scheme which is funded by LEADER+, SNH, CNPA and three councils supported funding worth £29,523 across nine projects. These included assistance to a community run wildlife audit in Boat of Garten and a boundary tree project in the Angus Glens.

Led by the Cairngorms LBAP partnership and with funding from LEADER+, the non-native fish project used an innovative electro-fishing system to identify the extent of non-native fish in Cairngorms river systems. The project resulted in two leaflets being produced which explain how people can take action to prevent non-native species being introduced to Park waters.

Spotlight: Freshwater pearl mussel reintroduction

CNPA, SNH, sporting estates and fisheries boards came together in a secret operation that saw the successful reintroduction of freshwater pearl mussels to two rivers in the Cairngorms National Park in 2005/06.

The globally threatened species which has in the past been threatened by illegal fishing, plays an important role in the ecology of rivers by filtering out fine particles. This helps maintain a healthy environment for wild fish stocks and other river wildlife.

With salmon fishing being a major multi-million pound contributor to the Cairngorms economy each year, this project is vital to the long term future of the industry and the local biodiversity of the rivers in the Cairngorms National Park.



Cairngorms Moorland Project

A wide range of people from land owners and gamekeepers to visitors and locals used the range of facilities at the demonstration moors at Blairfindy in Glenlivet, Moray and Balnaboth in Glen Prosen, Angus during 2005/06.

This multi-funded project which was managed by the CNPA aimed to raise awareness of the importance of these areas and conserve them as an ecological, economic and scenic resource.

Following a schools' competition, the project benefited from a new logo during the year and a website (www.cairngormsmoorlands.co.uk) was launched to enable the wildlife and people of the area to be discovered from anywhere in the world.



Deer Management

The CNPA and Deer Commission for Scotland came together to host an event which brought deer managers, community organisations and other interested groups together to discuss the future for deer management in the Park.

A consensus approach that is good for deer, the natural heritage, tourism and the economy was emphasised, and plans to set up a Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group outlined.

Later in 2005/06 and taking the seminar discussions on board, the Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group was established with help from the CNPA. Comprising representatives from communities, land managers, statutory bodies and NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations), the group will fulfil an essential role in advising public bodies and deer management groups on how the National Park Plan (see page 21) objectives for deer can be achieved in the future.

Promotion of two-way communication by land managers

Adding to the wide range of grants available through the Integrated Grants Programme (see page 20) and building on the work of the Land Based Business Training Project (see page 13), a scheme to encourage land managers to communicate and consult over their delivery of public benefits was launched by the CNPA.

The Communications and Consultation Grant Scheme for Land Managers provides financial assistance for a wide range of activities. These include production of newsletters, organisation of open days and design of websites which help inform the public and communities on a range of topics including biodiversity, access and jobs.

Land Management

In consultation with land managers, public agencies, communities and NGOs, a draft priority statement for the Cairngorms National Park was produced to identify the public benefits that we want land managers to deliver on. This was then taken to the Scottish Executive and discussions are ongoing for options on the delivery of the Rural Development Regulation to help deliver these priorities.

Work continued on developing policy on a strong regional advisory system and monitoring for land management contracts and the opportunities they provide for land managers to deliver public benefits in the Park. A prestigious European audience also heard about the CNPA's vision for buying and selling public benefits when the Euromontana Conference was held in Aviemore in 2005.

Cairngorms Forestry and Woodland Framework

In 2005/06, the CNPA commissioned some work to review and update the Cairngorms Forestry and Woodland Framework which identifies opportunities for the future development, protection and enhancement of forests and woodland in the Cairngorms.

Although the original framework which was carried out by the Cairngorms Partnership in 2000 is considered as appropriate now as it was then, the update will take account of existing and emerging policies that were not in place when the original document was produced.

Due to its integration with a number of other interests, the draft update was open for a period of public consultation during 2006.



Theme 3

"To support and stimulate economic and social development within the Park that sustains and is sustained by its special natural and cultural qualities."

Achievements under this theme during 2005/06 include:

- Award of European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas
- Delivery of 'Cairngorms Connections' product knowledge courses about the Park
- Effective roll-out of commercial use of the Park brand to communities and businesses
- Work with VisitScotland to encourage more businesses into the Green Tourism Business Scheme
- Production of an integrated public transport guide
- Supported recycling work within the Park
- Development of evidence base on the housing issues facing the Park
- Support of studies to examine the potential for sustainable housing on a Forestry Commission site, and the potential for landowners to address affordable housing issues
- Support for a wide range of community development and cultural heritage projects, as well as local marketing and events, via the Integrated Grants Programme.

Key Highlight: UK First for National Park

As a result of the work by the CNPA and a wide range of partners, the Cairngorms National Park became the first National Park in the UK to be awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.

The achievement, which is only awarded to areas which meet the highest standards for the sustainable development and management of tourism, was all the more remarkable for a National Park that was only two years old at the time.

Through implementing the strategy associated with the Charter, and with the ongoing commitment from all those involved in tourism in the Park, we can protect and enhance what attracts people to the area, thereby increasing the overall value of tourism. The assessment process itself was also useful and several suggestions that were made for practical improvements have been progressed.

£227,000 to 66 community projects

Sustainable Tourism

During 2005/06, six 'Cairngorms Connections' tourism courses were rolled out to tourism business across the Park. These popular half-day sessions provided a wide range of people, from those running B&Bs to petrol station owners, with valuable information about the tourism product of the National Park so they can help promote the special qualities of the Park to visitors.

The Park brand identity – which helps promote and market the Cairngorms to visitors – was used by an increasing number of businesses and local communities to raise the profile of the area during 2005/06. As well as helping to promote the Cairngorms, the brand is designed to bring commercial benefits to those businesses that use it, whilst encouraging improvements in quality and environmental standards.

The 'Cairngorms Explorer' provided a combined timetable for public transport in the Park to encourage people to think about the environment and their own health before embarking on a journey. As well as the usual bus, train and post-bus timetables, it also provides information on community transport schemes, taxis, the National Cycle Network and information on popular walking routes.

Spotlight:

Green Tourism Business Scheme

Following a sustainable tourism conference in 2005/06 held at the Lecht, the CNPA joined forces with VisitScotland to encourage tourism businesses to sign up to the Green Tourism Business Scheme free of charge.

With demand for places at the Grantown-on-Spey and Ballater seminars so great, the deal was extended to offer even more tourism operators in the Park the opportunity to find out the business benefits of going green.

Qualifying for the bronze award entitles businesses to use the Cairngorms brand to promote their own businesses as well as contributing towards the future actions of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (see page 17).

Housing Study Findings

With a lack of affordable homes a major problem in the Park, studies carried out by Heriot-Watt and Manchester universities during 2005/06 provided enough information on the housing market and levels of need to enable a review of the Cairngorms Housing Strategy and Action Plan to take place.

Among measures to be investigated further are:

- A range of policy options to ensure that new market housing is meeting the economic and social needs of communities;
- Exploring a change to planning legislation to the effect that a change of use from a permanent home into second or holiday home would require planning permission;
- Encouraging greater private sector investment; and
- Supporting community owned low cost rented housing.

Housing Research Initiatives

Along with partners, CNPA also co-funded several other housing related studies during 2005/06 which will help inform some of the housing policies for the Park in the future.

A survey of landowners was undertaken by the Scottish Rural Property and Business Association in order to gain a clear picture of the barriers to landowners providing affordable housing stock. It also assessed the potential for converting derelict and redundant buildings, improving existing stock and providing new builds.

A feasibility study for the development of affordable housing on Forestry Commission land at Kincaig was also carried out. This placed a major emphasis

on sustainable design and opportunities for using local timber. It aimed to capitalise on a change in Forestry Commission policy which enabled them to release sites for affordable housing, where appropriate.





Recycling in the Cairngorms

As an agency charged with helping care for the Park's environment, the CNPA worked with others in 2005/06 to move recycling in the Park up the agenda. To this end a 'Towards Zero Waste' seminar was held to share best practice in community recycling from rural areas across Scotland.

The Cairngorms Recycling Forum also held its first meeting at the CNPA's headquarters. With help from the Community Recycling Network for Scotland and the

CNPA, the Forum is set to play an important role in raising awareness of the impacts of producing and processing waste in the Cairngorms National Park and how local residents and visitors can help minimise this impact.

Integrated Grants Programme (IGP)

Funded by the CNPA and the Cairngorms LEADER+ programme, there was a flood of new applications to the IGP which is currently set to run until March 2008.

The programme incorporated six separate funding schemes covering investments in communities, marketing and events, biodiversity, interpretation, outdoor access and cultural heritage. In total, £227,000 of funding was committed to 66 projects during 2005/06.

In Newtonmore, £4,500 was approved to help purchase all abilities cycles which now enable less able people to enjoy the local area more. Granttown Farmers Market Association received £1,465 under the scheme to support the early development and expansion of the local farmers market.

The Cairngorms Mountain Tree Project received £1,833 of funding to support local schools to learn and become involved with planting and nurturing mountain trees. And in Upper Deeside, the Kodaly Choir received £6,950 to bring together local communities to learn to read and sing music.



Theme 4

“To ensure our commitment to future generations we will look beyond the horizon and put in place plans to guide and co-ordinate the long-term integrated management of the Park.”

Achievements under this theme during 2005/06 include:

- Ongoing consultation with a range of partners in order to produce a Draft National Park Plan
- Production of a suite of Draft National Park Plan documents, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment, to support the formal public consultation process
- Production of a State of the Park Report
- Local Plan meetings held in every community throughout the Park
- Review of written responses to Local Plan Consultation by CNPA staff
- Review the planning application by Scottish and Southern Energy/Scottish Power to route part of the proposed Beauly to Denny powerline through the Park
- Review proposals to site three wind farm developments on the edge of the Park
- Contribution to the debate into ownership options for Cairngorm Estate

Key Highlight: Draft National Park Plan

The CNPA reached a major milestone in the development of a National Park Plan during 2005/06 with the publication of the emerging Plan's 25-year vision, strategic objectives and priorities for action. These documents were used during a wide-ranging consultation process that involved intensive discussions with partners and other interested bodies to ensure that the Plan was realistic and met people's expectations.

The National Park Plan was then finalised into two draft documents – a 25 year vision called 'Looking to 2030' and 'Priorities for Action 2007-2012'. A three month public consultation was launched in 2006 to allow organisations and the public to make their viewpoints known. When complete, the National Park Plan will provide a blueprint for actions to be delivered and the roles of partners if the aims of the Park are to be achieved.

71 'called in' planning applications reviewed

Planning and Development Control

The planning department of the CNPA which is based in Ballater led on developing the Local Plan for the Cairngorms during 2005/06. The CNPA organised a series of Park wide public meetings to receive comments, views and opinions on what the strategy for built development in the Park should consist of.

The CNPA planners also received some 200 written responses to the informal local plan consultation and started the process of reviewing all comments. Publication of the finalised local plan will go on

deposit for public consultation later in 2007 and will ultimately replace the four existing local plans used within the Park boundaries which were prepared by Highland, Moray, Angus and Aberdeenshire councils before the CNPA was formed.

The planning department dealt with a total of 71 'called-in' planning applications in 2005/06 that had relevance to the four statutory aims of the National Park. These ranged from small scale domestic projects to large scale commercial developments. Determination times for planning applications were also improved.

In February/March 2006, in association with the Building Research Establishment, CNPA planners held two workshops in Ballater and Coylumbridge to develop a sustainable design guide and checklist for all future developments within the Park. CNPA intends to consult on a draft guide in due course.

Spotlight: CNPA Planning Leaflet

A leaflet launched by the CNPA during 2005/06 encouraged people developing properties in the National Park to protect and enhance wildlife while carrying out work on their property or garden. The leaflet provided guidance on protecting bushes and trees, wetlands, ponds and burns, birds, bees, bats and plants amongst others.

'Biodiversity Planning Guidance Note for the Householder' explains the various opportunities for benefiting wildlife at the time developments are planned. Every planning applicant to the CNPA now receives a copy of the leaflet and they must demonstrate they have considered impacts and identified opportunities to benefit wildlife as part of their planning application.



Power Lines Response

Planners at the CNPA led on reviewing a proposal by Scottish and Southern Energy / Scottish Power to route a major powerline through part of the Park. Over a six month period, the CNPA gathered evidence and consulted with the Park's communities to make its final submission to the Scottish Executive on this planning application.

The conclusion was to object to the proposals to route part of the Beauly to Denny line through the southern edge of the Park on the grounds that it conflicted with the four statutory aims of the National Park; it compromised the Park's designation; and that it failed to offer an alternative route for the powerline.

There will be a public inquiry in the first half of 2007 looking at both strategic and local issues raised by the planning authorities along the route, as well as considering various other objections that have been lodged. The CNPA will be represented at the inquiry and will present the case agreed by the Planning Committee in April 2006. A pre-inquiry meeting was held in Aviemore on 3 October 2006.

Wind Farm Developments

After careful deliberation, the CNPA also expressed its objection to a number of proposed wind farms on the periphery of the Park namely the 36-turbine development at Dunmaglass in Strathnairn; an 11-turbine development at Kildrummy; and the 34-turbine proposal for Glenkirk near Tomatin.

Even though the proposed developments were outside the Park boundary, all were considered inappropriate on the grounds of visual impact, the likely effect on protected species, the potential adverse effect on the local economy from a tourism perspective and on the landscape and people's enjoyment of an area of national and international beauty. A particular concern was the cumulative impact of the numerous wind farm proposals just outside the boundaries of the Park.



State of the Park Report

A 116 page report was published by the CNPA during 2005/06 which brought together all the current knowledge about the Cairngorms National Park.

The State of the Park Report covers all aspects of life in the Park including trends, statistics, observations and fascinating information and photographs on its natural, cultural, visitor, recreational and socio-economic resources.

The publication helped inform the development of the Draft National Park Plan (see page 21) and with a five year lifespan, it is expected to be of interest to a broad range of people and organisations with an interest in the Park. Collating the information also helped identify knowledge gaps so that these may be addressed in the future.

Cairngorm Estate

During 2005/06 the CNPA ruled itself out of becoming owners of the Cairngorm Estate after current owners Highlands and Islands Enterprise commissioned an investigation into the ownership options for it.

Instead, the CNPA said they would like to see a number of options investigated further including the possibility of Forestry Commission Scotland assuming ownership of the estate and ensuring involvement of relevant local and national interests in advising on its management. As the Forestry Commission already manages Glenmore Forest, this option could provide the opportunity for a more integrated land management approach across the two estates.



Theme 5

“To be an open, innovative and professional organisation that engages effectively with the public and behaves with integrity.”

Achievements under this theme during 2005/06 include:

- Various activities undertaken to maximise transparency
- Clear internal and external audit reports ensuring all CNPA resources were appropriately managed
- 54 enquiries processed under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act
- Ensuring all CNPA staff have an opportunity to shape the organisation through the Staff Consultative Forum (SCF)
- Delivery of a number of successful recruitment activities to take the Authority towards its full staff complement
- Development and implementation of performance appraisal processes
- Progression of policies and systems to ensure efficiency, best value and sustainability including a pledge to become an exemplar in office greening
- Media relations service resulting in 57 press releases being produced and distributed
- Management and production of a wide range of promotional materials to better promote the work of the CNPA and the Park

- Attendance at community shows and events, party political conferences and Holyrood information events
- Ongoing development of CNPA website

Key Highlight: Transparency and Effective Decision Making

During 2005/06 the Cairngorms National Park Authority held 13 Board meetings and 26 Planning Committee meetings. These were open to the general public and held at various locations around the Park enabling decisions to be made in as open and transparent a manner as possible. All Board papers were also made available on the CNPA website.

Pre-board open meetings held within local communities across the Park provided residents with the opportunity to voice their opinions and raise questions or concerns with Board members. In addition, various forums (see page 58) allow national and local representatives of organisations, businesses and communities to give guidance and advice to inform the decision making process and support the aims of the Park.

54 enquiries dealt with under FOI

Central Services

During 2005/06, internal and external audit reviews confirmed all CNPA activities were within approved resource allocations and had appropriate governance and planning arrangements in place. Enhancements to information technology systems were also made which helped improve efficiency and protect valuable data.

Helping to underline our transparency as an organisation, the CNPA dealt with 54 enquiries under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act - FOI - which provides a right of access to information held by public bodies.

Internally, a Staff Consultative Forum (SCF) remained central to the ongoing development of CNPA and its culture, allowing staff to influence the development of the organisation. The CNPA also successfully completed a number of recruitments bringing staff close to full complement. It also delivered effective staff performance appraisal processes and a training and development programme. This helped ensure the work of CNPA staff was linked to the effective achievement of its objectives.

The CNPA also developed and issued a staff survey which sought staff views on a wide range of subjects to help benchmark our performance as an employer, improve internal communication, induction, training and general work organisation. The survey indicated 85 per cent of staff think the CNPA is a great place to work.

Spotlight: Greening Policy

Having encouraged businesses and organisations around the Park to reduce waste and improve environmental performance (see page 20) in 2005/06, the CNPA has pledged to become an

exemplar in office greening itself.

Through an Organisational Greening Policy, it has already taken action to promote car sharing amongst staff and by converting an outbuilding to a bike shed, staff are encouraged to cycle to work more.

Other measures to encourage staff to use resources more economically, efficiently and effectively includes not leaving electrical equipment on 'stand-by' mode, fitting water saving devices in CNPA premises, increasing the use of public transport and sourcing re-usable materials.



Efficiency, Best Value and Sustainability

With all our activities and planned expenditure subject to rigorous scrutiny, we embedded financial policies during 2005/06 – including those on tendering and procurement – to ensure outputs derived offered good value for money.

Progress in these areas help ensure economy, effectiveness and efficiency of services – one of the CNPA's three cross-cutting themes which run through all our work. Identifying further opportunities in these areas was also progressed by involvement in the Scottish Executive's 'Efficient Government' and 'On the Ground' initiatives which involve considering service improvement and economy.

Sustainability is another cross-cutting theme which is being embedded in the work of the CNPA. The Authority's Office Greening Policy was completed in 2005/06, along with Environmental Impact Assessments on both the Draft National Park Plan and the Draft Local Plan.

Following the release of updated guidance, toolkits and a self assessment questionnaire on the duty of Best Value, we have been considering how we will ensure that we secure continuous improvement in the future.

Communications

During 2005/06 the CNPA carried out a range of work to make sure its key audiences of local people, opinion formers and visitors and potential visitors to the Cairngorms National Park understand more about the work of the CNPA.

We provided a responsive and comprehensive media enquiry service as well as distributing 57 press releases to a broad selection of both generic and specialist press and media throughout 2005/06. Two editions of Parklife – the

newsletter of the CNPA – were distributed to every household and business in the Park in 2005/06. This helps to illustrate the work of the Park Authority and promotes specific programmes, schemes and initiatives. In addition, support for community newsletters was provided through training workshops and sponsorship of an Awards programme. This aimed to improve the overall standard of community newsletters across the Park by sharing best practice and ideas.

National Park Plan Promotion

On behalf of a range of partners, CNPA also managed the production of a suite of Draft National Park Plan publications including a 25-year vision document, an outline of the priorities for action from 2007-2012 and a Strategic Environmental Assessment. A 12 page newsletter was distributed to every household in the Cairngorms as part of an overall campaign to raise awareness and participation in the Draft National Park Plan consultation process.

Awareness Raising

Promotional materials were taken to a wide variety of events to help promote the Park and explain the role of the CNPA. Seven community-based shows and events were supported where Park Authority staff promoted the Integrated Grants Programme and other initiatives while also providing residents and visitors the opportunity to meet staff members. Stands were also taken at Party Political Conferences and an MSP reception, hosted by Rhona Brankin, was held at Holyrood to share copies of the Draft National Park Plan before it went out for public consultation.

Website

Further enhancements to the CNPA website (www.cairngorms.co.uk) were also made throughout 2005/06 providing users with access to a more comprehensive service. New features included provision of on-line facilities for people responding to consultations, the addition of a consultant database and an increasing array of downloadable publications.



Commentary on Financial Performance for 2005/06

Our full accounts for 2005/06 are set out on pages 30-55. These show that the achievements set out in this report have been delivered within our total resource allocation made by the Scottish Executive.

From a total resource allocation of £4.4million made available by the Scottish Executive for 2005/06, we spent £4.2million in delivering our plans during the year. We have agreed with the Scottish Executive to retain £0.1million for use in 2006/07. The remaining £0.1million of resource allocation (equivalent to 2.3 per cent of available allocation) was not drawn.

The accounts also show that we have been successful in working with our partners and attracting additional funds to support projects in the Cairngorms over the course of the year. Our core grant income is supported by an additional £0.9million income supporting our activities received from other

partners, including European funding. This is equivalent to an additional 20 per cent of our core grant-in-aid from the Scottish Executive. This, together with the use of capital grants to invest in equipment and assets to support our operations, gives a total annual income of £5.2million reported in our accounts.

Foreword

Introduction

This Statement of Accounts, prepared in a form directed by Scottish Ministers in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, reports on the third year of operation of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA). The Authority became fully operational on 1 September 2003 but prior to that date the Authority had assumed stewardship duties for the area from the Cairngorms Partnership following the creation of the CNPA Board on 25 March 2003.

Background

National Park Aims

Section 1 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 sets out four aims for the Park:

- 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; and
- to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

The National Park Authority

Under the legislative provisions of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, the Designation Order for CNPA was approved on 7 January 2003. The Order defined the boundaries of the National Park, confirmed the constitution of the Authority, the functions to be exercised by the Authority and identified specific dates on which the CNPA would come into existence and when it would become responsible for full function delivery viz, the establishment date of 25 March 2003 and operational date of 1 September 2003.

The National Park Authority (NPA) has the status of a Non-Departmental Public Body working to the provisions of a Management Statement and Financial Memorandum agreed with its sponsor department within the Scottish Executive: the Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD). The general purpose of the Authority is to ensure that the National Park Aims are collectively achieved in a co-ordinated way, in relation to the National Park. A full list of Park Authority Members together with a resume of their backgrounds is detailed on pages 36 to 39.

Results and future activities

The accounts for the year to 31 March 2006 are set out in pages 46 to 48 together with the notes on pages 49 to 54. The accounts are prepared on a going concern basis and show a surplus of £115,588 for the year to 31 March 2006.

A comprehensive presentation of the Authority's current and future activity plans is available in its Operational Plan for 2006/07 and Corporate Plan for 2005 to 2008.

Changes in fixed assets

Movements in fixed assets are shown in note 7.

Post Balance Sheet Events

There are no post balance sheet date events to report for the year to 31 March 2006.

Charitable Donations

There were no charitable donations made in the year.

Payment Performance

The Authority's payment policy complies with the terms of the Better Payment Practice Code. During the year to 31 March 2006, the time taken to pay creditors achieved an average of 19 days (2005 - 19 days).

Employment policies, consultation and disabled employees

During the year the Authority has continued to develop employment policies including further health and safety related policies. Equal opportunities continue to underpin our policies on recruitment, appraisals and training opportunities, and all recruitment activity is monitored to ensure that the policies are working.

The Staff Consultative Forum is now well established and works in partnership with Prospect Trade Union. A staff survey was conducted in March this year and has been used extensively to assess staff motivation and morale, as well as to look at the effectiveness of internal policies and procedures. Internal communications have been further improved, and the monthly all staff meeting re-designed to increase its effectiveness.

Our performance related pay system is now in operation in conjunction with the appraisal system which was introduced last year. This system ensures that pay progression is linked to the achievement of work targets set at the beginning of the year.

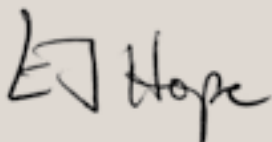
Auditors

The accounts of the Authority are audited by an auditor appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland in accordance with paragraph 25 (2) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. His audit report is on pages 44 and 45 and details of the auditor's remuneration are given in note 5.

Disclosure of information to auditors

As Accountable Officer, as far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Authority's auditors are unaware. I have taken all reasonable steps that ought to have been taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Authority's auditors are aware of the information.

Signed on behalf of the Cairngorms National Park Authority



Jane Hope, Chief Executive
30 October 2006

Remuneration Report

Introduction

The Authority has in place a Staffing and Recruitment Committee which consists of five Board members. The Committee normally meets as required and its membership and remit is agreed annually by the full CNPA Board. The Committee's remit includes the following:

- to oversee and monitor the HR (human resources) systems put in place for the CNPA, including in particular the pay and grading system, performance appraisal system and related performance related pay system;
- to advise the CNPA Board on annual pay awards;
- to provide an interface between staff representative group(s) and the Board, and play a role in arbitrating on staffing issues as set out in the Authority's procedures, and as otherwise required; and
- to oversee the recruitment of senior staff (Heads of Group and Chief Executive) including agreeing the job descriptions, adverts and salary; to take responsibility for interviewing and selecting the successful candidates, and seeking the endorsement of the whole CNPA Board (and of Scottish Ministers in the case of the Chief Executive).

For the purposes of this report, persons in senior positions having authority or responsibility for directing or controlling the major activities of the Authority are taken to comprise the Chief Executive and Board members.

Service contracts

Board members' fees are set annually in April by the Scottish Executive.

Salary levels for the Authority's staff, including the Chief Executive are reviewed by the Staffing and Recruitment Committee and the overall pay remit is subject to agreement by the Authority's Sponsoring Department at the Scottish Executive.

In reaching its recommendations, the Committee has regard to the following considerations:

- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities;
- regional/local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff;
- Government policies for improving the public services including the requirement on departments to meet the output targets for the delivery of departmental services;
- the funds available to departments as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits;
- the Government's inflation target.

Chief Executive

The current Chief Executive, Mrs Jane Hope, served as the Interim Chief Executive from January 2003 until her appointment as permanent Chief Executive on 1 June 2004. Mrs Hope's contract of employment, signed on 30 April 2004, contains a three month notice period.

Board members

	Most recent appointment	End of term or date stepped down	2005/06		2004/05	
			Fees £	Expenses £	Fees £	Expenses £
Scottish Executive appointee						
Andrew Thin	25 Mar 2003	31 Aug 2006	19,457	4,758	18,982	6,219
Eric Baird	25 Mar 2006	24 Mar 2009	9,728	2,620	9,491	1,587
Duncan Bryden	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	900	6,571	1,345
Nonie Coulthard	01 Apr 2006	31 Mar 2009	-	-	-	-
Sally Dowden	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2006	6,735	1,357	6,571	1,078
Lucy Grant	25 Mar 2006	24 Mar 2009	6,735	581	6,829	822
David Green	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	2,686	6,571	2,208
Anne MacLean	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	523	6,571	300
Alastair MacLennan	25 Mar 2006	24 Mar 2009	6,735	570	6,571	327
Joyce Simpson	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2006	6,735	374	6,571	199
Susan Walker	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,959	807	7,160	998
Ross Watson	01 Apr 2006	31 Mar 2009	-	-	-	-
Local Authority nominee						
Peter Argyle	25 Mar 2003	24 Sept 2004	-	-	3,283	327
Francis (Stuart) Black	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	-	6,571	-
Basil Dunlop	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	-	6,571	-
Angus Gordon	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	163	6,571	85
Marcus Humphrey	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	497	3,285	304
Bruce Luffman	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	1,597	6,571	1,938
Sandy Park	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	1,081	3,285	480
David Selfridge	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	2,421	6,571	2,413
Robert Severn	25 Mar 2003	24 Sept 2004	-	-	2,736	269
Sheena Slimon	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	-	6,571	-
Richard Stroud	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	1,122	6,571	460
Bob Wilson	25 Sept 2004	30 Jun 2007	6,735	786	6,571	1,143
Locally elected						
Douglas Glass	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	-	6,571	-
William McKenna	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	42	6,571	-
Eleanor Mackintosh	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	277	6,571	756
Andrew Rafferty	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	232	6,571	72
Gregor Rimell	25 Mar 2003	24 Mar 2007	6,735	795	6,571	1,112
			184,314	24,189	179,900	24,442

Remuneration Report (continued)

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Chief Executive. Fees and expenses received by Board members are shown on the previous page.

No Board member has any pension entitlement and no benefits in kind subject to UK taxation were received by any senior managers (Chief Executive and Board members) during the periods covered by these accounts.

Salary

Salary includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

	2005/06		2004/05	
	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind £'000	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind £'000
Jane Hope Chief Executive	55-60	0	50-55	0

Pension entitlements

	Accrued pension as at age 60 as at 31 Mar 2006 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000	CETV (a) at 31 Mar 2006 £'000	CETV (a) at 31 Mar 2005 £'000	Real increase in CETV (b) £'000
Jane Hope Chief Executive	10-15 plus lump sum of 30-35	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 5-7.5	200	124	43

(a) The Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

This is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the pension benefits they have accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

(b) The real increase in the value of the CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

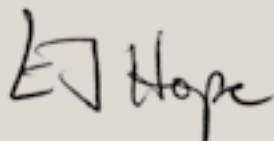
Civil Service pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. Civil servants may be in one of three statutory based 'final salary' defined benefit schemes (classic, premium, and classic plus). The schemes are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under classic, premium, and classic plus are increased annually in line with changes in the Retail Price Index. New entrants may choose between membership of premium or joining a good quality 'money purchase' stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account).

Employee contributions are set at 1.5% of pensionable earnings for classic and 3.5% for premium and classic plus. Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may commute some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic plus is essentially a variation of premium, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2003 calculated broadly in the same way as classic.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee from a selection of approved products. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Signed on behalf of the Cairngorms National Park Authority



Jane Hope, Chief Executive
30 October 2006

National Park Board Members

The CNPA's Board comprises 25 members. The Scottish Executive appoints 10 members directly; appoints a further 10 following Council nominations by the four councils in the Park area (Highland, Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus Councils) and five are elected locally. The members will serve between 18 months and four years.

All members served throughout the period covered by these accounts except as noted below.

Andrew Thin (Convener to 31 August 2006) ‡	(a)	
David Green (Convener from 8 September 2006)	(a)	(S&R)
Eric Baird (Deputy Convener)	(a)	(A), (S&R)
Francis (Stuart) Black	(b)	
Duncan Bryden	(a)	(A)
Nonie Coulthard (from 1 April 2006)	(a)	(A)
Sally Dowden (until 24 March 2006)	(a)	
Basil Dunlop	(b)	
Douglas Glass	(c)	
Angus Gordon	(b)	
Lucy Grant	(a)	
Marcus Humphrey	(b)	
Bruce Luffman	(b)	(F)
William McKenna	(c)	
Eleanor Mackintosh	(c)	(F)
Anne MacLean	(a)	(S&R)
Alastair MacLennan	(a)	
Sandy Park	(b)	(S&R)
Andrew Rafferty	(c)	
Gregor Rimell	(c)	(F)
David Selfridge	(b)	(F)
Joyce Simpson (until 24 March 2006)	(a)	
Sheena Slimon	(b)	
Richard Stroud	(b)	
Susan Walker	(a)	(A)
Ross Watson (from 1 April 2006)	(a)	
Bob Wilson	(b)	(A)

Notes

(a) Scottish Executive appointee, (b) Local Authority nominee, (c) Locally elected

Committee membership (at present): All Board members sit on the Planning Committee. Finance (F), Audit (A), Staffing & Recruitment (S&R)

‡ Following his appointment as Chairman of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Andrew Thin resigned as Convener of the Park Authority and stepped down as a Board member on 31 August 2006. As a result, of this an additional Board member will be appointed by the Scottish Executive and a new member needs to be appointed, by the Board, to both the Finance and Staff & Recruitment Committees.

Membership of committees is reviewed annually, the latest review was on 23 September 2005 and made the following changes, which have been reflected in the list on page 36:

Planning

No change.

Finance

Andrew Thin stepped down;
Bruce Luffman joined.

Audit

Sheena Slimon stepped down;
Sue Walker joined.

Staffing & Recruitment

Douglas Glass and Bruce Luffman stepped down;
Sandy Park joined.

In addition to the annual review, Nonie Coulthard was appointed to the Audit Committee on 1 April 2006, to fill the vacancy caused by Sally Dowden stepping down from the Board. Andrew Thin replaced Joyce Simpson on the Finance Committee when she stepped down from the Board on 24 March 2006.

National Park Board Members (continued)

Andrew Thin was Convener of the Park Authority Board, the Planning and Staff & Recruitment Committees until 31 August 2006. He is also a board member of the Crofters Commission and holds senior non-executive positions in a number of other public, private and charitable organisations. He was previously Chairman of both the John Muir Trust and the Footpath Trust, Chief Executive of Caithness and Sutherland Enterprise and also served for several years on the North Areas Board of Scottish Natural Heritage.

David Green lives in Ross and Cromarty and is currently Chair of the Crofters Commission having previously been a Crofters Commissioner and Convener of Highland Council. He was elected as Convener of the Cairngorms National Park Authority on 8 September 2006.

Eric Baird is currently Deputy Convener of the Park Authority Board and Convener of the Audit Committee. He is Head Ranger on the Glen Tanar estate, has specialist knowledge of countryside issues and sits on the Grampian Regional Forestry Forum.

Councillor Francis (Stuart) Black (Highland Council - Scottish Liberal Democrat) is a board member of North Areas Board of Scottish Natural Heritage and Chairman of Explore Abernethy, a community project involving the creation of a local footpath network. He serves on a number of Highland Council's committees, is a former member of the Cairngorms Partnership Board and has been a Strathspey hill farmer for over 40 years.

Duncan Bryden is a self employed Rural Development consultant with a professional ecological background. He has undertaken a wide range of recreational and tourism-related activities within the Park.

Nonie Coulthard from Glen Isla is a consultant in ecology and biodiversity and has experience working in conservation management. She has just concluded her second term as a member of Scottish Natural Heritage's East Areas Board and Scientific Advisory Committee.

Councillor Basil Dunlop (Highland Council – Independent) is Chairman of Planning for the Badenoch & Strathspey area of Highland Council. In addition to being a member of other Council committees he is on the Board of HIE Inverness and East Highland and the Joint Northern Police, and is a Director of Highland Opportunity Ltd, Strathspey Leisure & Recreational Trust, and Grantown Museum & Heritage Trust. He is a Chartered Forester who has specialised in the native pinewoods of the Cairngorms, and is a Director of the Anagach Woods Trust which he Chairs. He has lived and worked in the Cairngorms for over 40 years, and is a keen hillwalker and photographer.

Douglas Glass was elected for Ward 5 and has been a full time General Practitioner at Ballater clinic since 1986. He is a partner on a farm and a board member of Crathie Opportunity Holidays. As well as farming and medicine he is interested in environmental issues.

Councillor Angus Gordon (Highland Council – Independent) is Chairman of the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee of the Licensing Board. He sits on various Council committees including the Sustainable Development and the Land and Environment Select Committees. He is a local tenant farmer and a member, at area and local level, of the National Farmers Union.

Lucy Grant is a partner in the family livestock farm and has developed a good general knowledge of the area's issues.

Councillor Marcus Humphrey (Aberdeenshire Council – Scottish Conservative) is a Chartered Surveyor who has been involved in farming, forestry, tourism and land management in the Park area. He is currently Chair of the Council's Marr Area Committee and is on the Infrastructure Services and Policy and Resources Committees. He also serves on COSLA's Economic Development Executive (the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities).

Councillor Bruce Luffman (Aberdeenshire - Conservative) is a member of the North Board of Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and the North East Scotland Agricultural Advisory Group. He is vice-chairman of the Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce, a member of the North East Scotland Tourism Partnership and chairs the Tourism Forum in the Park. He and his wife run a guesthouse in Strathdon.

William McKenna was elected for Ward 2. He worked locally in the skiing business for over twenty

years and is now a countryside manager on Rothiemurchus Estate. He is currently involved with Aviemore Community Company, the Citizens Advice Information Service and CRAGG as a member of the community association.

Eleanor Mackintosh was elected for Ward 4 and is Convener of the Finance Committee. She lives in Glenlivet and helps at home on the farm having previously been a financial adviser with the Clydesdale Bank. She serves on various community groups.

Anne MacLean has an interest in Human Resource matters, disability rights and awareness, is a board member of the Highland Society for Blind People and the Royal National Institute of the Blind Scotland. She is also a board member of Albyn Housing Society and an Independent Assessor for Ministerial Appointments.

Alastair MacLennan was born in Grantown-on-Spey and is a farmer who has diversified into tourism and other business ventures being a demonstration farmer since 2000. He has been at the forefront of the LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) initiative and is a director of the Cairngorms Farmers Market Association. He sits on the National Access Forum, Cairngorms FWAG (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) and the National Farmers Union's Land Use and Environment Committee. He was previously a board member with the Cairngorms Partnership.

Councillor Sandy Park (Highland Council - Independent) is Provost of Nairn and Chairman of the

Council's Planning, Development, Europe and Tourism Committee and a member of the Council's Transport, Environment and Community Services Committee and the Northern Joint Police Board. He has been involved in outdoor pursuits in the area for over 40 years.

Andrew Rafferty was elected for Ward 3 and is the principal vet in the Strathspey Veterinary Centre. He lives on a smallholding near Aviemore and is a director of Anagach Woods Trust.

Gregor Rimell was elected for Ward 1. He lives in Newtonmore and is the sub-postmaster in Kingussie.

Councillor David Selfridge JP (Angus Council – Scottish National Party). He serves on a number of bodies including Scottish Enterprise (Tayside), Angus & Dundee Tourist Board and Angus Economic Development Partnership. He is Convener of the Council's Infrastructure Services Committee and a member of several other committees. He was formerly an Assistant Director of Water Services with Tayside Regional Council.

Councillor Sheena Slimon (Highland Council - Independent) was involved in setting up the Laggan Rural Partnership, the Community Information Resource Centre and the Laggan Forest Trust and works closely with a number of local agencies and other parties concerned with the wellbeing of the Laggan community. She is also a member of several Highland Council committees including the Education, Culture & Sport Committee and the Sustainable

Development and Land & Environment Select Committees.

Councillor Richard Stroud (Aberdeenshire - Liberal Democrat) previously worked with the Community Education Service in the Upper Deeside/Donside areas and has considerable contact with community organisations and individuals in these areas through his professional work. He is an active mountaineer and ski mountaineer.

Susan Walker OBE is a specialist in water and land. She is currently a board member of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Deer Commission for Scotland and a member of the Fisheries (Electricity) Committee and Waterwatch Scotland. She served as a board member of Scottish Natural Heritage for six years until March 2006.

Ross Watson from Nethybridge is a nature reserve warden and ghillie and has experience of nature conservation both within the Cairngorms National Park and in National Parks in Tanzania and South Africa. He is also a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament where he is Convener of the Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee.

Councillor Bob Wilson (Moray - Independent) is Chairman of the Grampian Joint Valuation Board, the Speyside Way Management Committee and is a member of the Speyside Area Management Committee. He has a keen interest in local community issues and those issues which will fall to the remit of the Park Board.

Statement of National Park Authority's responsibilities

Under Section 25(1) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year in the form and on the basis determined by the Scottish Minister.

The financial statements are prepared on an accruals basis and must show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Authority at the financial period end and of the income and expenditure, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing those financial statements, the CNPA is required to:

- observe the financial statements direction issued by Scottish Ministers, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the CNPA will continue in operation.

In addition, the CNPA has general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to it to safeguard the assets of the CNPA and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

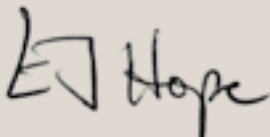
Statement of Accountable Officer's responsibilities

The Accountable Officer of the Scottish Executive's Environment and Rural Affairs Department designated the Chief Executive of the CNPA as Accountable Officer for the Authority.

The Chief Executive's relevant responsibilities as Accountable Officer for the Authority includes responsibility for propriety and regularity of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records as set out in the Non-Departmental Public Bodies Accountable Officers' Memorandum, issued by the Treasury and published in Government Accounting.

The Authority's Management Statement sets out the specific responsibilities of the Chief Executive, as Accountable Officer. With specific reference to accounting for the CNPA's activities the Accountable Officer:

- has a duty to sign the accounts and be responsible for ensuring that proper records are kept and presented in accordance with any direction issued by the Scottish Ministers;
- sign a Statement of Accountable Officer's responsibilities and a Statement on Internal Control both for inclusion in the annual accounts;
- sign a Certificate of Assurance on the maintenance and review of the Authority's internal control, for submission to the Sponsoring Department; and
- give evidence when summoned before Committees of the Scottish Parliament on the use and stewardship of public funds by the Authority.



Jane Hope, Chief Executive
30 October 2006

Statement of Internal Control for the period ended 31 March 2006

Scope of Responsibility

As Accountable Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the organisation's policies, aims and objectives set by the Scottish Ministers, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me. In discharging this responsibility I am held accountable by the Authority's Board, and by Scottish Ministers. In particular, the Authority's Board has Finance and Audit Committees in place, each of which has remits to ensure elements of the Authority's internal control systems are in place and function effectively.

The Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) is issued by the Scottish Ministers to provide guidance to the Scottish Executive and other relevant bodies on the proper handling of public funds. It is mainly designed to ensure compliance with statutory and parliamentary requirements, promote value for money and high standards of propriety, and secure effective accountability and good systems of internal control. An element of my responsibility as Accountable Officer is to ensure the Authority's internal control systems comply with the requirements of the SPFM.

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve the organisation's policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify the principal risks to the achievement of the organisation's policies, aims and objectives; to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The process within the organisation accords with the SPFM and has been in place for the year ended 31 March 2006 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts and accords with guidance from the Scottish Ministers.

The internal audit function is an integral element of the Authority's internal control systems. Deloitte LLP were appointed as the Authority's internal auditors in June 2004 and have undertaken a comprehensive review of key internal control systems since their appointment. Over the course of the year to 31 March, the internal auditors have reported to the Audit Committee on their independent reviews of Corporate and Operational Planning; project planning; information technology contingency planning; and server security. Work is ongoing on reviews of cash management and implementation of risk management. The Board's Audit Committee has considered reports on each of these reviews and approved management actions required to address any recommendations made. Recommendations made were for improvements to control systems, with all reviews finding adequate control systems to be in place and operational.

Statement of Internal Control for the period ended 31 March 2006 (continued)

Risk and Control Framework

All bodies subject to the requirements of the SPFM must operate a risk management strategy in accordance with relevant guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers. The general principles for a successful risk management strategy are set out in the SPFM.

The Authority's strategic risk management processes are based on a schedule of key risks and risk management strategy approved by the Audit Committee in March 2005. This has given rise to the Authority's Strategic Risk Register, setting out responses to key risks and officers responsible for their management, which was subsequently approved by the Audit Committee in March 2006 and is now subject to quarterly review and update by the Committee and the Authority's Management Team.

The Authority has also adopted a risk based approach to the management and monitoring of its Operational and Corporate Plan delivery, whereby any increased risk to achievement of targets is assessed, reported to Board and Management Team, and where required remedial action determined and implemented.

More generally, the organisation is committed to a process of continuous development and improvement: developing systems in response to any relevant reviews and developments in best practice in this area. In particular, in the period covering the year to 31 March and up to the signing of the accounts the organisation has:

- Implemented financial regulations and published accompanying guidance on budget management;
- Implemented a standard planning process for operational plan activities, to improve management and control of our activities aimed at delivering Corporate Plan outcomes;
- Developed a "balanced scorecard" model to further assist in monitoring and controlling key organisational risks around the Authority's finances, its staffing, its governance and its delivery of key outcomes.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accountable Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control.

My review is informed by:

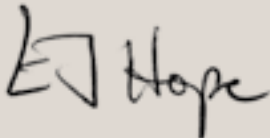
- the executive managers within the organisation who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework;
- the work of the internal auditors, who submit to the organisation's Audit Committee regular reports which include the Head of Internal Audit's independent and objective opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's systems of internal control together with recommendations for improvement;
- comments made by the external auditors in their management letters and other reports.

Advice from independent internal and external auditors forms a key and essential element in informing my review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control within the Authority. The Board's Audit Committee also plays a vital role in this regard, through its review of audit recommendations arising from reviews of internal control systems and its consideration of proposed management action. In particular, the Audit Committee is tasked with monitoring the operation of the internal control function and bringing any material matters to the attention of the full Board. Detailed findings of all audit reviews are made available to both management and the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee also produces an Annual Report to the Board assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal controls.

Senior Managers on the Authority's Management Team also play an important role in implementing control systems and advising on any improvements required. The Head of Corporate Services is particularly involved in implementing a variety of internal control processes and for ensuring a continuing process of review and improvement to these systems.

Appropriate action is in place to address any weaknesses identified and to ensure the continuous improvement of the system.

The internal auditors have reported that, overall, adequate internal controls were in place within the Authority over the course of 2005/06.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Hope', with a stylized initial 'J'.

Jane Hope, Chief Executive
30 October 2006

Independent Auditor's report

To the Members of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, the Auditor General for Scotland and the Scottish Parliament

I have audited the financial statements of the Cairngorms National Park Authority for the year ended 31 March 2006 under the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. These comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Auditor General for Scotland and for no other purpose as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and of Audited Bodies prepared by Audit Scotland, dated July 2001.

Respective responsibilities of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, the Chief Executive and Auditor

The Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Chief Executive are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers. The Chief Executive is also responsible for ensuring the regularity of expenditure and receipts. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Accountable Officer's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) as required by the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Auditor General for Scotland.

I report my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers. I also report whether in all material respects the expenditure and receipts shown in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers. I also report if, in my opinion, the Foreword is not consistent with the financial statements, if the body has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit, or if information specified by relevant authorities regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

I review whether the Statement on Internal Control reflects the body's compliance with the Scottish Executive's guidance. I report if, in my opinion, it does not comply with the guidance or if it is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit of the financial statements. I am not required to consider, nor have I considered, whether the statement covers all risks and controls. Neither am I required to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the body's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises only the Foreword and the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board as required by the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of expenditure and receipts included in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Cairngorms National Park Authority and Chief Executive in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the body's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error, and that in all material respects the expenditure and receipts shown in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

Opinion

Financial statements

In my opinion

1. the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers, of the state of affairs of the Cairngorms National Park Authority as at 31 March 2006 and of the surplus, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year then ended; and
2. the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

Regularity

In my opinion in all material respects the expenditure and receipts shown in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.



Robert W Clark

Audit Scotland, Ballantyne House
84 Academy Street, Inverness IV1 1LU
30 October 2006

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2006

	Note	2006 £	2005 £
Income			
Grant in Aid	2	4,173,894	3,000,000
Planning fees and other income		65,333	38,017
Released from Capital Assets Fund	11	109,879	90,852
Operational Plan income		834,179	793,147
		<u>5,183,285</u>	<u>3,922,016</u>
Expenditure			
Board members and staff costs	3	1,855,951	1,496,085
Operational Plan expenditure	4	2,426,225	1,770,161
Other operating costs	5	686,298	730,459
Notional costs	6	11,056	10,899
Depreciation	7	109,879	90,852
		<u>5,089,409</u>	<u>4,098,456</u>
Surplus/(deficit) on operating activities		93,876	(176,440)
Bank interest received		10,656	4,329
Surplus/(deficit) on ordinary activities		<u>104,532</u>	<u>(172,111)</u>
Add back: Notional costs	6	11,056	10,899
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	12	<u>115,588</u>	<u>(161,212)</u>

Statement of total recognised gains and losses for the year ended 31 March 2006

		2006 £	2005 £
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	12	115,588	(161,212)
Total recognised gains/(losses)		<u>115,588</u>	<u>(161,212)</u>

No activities were discontinued during the year.

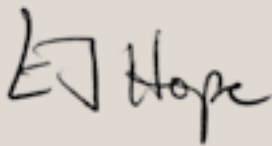
The accounting policies and notes on pages 49 to 54 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2006

	Note	2006 £	2005 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	7	326,498	422,037
Current Assets			
Debtors	8	217,421	168,916
Cash at bank and in hand	9	29,061	43,230
		246,482	212,146
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(277,869)	(359,121)
Net Current Assets /(Liabilities)		(31,387)	(146,975)
		295,111	275,062
Financed by:			
Deferred income	11	326,498	422,037
Reserves	12	(31,387)	(146,975)
		295,111	275,062

Signed on behalf of the National Park Authority



Jane Hope, Chief Executive
30 October 2006

The accounting policies and notes on pages 49 to 54 form part of these accounts.

Cash Flow Statement for the year ended 31 March 2006

	Note	2006 £	2005 £
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	13	(24,825)	(88,919)
Returns on investments			
Bank interest received		10,656	4,329
Investing activities			
Purchase of fixed assets		(14,340)	(176,738)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities		(28,509)	(261,328)
Financing			
Grants received to be applied to purchase fixed assets		14,340	111,286
Increase/(decrease) in cash		(14,169)	(150,042)
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds			
Increase/ (decrease) in cash for the year		(14,169)	(150,042)
Net funds at start of year		43,230	193,272
Net funds at end of year		29,061	43,230

The accounting policies and notes on pages 49 to 54 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006

1. Accounting Policies

(a) Basic Accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modification in a form determined by Scottish Ministers. The particular accounting policies adopted are described below and are applied consistently within the accounts.

Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 1985 and accounting standards issued and adopted by the Accounting Standards Board in so far as those requirements are appropriate.

(b) Accounting Period

The accounting period commenced on 1 April 2005 and ended on 31 March 2006.

(c) Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are valued at initial cost less accumulated depreciation.

Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write-off the cost evenly over the asset's expected useful life, as follows:

Leasehold improvements	Over length of lease
Office equipment	5 years
IT equipment	3 years
Motor vehicles	5 years

(d) Value Added Tax

Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in the period in which it is incurred.

(e) Leases

Operating lease rentals are charged to the Revenue Account over the term of the lease.

(f) Grant in Aid

The Authority receives government Grant in Aid to finance its net expenditure. Grant in Aid is recognised on a cash basis, i.e. when it is received.

Grant in aid used to purchase fixed assets is credited to a Government Grant Reserve Account and an amount equivalent to the historical depreciation charge is released to the Income and Expenditure Account over the expected useful life of the relevant assets.

(g) Notional Costs

In line with HM Treasury's Fees and Charges Guide, the Authority includes notional costs for cost of capital.

(h) Pension Costs

The Authority is a member of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The expected cost of providing staff pensions is recognised through monthly payment of Accruing Superannuation Liability Charges contributions to the PCSPS.

(i) Debtors

All material amounts due as at 31 March 2006 have been brought into the Income and Expenditure Account irrespective of when actual payments were received.

(j) Creditors

All material amounts outstanding as at 31 March 2006 have been brought into the Income and Expenditure Account irrespective of when actual payments were made.

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2006 (continued)

2. Grant in Aid

	2006	2005
	£	£
Grant in Aid receivable	4,188,234	3,111,286
less: amounts designated as Deferred Income (see note 11)	(14,340)	(111,286)
	4,173,894	3,000,000

3. Board members and staff costs

Summary

Board members	192,241	187,853
Staff - Core	1,663,710	1,308,232
	1,855,951	1,496,085

Project staff's salary details are included in note 4

Board members – see Remuneration report

Fees	184,314	179,900
Social security costs	7,927	7,953
Pension costs	-	-
	192,241	187,853

Board members' expenses are included in other operating costs (see note 5)

Staff - Core

Salaries	1,312,919	1,074,309
Social security costs	102,672	83,362
Pension costs (see note 14)	248,119	150,561
	1,663,710	1,308,232

Average numbers employed during period

Park Authority Board Members	25	25
Core employees	44	37

The Core employee number includes 2 seconded staff (2005-2).

At 31 March 2006 there were a total number of 43 (2005-36) Core employees.

4. Operational Plan expenditure

The Operational Plan details key targets and milestones that the Authority follows in seeking to meet objectives set by the Scottish Executive. Major items of expenditure are detailed below:

	2006	2005
	£	£
Outdoor Access projects	313,163	-
LEADER+ *	259,717	249,118
LEADER+ Administration costs *	62,766	67,311
Land Based Business Training *	211,721	146,238
Park Entry Point signage	200,392	71,071
Moorlands *	184,771	187,560
Website	71,778	43,467
Small Grants Scheme	-	100,130
Community Consultation	-	58,803
Forest of Spey	-	51,745
State of the Park report	-	42,561
Marketing/Promotional action	-	31,912
LBAP (Local Biodiversity Action Plan) Officer *	-	31,242
John Muir Award *	-	31,046
	1,304,308	1,112,204
Other (individually less than £50,000; 2005 – less than £30,000) *	1,121,917	657,957
	2,426,225	1,770,161

* the above expenditure includes the following salary costs paid to staff employed directly on individual projects:

Staff - Project

Salaries	193,657	178,240
Social security costs	13,003	11,917
Pension costs (see note 14)	34,982	23,951
	241,642	214,108

At 31 March 2006 there were a total number of eight Project employees (2005-10) and the average number of Project employees throughout the year was eight (2005-7).

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006 (continued)

5. Other operating costs	2006	2005		
	£	£		
Board and staff costs (exc. salary costs)	302,873	362,898		
Office running costs	259,813	176,654		
Information technology	48,463	91,223		
Consultants' fees	75,149	99,684		
	686,298	730,459		
The following expenditure is included in the above costs:				
Audit fees (external audit)	10,100	8,600		
Operating lease rentals				
- land and buildings	55,875	46,325		
- vehicles and office equipment	13,252	12,463		
	78,227	67,388		
6. Notional costs				
	£	£		
Cost of capital (calculated @ 3½%)	11,056	10,899		
7. Fixed Assets				
	Leasehold improvements £	Office equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2005	280,326	246,705	29,900	556,931
Additions	-	14,340	-	14,340
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2006	280,326	261,045	29,900	571,271
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2005	(45,354)	(89,042)	(498)	(134,894)
Provided in year	(31,726)	(72,173)	(5,980)	(109,879)
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2006	(77,080)	(161,215)	(6,478)	(244,773)
Net book value				
At 31 March 2006	203,246	99,830	23,422	326,498
At 31 March 2005	234,972	157,663	29,402	422,037

	2006	2005
	£	£
8. Debtors		
Project income debtors	201,847	117,166
Other debtors	15,574	51,750
	<hr/> 217,421	<hr/> 168,916
9. Cash at bank and in hand		
Bank accounts	28,861	43,030
Cash imprest accounts	200	200
	<hr/> 29,061	<hr/> 43,230
10. Creditors		
Trade creditors	168,320	178,801
Project income received in advance	34,961	76,020
Payroll taxes	-	53,678
Accruals	74,588	50,622
	<hr/> 277,869	<hr/> 359,121
11. Deferred income		
Capital Assets Fund		
Opening balance	422,037	401,603
Grant in Aid received for purchase of fixed assets	14,340	111,286
Released to Income and Expenditure Account	(109,879)	(90,852)
Closing balance	<hr/> 326,498	<hr/> 422,037
12. Reserves		
Opening balance	(146,975)	14,237
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	115,588	(161,212)
Closing balance	<hr/> (31,387)	<hr/> (146,975)
13. Reconciliation of operating surplus on ordinary activities to net cash flow from ordinary activities		
Surplus/(deficit) on operating activities	93,876	(176,440)
Depreciation charge	109,879	90,852
Notional costs	11,056	10,899
Transferred from Government Grant Reserve	(109,879)	(90,852)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(48,505)	(9,140)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(81,252)	85,762
	<hr/> (24,825)	<hr/> (88,919)

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006 (continued)

14. Pensions

The Authority is a member of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) which is an un-funded multi-employer defined benefit scheme. The Authority is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2003 details of which can be found in the Resource Accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk).

For 2005/06 employer's contributions of £263,679 (2004/05 - £160,147) were payable to the PCSPS. The contributions were payable at one of four rates ranging from 16.2% to 24.6% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands.

All employees have the opportunity to join the scheme. In addition, the Authority paid employer pension contributions of £3,927 to other pension providers and we were also invoiced for employer pension contributions of seconded staff working for the Authority.

15. Related party transactions

The Authority is a Non-Departmental Public Body of the Scottish Executive. The Authority's Sponsoring Department is the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD). SEERAD is regarded as a related party with which there have been various material transactions during the year in the normal course of business. In addition the Authority has had a number of material transactions with other Government Departments and other Non-Departmental Public Bodies.

None of the Board members, Management Team, or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with the Authority during the year. Material transactions cover payments made under contract for goods or services.

16. Capital commitments, contingent liabilities and operating leases

There were no contracted capital commitments outstanding and not included in the balance sheet, nor were there any contingent liabilities existing at the balance sheet date.

Commitments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	Land & buildings 2006 £	Motor vehicles & office equipment 2006 £	Land & buildings 2005 £	Motor vehicles & office equipment 2005 £
Operating leases which expire:				
Within one year	-	527	-	-
Within two to five years	63,300	2,840	46,325	12,463
After five years	-	-	-	-
	<u>63,300</u>	<u>3,367</u>	<u>46,325</u>	<u>12,463</u>



CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

DIRECTION BY THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS

1. The Scottish Ministers, in pursuance of The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, hereby give the following direction.
2. The statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2006, and subsequent years, shall comply with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the edition of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRM) which is in force for the year for which the statement of accounts are prepared.
3. The accounts shall be prepared so as to give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and of the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.
4. This direction shall be reproduced as an appendix to the statement of accounts. The direction given on 20 April 2004 is hereby revoked.

Signed by the authority of the Scottish Ministers

I R Ramsay

Head of Country Parks and
National Heritage Division

Dated 12 January 2006

Members attendance at board meetings

Board Member	Planning Committee		Board Meetings	
	Total meetings 26	%	Total meetings 13	%
Eric Baird	26	100	12	92
Stuart Black	22	85	11	85
Duncan Bryden	23	88	11	85
Sally Dowden	20	77	9	69
Basil Dunlop	20	77	10	77
Douglas Glass	22	85	8	62
Angus Gordon	18	69	8	62
Lucy Grant	21	81	10	77
David Green	18	69	8	62
Marcus Humphrey	18	69	9	69
Bruce Luffman	22	85	10	77
Eleanor Mackintosh	24	92	11	85
Anne MacLean	21	81	12	92
Alastair MacLennan	20	77	10	77
William McKenna	21	81	9	69
Sandy Park	23	88	12	92
Andrew Rafferty	17	65	8	62
Gregor Rimell	17	65	8	62
David Selfridge	21	81	10	77
Joyce Simpson	12	46	11	85
Sheena Slimon	19	73	9	69
Richard Stroud	20	77	8	62
Andrew Thin	21	81	9	69
Susan Walker	20	77	10	77
Bob Wilson	17	65	8	62

Staff details at 1 April 2006

Corporate Services

Jane Hope
Chief Executive
David Cameron
Head of Corporate Services
Andy Rinning
Business Services Manager
Francesca Scott
Human Resources Manager
Denby Pettitt
Finance Manager
Sandy Allan
Information Services Manager
Morag James
Support Officer

Mandy Mathieson
Core Finance Assistant

Diane Buchan
Project Finance Assistant

Margaret Smith
Administration Officer

Laura Grant
Administration Officer

Catriona Campbell
Administration Officer

Land Management

Fiona Newcombe
Head of Land Management

Will Boyd-Wallis
Senior Land Management Officer

Kate Christie
Land Based Business Project Manager

Sam Masson
Land Based Business Project Support Officer

Sara Krawczynska
Land Based Business Project Assistant

Natural Heritage Group

David Bale
Head of Natural Heritage

Stephen Corcoran
Local Biodiversity Action Plan Officer

David Hetherington
Ecology Advisor

Visitor Services & Recreation

Murray Ferguson
Head of Visitor Services and Recreation

Bob Grant
Senior Outdoor Access Officer

Sandra Middleton
Outdoor Access Officer

Fran Pothecary
Outdoor Access Officer

Pete Crane
Senior Visitor Services Officer

Andy Ford
Visitor Services Officer

Alan Smith
John Muir Award Manager

Economic & Social Development

Andrew Harper
Head of Economic and Social Development

Debbie Strang
Tourism & Economic Development Manager

Claire Ross
Education and Inclusion Manager

Heather Galbraith
Sustainable Tourism Officer

Ruathy Donald
Business and Marketing Officer

John Thorne
Economic Development Officer

Elsbeth Grant
Social Inclusion Policy Officer

Rita Callander
Cultural Heritage Policy Officer

Fiona Munro
Housing Policy Officer

Communications

Françoise van Buuren
Head of Communications

Karen Archer
Press Officer

Alison Fleming
Communications Officer

Strategic Policy & Programme Management

Nick Halfhide
Head of Strategic Policy & Programme Management

Dicken Higgins
Programme Manager

Quentin McLaren
External Funding Officer

Hamish Trench
Park Plan Officer

Mairi Maciver
Park Plan Assistant

Andy McMullen
Moorland Project Manager

Gail Renwick
Moorland Liaison Officer

Patricia Hamilton
LEADER+ Programme Manager

Jackie Farquhar
LEADER+ Support Officer

Alix Harkness
LEADER+ Administration Support

Planning & Development Control

Ballater Office

Don McKee
Head of Planning & Development Control

Neil Stewart
Development Control Officer

Andrew Tait
Development Control Officer

Mary Grier
Development Control Officer

Norman Brockie
Local Plan/Policy Officer

Gavin Miles
Local Plan/Policy Officer

Gareth Austin
GIS Officer

Pip Mackie
Office Manager & Planning Admin Assistant

Wendy Rogerson
Admin Support

Forums

Working Groups and Forums are aimed at directing and driving the planning and delivery of particular actions or projects. Membership comprises Board members, Cairngorms National Park Authority staff and key relevant partners.

Joined Up Government/ National Park Plan Advisory Panel

Remit - The Panel advises the CNPA on the development and implementation of the National Park Plan as a strategic framework for joining-up public sector activity in the National Park. The Panel is advisory and has no executive or decision-making functions.

Integrated Land Management Forum

Remit - To provide advice to the CNPA in its development and implementation of policies and strategies on integrated land management within the Cairngorms National Park.

Specifically:

- to act as a critical and constructive sounding board for draft proposals from the CNPA, and in particular, to help ensure that strategic issues relating to land (including forestry), water, landscape, sustainable development and natural heritage management are addressed in a holistic and integrated way;
- to help generate new ideas for policy and implementation;
- to advise on the development of the relevant sections of the National Park Plan, and monitoring of implementation once it is approved;
- to act as a means of the CNPA communicating its thinking as this develops, and progress with initiatives and projects.

Membership is drawn from among organisations, groups and individuals able and willing to advise constructively on the development and delivery of integrated land management policies within the Park.

Membership is not on a strictly representational basis, but ensures a wide range of relevant experience and expertise.

Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum

Remit - The Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum meets on a 10 week cycle at different locations throughout the Park.

The objectives and functions of the Forum are:

- to act as the local access forum for the Cairngorms National Park and to undertake the functions of that body in terms of Section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003;
- to advise the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) on strategic access issues and the drawing up and adoption of a Core Paths Plan in terms of its responsibility under Section 17 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003;
- to advise the Authority in the preparation of its Outdoor Access Strategy;
- to advise the Authority and any other person or body consulting it, on the existence and delineation of rights of way and the exercise of access rights;
- to promote responsible access and land management through assisting the Authority in publicising the Scottish Outdoor Access Code;
- to promote discussion and the sharing of knowledge, awareness and good practice in outdoor access matters;

- to support the provision of infrastructure that improves responsible access to the countryside for all;
- to offer advice that will assist in the resolution of outdoor access disputes.

Economic and Social Development Forum

Remit - To provide advice to the Cairngorms National Park Authority in its development and implementation of policies and strategies on social and economic development and cultural heritage within the Cairngorms National Park.

Membership is drawn by invitation from among organisations, groups and individuals who are able and willing to advise constructively on the development and delivery of policy within the Park. Membership is therefore not on a strictly representational basis, but is drawn to ensure a wide range of relevant experience and expertise, coupled with the ability to constructively and critically advise the CNPA on its role and its work in developing and co-ordinating policy.

In addition to the members invited to attend meetings, there is a wide second tier of interested individuals who are copied all the papers, in order to keep them informed of progress.

CNPA Board members are invited to attend, to participate in debate and to receive views and advice.

Forums (continued)

Visitor Services, Tourism & Information Forum (ViSIT)

Remit - To provide advice to the Cairngorms National Park Authority in its development and implementation of policies and strategies on visitor services, tourism and information provision within the Cairngorms National Park, specifically:

- to act as a critical and constructive sounding board for draft proposals from the CNPA, and in particular, to help ensure that strategic issues relating to visitor services, tourism and information are addressed in a holistic and integrated way;
- to help generate new ideas for policy and implementation;
- to comment and advise on the development of the relevant sections of the National Park Plan and monitor implementation once approved;
- to act as a means of the CNPA communicating its developing, thinking and progress with initiatives and projects.

Members are invited from organisations (both government and non-government), groups and individuals who are able and willing to advise constructively on the development and delivery of policy within the Cairngorms National Park.

Membership is not on a strictly representational basis, but drawn to ensure a wide range of relevant experience and expertise. Also, there is a wide second tier of interested individuals who are copied all the papers, in order to keep them informed of progress. The meetings are open for anyone to attend.

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For a large print version of this Annual Report, please contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority at the above address or telephone 01479 873535.

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