

Helpful Information... facts & figures about the Cairngorms National Park

The Cairngorms National Park was designated in 2003. It is one of 15 in the UK and one of only two in Scotland.

A special place for people and nature...

- The Cairngorms National Park is 4,528 sq km, taking in Badenoch & Strathspey in the Highlands; parts of Moray including Glenlivet and Tomintoul; Strathdon and Royal Deeside in Aberdeenshire; the Angus Glens, Atholl & Glenshee and Glenshee.
- The Cairngorms National Park is twice the size of our sister National Park in Scotland, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, and twice the size of the Lake District National Park. The land area covers some 6 per cent of Scotland.
- Four of Scotland's five highest mountains are here. For those who like the rooftop terrace of the world there are 55 summits over 900 metres in the Park.
- It's like the Arctic here – and we're not talking about the weather! With 36% of the land area in the Park above 600 metres (the 'mountain zone') that means we have the largest area of arctic landscape in the British Isles. AND, the Park has the finest collection of different landforms outside of arctic Canada, from granite tors to heavings and leavings from Ice Age glaciers.
- The Park contains the most expansive tracts of Caledonian pine forest in the UK and we can also boast the best examples of bog woodland, montane willow scrub and stands of aspen. Around 15 % of the National Park is forest or woodland and heather moorland covers around 40% of the Park.
- The waters of the Park, our lochs, rivers and marshes are among the cleanest in Scotland and because of this they're home to populations of endangered freshwater pearl mussels, as well as salmon, trout and rare lampreys.
- 17 priority species are protected through conservation projects for the Scottish wildcat, water voles, red squirrels, rare plants, capercaillie, raptor watch plus the removal on non-native species.
- The Cairngorms National Park is home to 25% of the UK's threatened bird, animal and plant species and 51% of the Park is designated as being of national importance in terms of natural heritage, with 25% being of European importance.

A sustainable economy and thriving communities...

- The Park contributes around £400 million to the Scottish economy per year.
- Its home to over 17,000 people with this figure expected to grow to 20,000 by 2040. The population is 4-6 years older than the Scottish average, healthier and unemployment is low (down 80% since the Park was set up).
- The main sources of employment in the Park are: tourism (30%) – which includes winter sports, walking, fishing and shooting; housing and construction (18%); public sector (15%); agriculture, food and drink (15%); manufacturing (4%) and forestry and forest products (3%).
- The Cairngorms National Park is not owned and looked after by one particular organisation, it's owned and cared for by lots of different groups. Around 75% of the land is privately owned with 15% in the hands of Non Government Organisations (i.e. charities) with the remainder being owned and managed by a range of different public bodies, for example Forestry Commission Scotland.
- But “many hands make light work”, which is where the Cairngorms National Park Authority comes in. It's their job to bring together lots of different interests across the Park to try to ensure that the area is well cared for, so that it's robust and in good shape for future generations to enjoy.
- The Cairngorms Business Partnership is a clever way of the private sector, supported by the public sector, coming together to ensure that businesses in the Park get the most out of being in a National Park!
- Groups and resources also exist in the Park to support farmers, land managers, creative industries, outdoor and land-based workers, recreation providers, cultural heritage enthusiasts, etc.

Enjoying and getting involved....

- Over 1.4 million visitors come to the Cairngorms National Park each year with most of those visitors being from our own shores – 63% from Scotland, 19% from elsewhere in the UK and 18% from overseas.
- And when they get here the majority say they're happy to enjoy some sightseeing and simply relax. Also popular are winter sports, wildlife watching and walking.

- 51% of visitors consider the fact the Cairngorms is a National Park is “very” or “quite important” in their decision making to come here, 87% felt that the Park was well looked after and 90% said there was plenty to see and do.
- £4 million has been spent on improving paths and infrastructure in the last 10 years and with 984km of Core Paths in the Cairngorms National Park there is plenty of choice for those who enjoy a walk. There are also 320 health walks and more than 4,000 people enjoy a ranger led walk every year.
- Summer playground? Winter playground? All-year-round playground! Watersports, walking, climbing, wildlife, whisky tasting, Highland games, golf, horse riding, shooting, snowsports, quad biking, hand gliding, fishing, castles, museums, mountain biking, shopping, eating... sleeping!
- There are lots of ways people have been getting involved with the Park from contributing to the Cairngorms Biodiversity recording System, which has received over 100,000 new records since it was set up; enjoying training courses in recording and identifying species; 10,000 outdoor learning opportunities have been delivered by the John Muir Award in the Cairngorms National Park and 30 cultural heritage projects have been supported via the Community Heritage Project. Just to name a few!