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Transport Infrastructure

The National Park benefits from relatively good major transport infrastructure links compared to many other rural areas in Scotland. A mainline railway between Perth and Inverness and four A Class roads (A9, A93, A95 and A86) connect the area with Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross and the west of Scotland (see map below). Of the A roads, one is subject to a current improvement project. The A9 Dualling Strategy aims to link existing sections of dual carriageway to create a continuous dual carriageway between Inverness and Perth:

https://www.transport.gov.scot/projects/a9-dualling-perth-to-inverness/

Major Road and Rail Links outwith/into the Park

The geography of the Park means that links between certain parts of the Park are relatively poor due to topography and climate affecting their travel times and passability in poor weather.

Networks of other A, B, C and unclassified roads provide access to other parts of the Park, although many are narrow and twisty, increasing journey times. The travel times have an effect on access to services for residents and visitors.

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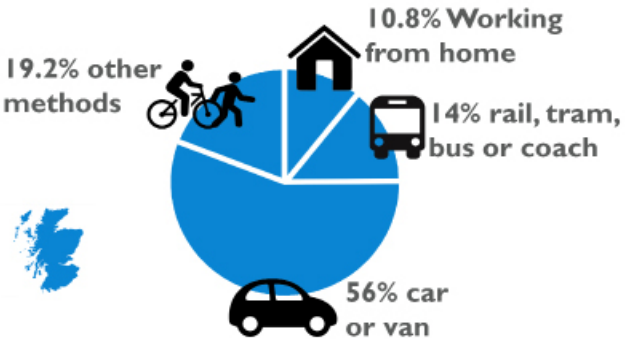
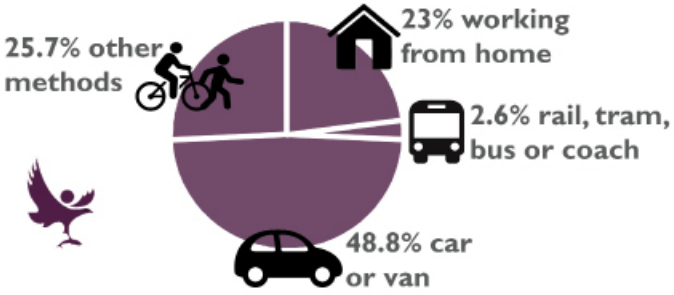
Transport: Commuting

Both nationally and in the National Park there has been an increase in the proportion of people working from home since 2001, and, which in light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic may increase further as remote working becomes more prevalent.

Encouragingly over a quarter of people in the Park opt for other modes of travel, which include active travel options such as walking and cycling. The limited availability of public transport options: rail, tram, bus and coach are reflected in the very low proportion of people using this mode of transport to commute.

Looking at the distances travelled there is a far higher proportion of people working within 2km of their homes, supporting the Governments move to the 20min neighbourhood vision. Due to its rural location the Park does inevitably have a higher proportion of people commuting over 30km (below).





23.0%	10.8%	working from home
21.6%	13.1%	<2km
6.2%	19.2%	2km to <5km
7.2%	17.1%	5km to <10km
9.2%	15.1%	10km to <20km
4.3%	6.5%	10km to <20km
16.6%	7.2%	30km +
12.9%	10.9%	Other

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Access to Services (SIMD 2018 Data)

Range of mean minutes to reach local amenities by car/ public transport

	Highland	Moray	Perth & Kinross	Aberdeenshire
Primary School	1 - 9	4 - 6	6	2 - 8
Secondary School	2 - 19	27 - 28	20 - 21	15 - 37
GP Surgery	2 - 13	5	17	1 - 12
	5 - 28	13	36 - 39	6 - 29
Post Office	1 - 10	4 - 5	7 - 12	2 - 8
	4 - 25	11 - 13	18 - 25	5 - 21
Retail Centre	1 - 13	25 - 26	19 - 20	2 - 25
	5 - 28	65 - 72	42 - 44	5 - 63
Petrol Station	2 - 11	20 - 21	7 - 16	2 - 13

The drive times demonstrate the nature of the road infrastructure in the Park, with the population often having to travel for a long time to reach key services. The rural nature of the area is also demonstrated through the relatively high instances of car ownership. According to the 2011 Census around 85% of households had access to a car or van, which is higher than the Scottish level of around 70%. As a result, a high proportion of the population of the Park have a reliance on the road infrastructure of the area for access to services, as well as for work

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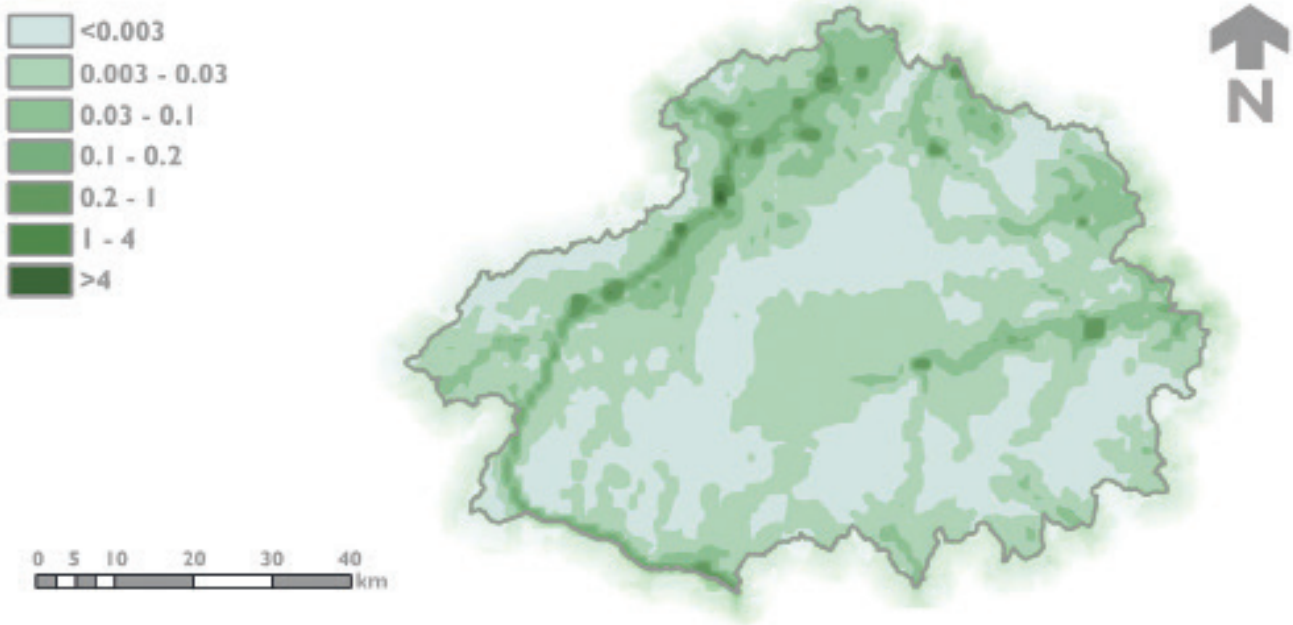
Transport Emissions

Dualling of the A9 and how this could change traffic levels and visitor numbers in the Park means that air quality could be a future concern. In particular, the potential for increasing pollutants associated with traffic emissions such as PM10 and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). Spatial data on the emission of PM10 and NO_2 is available from the UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory for 2016. The highest emissions are located along the A9 and within the main settlements of Aviemore, Grantown-on-Spey and Ballater, where traffic volumes are greatest. However these emissions are still well below the World Health Organisation levels that would have adverse effects on human health.

Emissions of PM10 in tonnes in the Park in 2016



Vehicle E-charging Stations in the National Park

For more information about specific types of charging sockets , costs and different locations within settlements refer to https://www.carwow.co.uk/electric-cars/charging-points#gref

Comparison of the proportion of commuters by distance

The largest proportion of people commuting within the Park travel less than 2km to their work .At around 23%, the Park figure is higher than the Scottish level of around 17%. However, in the Park a greater proportion of people commute further when compared to the Scottish average; in Scotland around 50% of commuters travel less than 10km to their work, whereas for the Park only around 36% of commuters travel that distance. In the Park around 16% travel of commuters travel more than 30km, compared to the Scottish average of 7%.

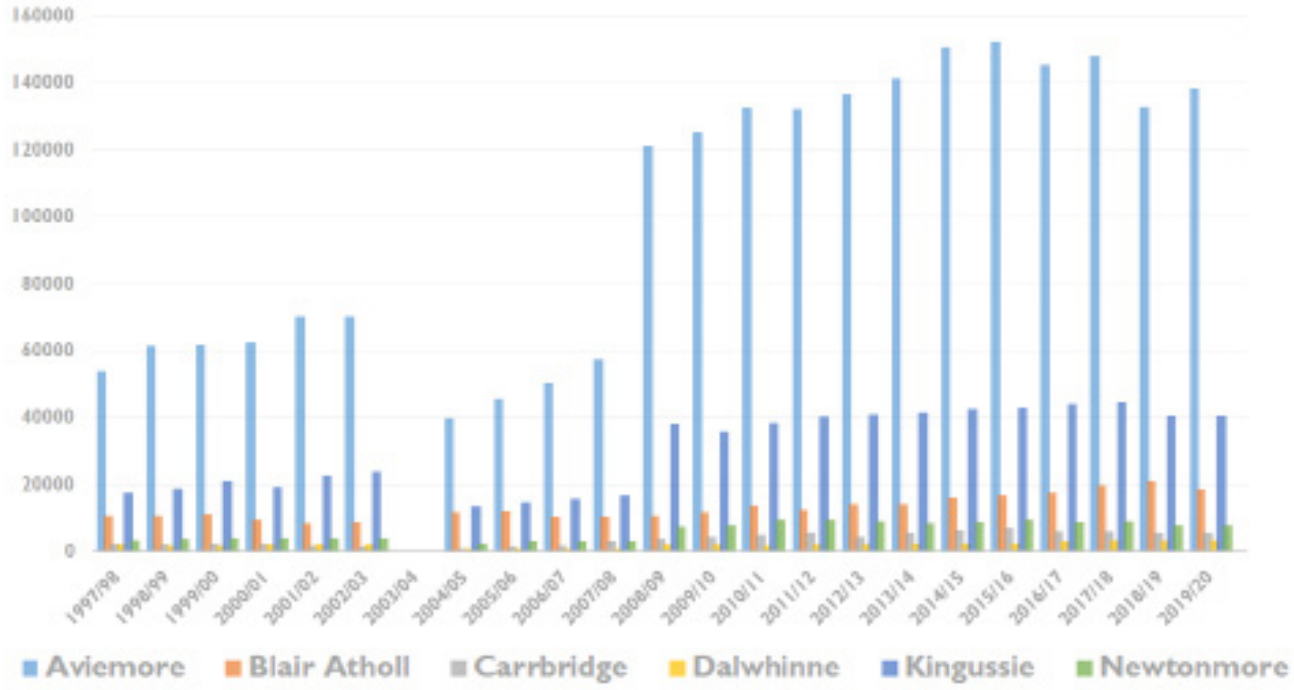
LA Area	<2km	2km to <5km	5km to <10km	10km to <20km	20km to <30km	30km +
Aberdeenshire	25.1%	20.4%	3.6%	3.7%	8.6%	4.9%
Highland	21.9%	24.1%	5.8%	7.6%	9.2%	3.4%
Moray	8.4%	2.9%	7.7%	16.1%	4.5%	16.6%
Perth and Kinross	11.7%	5.7%	6.7%	11.3%	4.5%	11.7%
National Park	23.3%	5.4%	6.8%	9.3%	3.8%	15.5%
Scotland	16.8%	17.6%	16.2%	14.5%	6.2%	7.0%

Rail

The Highland Main Railway Line runs between Inverness and Perth, through the Park with stations at Carr-Bridge, Aviemore, Kingussie, Newtonmore, Dalwhinnie and Blair Atholl.

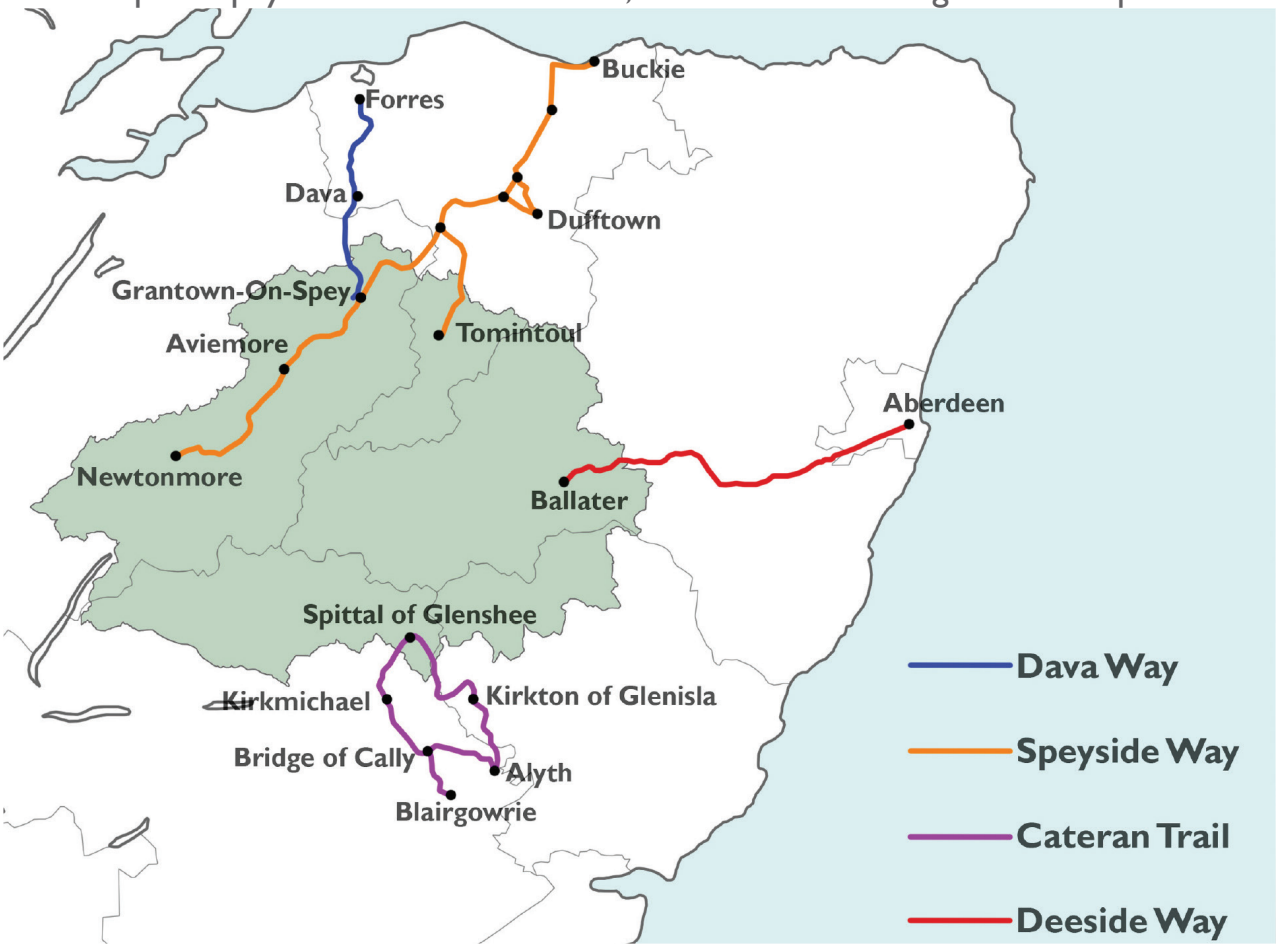
Using annual passenger usage at stations based on sales of tickets as an indicator of the overall use of the line, then there is an indication that use has increased significantly within the Park over the last 17 years.

Station Use in the National Park



Recreation Opportunities

In addition to the usual measures of deprivation related to employment, finances and transport, other factors can influence human health, such as opportunities to access the outdoors for recreation, leisure and exercise. Being outside and physical activity is well known to improve physical and mental health, as well as addressing health inequalities



The Dava Way, around 41 miles in length, follows the old railway route that used to link Grantown on Spey in the Park with Forres in Moray.

The Speyside Way, around 65 miles in length, follows the River Spey from Buckie on the Moray coast to Insh near Kincraig in the Park (with plans to extend it to Newtonmore in 2020). There is also a spur off the main route, which goes from around Ballindalloch through Glenlivet to Tomintoul. A section of the Speyside Way forms part of the off-road National Cycle Network route 7.

The Cateran Trail, around 64 miles in length, is a circular route following old drove roads and ancient tracks through Perthshire and the Angus Glens, between Blairgowrie, Alyth and Spittal of Glenshee.

The Deeside Way, around 41 miles in length, follows the old railway route the used to link Ballater in the Park with Aberdeen. It also forms part of National Cycle Network route 195.

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As well as the long distance routes, there are numerous path networks associated with settlements providing shorter routes for exercise or getting around. Some of the path networks also link settlements, offering opportunities for commuting by active travel.

Many of the paths in the Park are multi-user paths, providing opportunities for cyclists as well as pedestrians to be active. National Cycle Network route 7 goes between Inverness and Sunderland, passing through the Park, while the shorter route 195 provides opportunities in Aberdeenshire.

There are two water sports centres that facilitate non-motorised water sports through teaching and equipment hire, at Loch Insh and Loch Morlich.

Core Paths

The international reputation of the Park makes it the best venue for wide range of outdoor activities. The Core Paths Plan, a statutory plan, helps the Park Authority and its partners develop the backbone of paths that supports and grows the Park as the place for outdoor activities. More information about core paths in a specific area can be viewed online with in the plan accessible here:

https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/authority/national-park-strategies/core-paths-plan/

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Further Information

A9 Dualing Strategy:
https://www.transport.gov.scot/projects/a9-dualling-perth-to-inverness/

Active Cairngorms Outdoor Strategy:
https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/authority/national-park-strategies/outdoor-access-strategy/

Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan 2015:
https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/authority/national-park-strategies/core-paths-plan/