

# Corporate Plan 2023-27



Cairngorms  
National Park

Pàirc Nàiseanta a'  
Mhonaidh Ruaidh



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Cover image of Peatland Action team in the field  
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# Foreword

**2023 marks the 20th anniversary of the Cairngorms National Park. So much has changed over the last 20 years but throughout that time the Park Authority has been guided by the National Park aims and a vision to see people and nature thrive together.**

That is what this Corporate Plan is about. The National Park Partnership Plan sets out our collective ambition to 2045 and this plan sets out what the Park Authority will deliver over the next four years.

At its core is the leadership that the Park Authority can provide on issues like the nature and climate crisis, affordable housing and active travel. We need to be an exemplar of what can be achieved when we focus on a specific place and not look at things in silos.

The Park Authority has been instrumental in securing millions of pounds of investment over the last 20 years and this Corporate Plan will drive further investment across our three themes of Nature, People and Place.

The plan also gives clarity and direction for the fantastic staff that work for the Park Authority, who provide on-the-ground support to dozens of projects across the National Park and help deliver our agreed priorities.

In December 2023 we will find out if we have been successful in securing Lottery funding for the delivery phase of our Cairngorms 2030 programme. This five-year, £43 million programme will put the power to tackle the nature and climate crisis in the hands of the people of the National Park, benefitting people's health and wellbeing, developing sustainable transport solutions and enhancing nature. This is the type of programme that the Park Authority was set up to develop and deliver, and we are excited to take it forward over the next five years.

None of this can be achieved by working alone. We need to continue to work with local businesses, national agencies, private estates, local communities and many other organisations. There is only strength in partnership working.

There is much to do but the Cairngorms National Park is a special place and we need to do all that we can to build on the past 20 years and continue to deliver for people and nature.



**Sandy Bremner**  
Convener



**Grant Moir**  
Chief Executive

# Ro-ràdh

**Tha 2023 a' comharrachadh 20mh ceann-bliadhna Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh. Tha uiread air atharrachadh thairis air an 20 bliadhna mu dheireadh, ach air feadh na h-ùine sin tha Ùghdarras a' Phàirc air a bhith air a stiùireadh le amasan a' Phàirc Nàiseanta agus le lèirsinn gum bi daoine is nàdar a' soirbheachadh còmhla.**

Tha am Plana Corporra seo mu dheidhinn an dearbh nì sin. Tha Plana Com-pàirteachais a' Phàirc Nàiseanta a' cur an cèill an t-amas coitcheann a th' againn gu ruige 2045, agus tha am plana seo a' cur an cèill na bhios Ùghdarras a' Phàirc a' lìbhrigeadh thairis air an ath cheithir bliadhna.

'S e teis-mheadhan a' phlana an ceannardas a dh'fhaodas Ùghdarras a' Phàirc a thoirt seachad air cùisean leithid èiginn an nàdair agus na gnàth-shìde, taigheadas neo-chosgail agus siubhal gnìomhach. Feumaidh sinn a bhith mar eisimpleir air na ghabhas coileanadh nuair a tha fòcas ga chur air àite sònraichte gun a bhith a' coimhead air gnothaichean ann an saidhleothan.

Tha Ùghdarras a' Phàirc air a bhith mar mheadhan air seilbheachd luach milleanan nòtaichean a tharraing thairis air an 20 bliadhna a dh'fhalbh, agus bidh am Plana Corporra seo a' dràibheadh barrachd seilbheachd tarsainn nan trì tèaman againn: Nàdar, Daoine agus Àite.

Tha am plana cuideachd a' toirt seachad soilleireachd agus stiùireadh airson luchd-obrach mìorbhaileach Ùghdarras a' Phàirc, a tha a' toirt seachad taic air-an-làr do dhusanan pròiseact air feadh a' Phàirc Nàiseanta agus a tha a' cuideachadh gus na prìomhachasan aontaichte againn a lìbhrigeadh.

San Dùbhlachd 2023, gheibh sinn a-mach an robh sinn soirbheachail ann a bhith a' faighinn maoineachadh a' chrannchuir airson ìre lìbhrigidh a' phrògram againn Cairngorms 2030. Bidh am prògram seo, a mhaireas còig bliadhna agus a tha luach £43 millean, a' cur ann an làmhnan muinntir a' Phàirc Nàiseanta smachd a bhith a' dèiligeadh ri èiginn an nàdair agus na gnàth-shìde, a' toirt buannachd do shlàinte is sunnd dhaoine, a' leasachadh fhuasglaidhean airson còmhdhail sheasmhach agus a' meudachadh nàdar. B' ann airson prògraman den leithid seo a lìbhrigeadh a chaidh Ùghdarras a' Phàirc a stèidheachadh, agus tha sinn air bhioran a bhith ga thoirt air adhart thairis air na h-ath chòig bliadhna.

Cha ghabh gin dhe seo a choileanadh le bhith ag obair nar n-aonar. Feumaidh sinn cumail oirnn ag obair le gnothachasan ionadail, buidhnean nàiseanta, oighreachdan prìobhaideach, coimhearsnachdan ionadail agus iomadh buidheann eile. Chan fhaighear ach neart ann a bhith ag obair còmhla.

Tha mòran ri dhèanamh, ach tha Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh na àite sònraichte agus feumaidh sinn ar dìcheall a dhèanamh gus togail air an 20 bliadhna a chaidh seachad agus cumail oirnn a' lìbhrigeadh airson daoine is nàdar.



**Sandy Bremner**  
Neach-gairm



**Grant Moir**  
Ceannard



# Introduction

The nature and climate crisis is at the core of the new Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan. That plan sets out how we will look after the National Park and how we develop and deliver a wellbeing economy that works for the people of the Cairngorms, whilst also restoring nature and delivering net zero. It is our duty to deliver the Partnership Plan alongside our many partners, and to look after and enhance this special place for the people of Scotland.

This Corporate Plan describes how the Cairngorms National Park Authority contributes to the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27.

Our Corporate Plan also sets out how the Park Authority plans to achieve our aim of being 'the best small public body in Scotland' and how we will support Scottish Government across its policy priorities.

Our ambition is set out across three themes – Nature, People and Place. These are the themes of the National Park Partnership Plan and this document sets out the role the Park Authority will play in helping to deliver the objectives set out in that document. This is underpinned by our corporate functions and communications and engagement work.

Over 100 organisations are listed in the Partnership Plan document and it is our intention to work in partnership with a range of organisations, communities, land managers, businesses and others to deliver real change on the ground.

The Park Authority has a good track record of using its funding to leverage significant support into the Cairngorms and we will continue to do this. The Partnership Plan focuses on the big issues in the National Park and our role is to work with all to tackle those key challenges and come up with practical solutions.

# Strategic context

## Within the National Park

The Cairngorms is the UK's largest national park at 4,528 sq km (6% of Scotland's land mass) and is home to one quarter of the UK's rare and endangered species. Around 18,000 people live in the National Park across the areas of Aberdeenshire, Angus, Highland, Moray, Perth and Kinross, with over two million visitors enjoying this special place every year.

**The National Park has four distinct aims as set out by Parliament:**



**To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area.**

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**To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area.**

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**To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public.**

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**To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.**

These aims are to be pursued collectively. However, if there is conflict between the first aim and any of the others, greater weight is given to the first aim (as set out in Section 9.6 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000). This helps ensure conservation of the natural and cultural heritage underpins the economic, social and recreation value of the Cairngorms National Park.





## Across Scotland

The direction of travel from Scottish Government is clear around the nature and climate crisis, the need to have a just transition and the need to develop an economy that works for all. There is significant change likely to happen in Scotland over the coming years that will have a significant impact on the National Park and how the Park Authority operates. This includes the Nature / Environment Bill, Land Reform Bill and Agriculture Bill, all due within this parliamentary term. There are also proposals for at least one new national park in Scotland.

The Park Authority continues to work closely with public sector partners through working groups and through strategic engagement in entities like the Environment and Economy Leaders' Group, Scottish Forum on Natural Capital etc and across the full range of Scottish Government functions.

## Further afield

The Park Authority works closely with other national parks in the UK as part of the National Parks Partnership and National Parks UK. These collaborative mechanisms allow us to use the power of 15 national parks to tackle some of the key strategic priorities around green finance, fundraising and sponsorship, and other issues that are more difficult to tackle as a single national park.

At a European level, the Park Authority continues to be an effective and enthusiastic member of the EUOPARC Federation, which provides great insight, coordination and knowledge-sharing into how national parks are tackling the big issues across Europe.





**Our long-term vision:**  
'An outstanding National  
Park, enjoyed and valued  
by everyone, where nature  
and people thrive together.'

# Park Authority mission

To lead the way in delivering for the Cairngorms National Park by:



Bringing people together towards a common purpose.

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Enhancing the National Park for everyone.

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Inspiring new generations to be National Park champions.

## Our values

The Park Authority is an open, inclusive, innovative and professional organisation that behaves with integrity. The Park Authority also operates in an environmentally friendly manner and demonstrates leadership in this area.





## Culture

The Park Authority wants to be the best small public body in Scotland. The Best Companies Survey has consistently shown that we are a people-orientated organisation that is performing well for its employees. The Park Authority will build on our Organisational Development Strategy and will strive to ensure a high-performance culture and take forward new opportunities where they arise to deliver for the National Park. We will also be innovative, quick to act and to empower staff to deliver the strategies that are put in place by the Park Authority board. Diversity and equality will be a key component of our work.

## New ways of working

The Park Authority will continue to look at new ways to operate as an organisation to deliver our commitments in this plan period. This includes looking for alternative funding streams, from applications to the likes of the National Lottery Heritage Fund to sponsorship opportunities, green finance and other mechanisms. It will also include working collaboratively with partners to deliver improved services on the ground.





# Performance monitoring

We have set out indicators for each of the key objectives in the Partnership Plan and these will be measured and monitored across the next five years. By nature of the Park Authority's role – seeking to lead collaborative effort in tackling the big issues for the Cairngorms – these performance measures are rarely directly controllable by the Park Authority and certainly not by the Park Authority alone.

Rather, they require the necessary collaboration and engagement of the Park Authority and our partners. In this way, they act as measures of the effectiveness of our leadership and influencing abilities, combined with our own direct investment of finance and staff resources, in tackling these priorities.

Image of a person in an off-road wheelchair next to Loch Morlich © David Lintern





# Park Authority board



The Park Authority board provides strategic direction for the organisation. There are 19 board members, a mixture of directly elected, local authority nominees and Scottish Government appointees. The board carries out its functions through a process of formal public meetings and committee meetings. The board's formal committees are: audit and risk, planning, resources and performance.



# Services

## The Park Authority is the Planning Authority and Outdoor Access Authority for the area.

This means that certain functions have to be provided by the Park Authority, eg the Local Development Plan, Core Paths Plan, development management (where planning applications are called in), outdoor access case work and the National Park Partnership Plan.

The Park Authority also has a number of ongoing funding commitments, such as to community development officers, ranger services, multi-year projects (Cairngorms 2030, Cairngorms Capercaillie Project, community-led local development), peatland restoration, catchment management and nature restoration projects.

These ongoing commitments and statutory duties, alongside the overarching National Park Partnership Plan, mean that the room for significant change in strategic direction is relatively restricted.

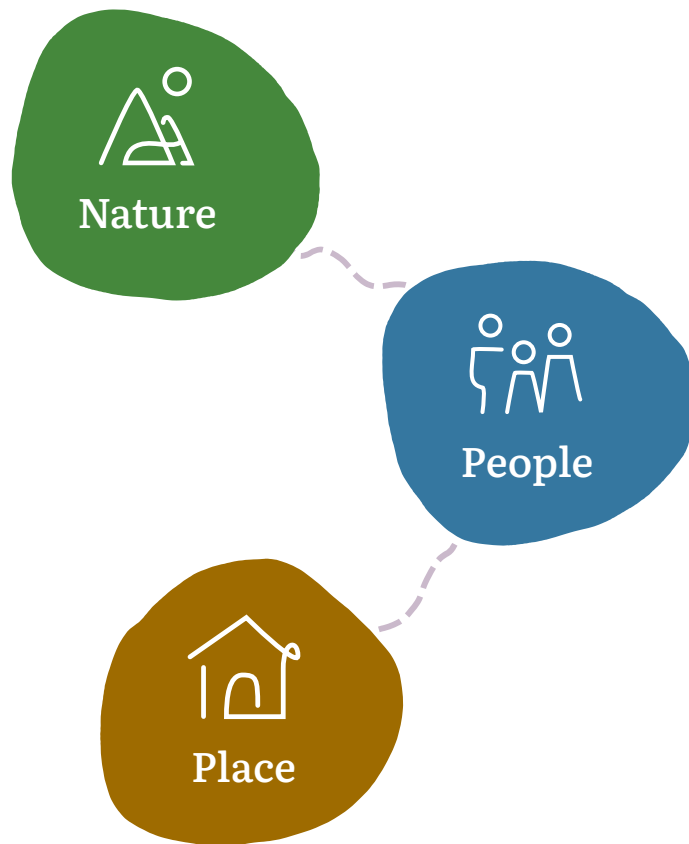


Image of a community consultation event in Braemar © Louise Fenlon



# Corporate Plan delivery





**To deliver the long-term outcomes set out in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan, we have separated the document into three main themes: Nature, People and Place.**

These are supplemented by a support theme – Corporate services and communications. The following pages show the direct and indirect delivery of the Park Authority against the National Park Partnership Plan objectives.

The key performance indicators for Nature, People and Place are set out in the National Park Partnership Plan. The Corporate key performance indicators are set out in this document on page 60.





Nature







## A1: Net zero



### OBJECTIVE

**Ensure the Cairngorms National Park Reaches net zero as soon as possible and contributes all it can to helping Scotland meet its net zero commitments.**



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Carbon audit and baseline established for the Cairngorms National Park in 2022.
- Establish date for Cairngorms National Park to be net zero and carbon negative in 2023.
- Establish a Community Climate Action Hub for the National Park.
- Cairngorms 2030 programme.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Delivering baseline report, monitor and annually report on progress towards the Cairngorms National Park achieving net zero and subsequently acting as a carbon sink.
- Lead on delivering Cairngorms 2030, empowering people to contribute to net zero ambitions.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Park Authority will work with partners including Scottish Government to establish a Community Climate Action Hub.

## A2: Woodland expansion



### OBJECTIVE

Increase the amount of woodland in the National Park to support larger, more natural woodland, expanding in places up to a natural treeline, providing connections across river catchments and around the central core of the mountains.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Expand woodland by a minimum of 7,000 ha through the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy and targeted grant schemes.
- Ensure all scales of woodland are considered and supported, including agro-forestry, and that at least 2,500 ha is achieved through natural regeneration without planting.
- Work with land managers to ensure existing woodlands are managed for a range of benefits including timber production, public access, biodiversity etc.
- Work to deliver improvements to woodland deer management planning in forest plans.
- Cairngorms 2030 programme.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver 1,000 ha of new or expanded woodland with new and innovative uses of the Forest Grant Scheme as part of Cairngorms 2030.
- Promote and administer a Woodland Challenge Fund to support land managers in the preparation of Forest Grant Scheme applications.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- The Park Authority will inspire, encourage and provide advice on woodland creation, potential forestry applications and forest plans in the National Park to landowners and Scottish Forestry in line with the National Park Partnership Plan, Cairngorms Nature and Cairngorms Forest Strategy.

## A3: Peatland restoration



### OBJECTIVE

Restore and manage peatland within the National Park to reduce carbon emissions and improve biodiversity.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Restore a minimum of 6,500 ha of peatland by 2027.
- Increase contractor and estate capacity while creating job opportunities through a peatland skills training programme.
- Develop guidance on the integration of peatland restoration and woodland expansion in the National Park.
- Explore protection options for peatland restoration from herbivores.
- Cairngorms 2030 programme.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Support and finance the restoration of peatland, with 6,500 hectares restored by 2027.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Peatland skills training programme to be developed with partners.
- Guidance on integration of peatland and woodland to be developed with partners, including how to protect from herbivores.





## A4: Deer and herbivore impacts



### OBJECTIVE

Reduce the negative impacts of red deer and other herbivores across the National Park to enable woodlands to expand, heather loss to be reversed, peatlands to recover and wider biodiversity and landscape enhancements to take place.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Work in partnership with deer management groups to produce strategic land use plans which explore a wide range of income streams (including from natural capital), reduce habitat impacts and deliver a wide range of public and private benefits.
- Explore new models of public / private partnership for maintaining stalker employment in key areas of the National Park to achieve overall deer policy objectives.
- Explore the use of measures of deer and herbivore occupancy across the National Park and investigate how those measures might be used to improve the management of herbivores and, specifically, reduce deer impacts on restoration targets.
- Cairngorms 2030 programme.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Work with deer management groups, as part of Cairngorms 2030, to deliver strategic land management plans to support a reduction in deer numbers.
- Investigate and trial models which achieve policy outcomes and retain skills and employment in the sector.
- Investigate the efficacy and practicalities of measures used in assessing impacts.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- The Park Authority will work with partners on the strategic board and working groups in implementing recommendations from the Deer Working Group.

## A5: Moorland management



### OBJECTIVE

Increase the sustainability of moorland management in the National Park to ensure greater species and structural diversity in moorland areas of the National Park.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Introduction of grouse moor licensing and other elements of the Independent Review of Grouse Moor Management within the Cairngorms National Park.
- Support knowledge exchange and sharing of good practice from the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership to other parts of the National Park.
- Develop and support estate management plans and Wildlife Estates Scotland accreditation.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership as a demonstration of sustainable moorland management delivering both public and private interests.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Contribute to the development and implementation of grouse moor licensing.
- Coordinate and support the Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group.





## A6: Gamebird management



### OBJECTIVE

Ensure that all pheasant and partridge shoots adhere to best practice and that all gamebird releases are sustainable and do not negatively impact on native biodiversity.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Establish a baseline for the number of gamebirds released in the National Park and assess their impact on native biodiversity.
- Depending on the evidence gathered, investigate the use of Park Authority powers to regulate gamebird releases and develop a regulatory approach if required.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Establish a baseline and assess impact of gamebird releases on native biodiversity. Produce report and recommendations on potential options based on a comprehensive impact assessment.

## A7: Fire management



### OBJECTIVE

Ensure that all managed burning (muirburn) follows best practice as defined by the muirburn licensing scheme, supporting habitat restoration and recovery. Reduce wildfire risk by developing an integrated wildfire management plan for the National Park.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Conduct an audit to establish an accurate baseline for the extent of deep peat in the National Park.
- Introduce and support a muirburn licencing regime in the National Park.
- Develop an integrated wildfire management plan for the National Park, including strategic firebreaks.
- Develop and agree a National Park approach on campfires and barbecues.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Develop an integrated wildfire management plan.
- Establish a baseline of deep peat.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Contribute to the development and implementation of muirburn good practice and a new licensing regime, alongside clear communication about the risk of fires and appropriate behaviour.





## A8: Farming



### OBJECTIVE

Work with farms in the National Park to reduce their carbon footprint, conserve soil carbon, encourage sustainable production and deliver increased biodiversity on in-by land.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Agree carbon and biodiversity management plans with farmers in the National Park to help guide their activities.
- Develop nature-friendly farming projects (woodland, waders, species rich grassland) as part of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan.
- Develop and establish a Regional Land Use Framework and Partnership.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Complete pilot Regional Land Use Partnership and Regional Land Use Framework.
- Lead oversight of delivery of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan.
- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 Future Farming projects, supporting farmers in achieving carbon neutrality and helping address the nature and climate crises in the context of a profitable farm business.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Coordinate and support the Cairngorms Nature partnership and Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group.
- Work with partners to support farmers and crofters through any required transitions and review support mechanisms for farming in the National Park.

## A9: Freshwater systems



### OBJECTIVE

Restore and connect rivers to thriving wetlands and floodplains as part of a wider restoration of the National Park's freshwater systems, helping mitigate the impacts of climate change.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Deliver catchment management plans.
- Develop and agree a long-term approach to water management and abstraction to help alleviate flood and drought issues.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 Climate Resilient Catchment projects, demonstrating restoration complementary to surrounding land use that benefits communities and wildlife.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support Catchment Management Partnerships and Fisheries Boards.



# A10: Ecological network



## OBJECTIVE

Connect habitats and ecosystems across all different types of land use in the National Park to create an ecological network, which will bring wider landscape, biodiversity and people benefits.



## ACTIONS BY 2027

- Develop Cairngorms Nature Networks – a spatial mapping of potential strategic areas for expanding, enhancing and increasing connectivity of habitats and species in the National Park.
- Undertake a ‘call’ for new nature restoration sites in the National Park that deliver ecological functionality and look to secure long-term funding.
- Review and develop our approach to designations in the National Park to help deliver ecological restoration and contribute to ecological networks and net zero, in line with the new Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.
- Develop NatureScot conservation advice packages.



## DIRECT DELIVERY

- Design, deliver and showcase a template for nature networks to guide habitat restoration priorities and support land use decision making.
- Develop, publicise and administer a system for encouraging land managers to engage with creating nature networks, including a call for sites.



## INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Encourage using test cases in the National Park to develop new thinking and models for the role of designated sites in meeting the nature and climate crises.

# A11: Ecological restoration



## OBJECTIVE

Improve ecosystem functionality and resilience across the National Park by increasing the area of land managed principally for ecological restoration.



## ACTIONS BY 2027

- Work with Cairngorms Connect, the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership and others to expand the area of the National Park under ecosystem restoration.
- Develop case studies demonstrating what success looks like, share knowledge, and agree an appropriate monitoring framework.



## DIRECT DELIVERY

- Define and establish a baseline on land managed principally for ecosystem restoration. Encourage more land in the National Park to be managed principally for ecosystem restoration to meet the target in the Partnership Plan.



## INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Showcase ecological restoration through landscape-scale partnerships in the National Park.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the global 30x30 biodiversity target.



Image showing regenerating woodland along the River Feshie © Scotland: The Big Picture



## A12: Cairngorms Nature Index



### OBJECTIVE

Develop a more complete understanding of the National Park's species, habitats and ecosystems, and help monitor long-term progress through a dedicated Cairngorms Nature Index.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Establish the Cairngorms Nature Index.
- Establish a Cairngorms Nature Atlas / data portal.
- Monitor changes in special landscape qualities.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Design, deliver and showcase a Cairngorms Nature Index.
- Establish a biological data portal.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support the Cairngorms Nature partnership.



Image of Genevieve Tompkins surveying pine hoverfly in the wild © Josie Slade

## A13: Species recovery



### OBJECTIVE

Ensure species thrive in the National Park, with key assemblages across the Cairngorms within the semi-natural landscape.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Deliver species recovery plans for priority species through the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan.
- Deliver a work programme to support capercaillie conservation in the Cairngorms, based on best available evidence.
- Facilitate beaver translocation in the Cairngorms National Park.
- Reduce wildlife crime in the National Park, with a specific focus on eliminating it as a constraint on raptor numbers and range occupancy in the National Park.
- Deliver the Cairngorms Raptor Project, in partnership with land managers and raptor study groups.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead on beaver reintroduction.
- Lead on a capercaillie emergency plan and long-term strategy.
- Lead on the Cairngorms Raptor Project.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Coordinate and support the Cairngorms Nature partnership and delivery of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan.
- Foster collaboration with Police Scotland, Raptor Study Groups and land managers.



# A14: Green investment



## OBJECTIVE

Use private green investment in the National Park to fund nature's recovery and share the benefits between communities, landowners, workers and wider society.



## ACTIONS BY 2027

- Trial a green finance project for peatland restoration in the National Park.
- Explore green finance opportunities at a landscape scale and for a wider range of benefits, including local community benefit.
- Identify a pipeline of projects within the National Park over the next five years.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen the role of communities and public authorities in land purchase decisions in the National Park through the next Land Reform Bill.



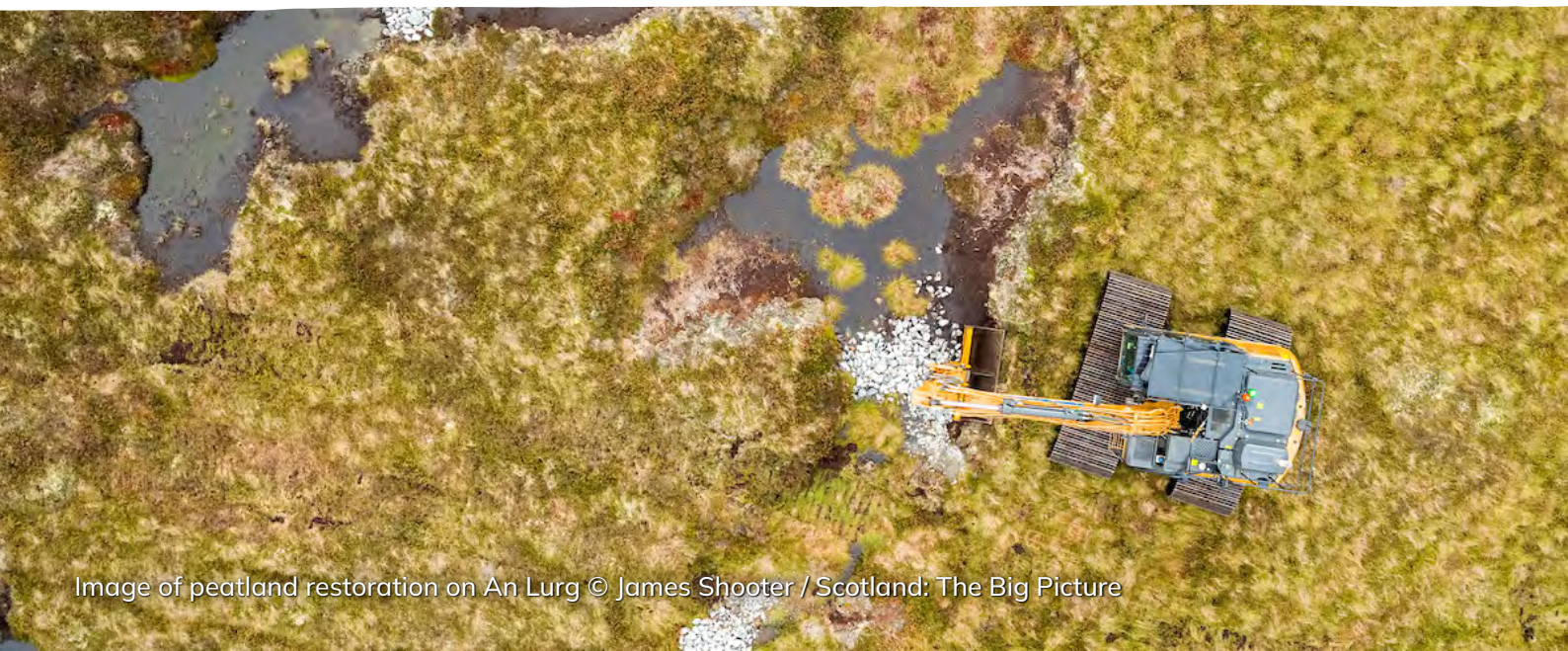
## DIRECT DELIVERY

- Pilot approaches to blended public and private finance to deliver net zero and biodiversity targets, whilst also providing long-term benefits for land managers, investors and local communities.



## INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support restoration activities at scale via landscape partnerships.







People





## B1: Working-age population



### OBJECTIVE

The proportion of young and working-age people in the National Park increases relative to the total resident population, which remains stable.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Develop and implement a Local Development Plan.
- Develop a green skills / youth apprenticeship project to help grow a strong working age population (see People objective B4 – Skills and training).
- Grow the influence and level of youth participation in the Cairngorms Youth Action Team.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver and monitor the current Local Development Plan.
- Lead development of the new Local Development Plan.
- Lead the coordination and development of the Cairngorms Youth Action Team.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote development of sites within the Local Development Plan.
- Work in partnership with local authorities to promote coordinated delivery of the Local Development Plan.
- Support partners delivering green skills youth apprenticeships or equivalent skills and training initiatives.

## B2: Wellbeing economy



### OBJECTIVE

Develop a wellbeing economy that delivers social justice in a healthy ecosystem, drawing on the special natural and cultural qualities of the Cairngorms.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Develop Cairngorms Cornerstone Indicators for a wellbeing economy to track key social and economic data and trends.
- Develop and implement a Wellbeing Economy Action Plan with targeted support and development measures for key sectors.
- Support employers to gain accreditation for eg Disability Confident, Carer Positive and the Young Person's Guarantee (see People objective B10 – Park for All).



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead the development of cornerstone indicators.
- Lead the development of a Wellbeing Economy Action Plan to integrate economic and community-led development.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote accreditation schemes that champion equalities and equal opportunities.
- Coordinate and support the Economic Steering Group.



Image of a farmers' market in Kingussie © Liam Anderstrem



## B3: Real Living Wage



### OBJECTIVE

Increase the number of Real Living Wage employers in the National Park.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Undertake a Real Living Wage audit of employers in the National Park and Promote best practice and provide regular reports.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote the development of Real Living Wages through Economic Steering Group as part of Wellbeing Economy Action Plan.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Contribute to research on the Real Living Wage and support initiatives to increase participation.



## B4: Skills and training



### OBJECTIVE

**Increase skills and training opportunities for people in the National Park to meet business needs and ensure opportunities created by the growth in green jobs can be filled by residents and under-represented groups.**



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Support skills and training programmes relevant to business needs and changes in land management within the National Park (see Nature objectives A2 to A6).
- Develop scholarships and a mentoring scheme for young people who want to study and be employed in the National Park.
- Develop targeted skills initiatives to support social enterprises (see People objective B5 – Community assets and land).



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Develop the Park Authority as an exemplar of good practice in youth training and skills – with emphasis on the Planning, Peatland, Ranger, Outdoor Access and Corporate Services teams.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Financially support targeted skills initiatives, mentoring schemes and collaborative business organisations (eg Growbiz, Countryside Learning Scotland, Cairngorms Business Partnership).
- Promote scholarships and training opportunities.



## B5: Community assets and land



### OBJECTIVE

**Increase the number of assets in community ownership or management, the number of social enterprises that generate a profit and the area of land where communities are involved in management decisions.**



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Identify opportunities for community land ownership through a refreshed set of community action plans / local place plans.
- Promote Scottish Land Commission Guidance and monitor compliance.
- Develop targeted skills initiatives to support social enterprises – as B4.
- Support communities to acquire and manage assets / land through enhanced funding and training support.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Coordinate and promote the development of local action plans / local place plans.
- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 projects – community-managed climate grants, effective community engagement etc.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote Scottish Land Commission guidance through all our partnership work.
- Coordinate and promote the development of community owned or managed assets in the National Park.

## B6: New approaches to citizen participation



## OBJECTIVE

**Strengthen the participation structures that support planning and decision-making at a local level.**



## ACTIONS BY 2027

- Cairngorms 2030 programme.



## DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 projects – community-managed climate grants, effective community engagement etc.



## INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support development of training for community participation in planning.



Image of a consultation event in Braemar © Louise Fenlon



## B7: Community-led planning and development



### OBJECTIVE

Communities have up-to-date community action plans and are supported by a community-led local development funding programme, delivering the National Park Partnership Plan.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- A refreshed programme of support for community action planning and local place plans.
- Develop and administer a new community-led development funding stream.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Coordinate and promote the development of local action plans / local place plans.
- Act as the accountable body or play another supporting role as required to underpin delivery of community-led local development in the Cairngorms.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Influence the strategic development of the national focus on (and design of) community-led local development to secure an adequate level of resourcing which continues to focus on the Cairngorms National Park as an administrative boundary.

## B8: Gaelic language and culture



### OBJECTIVE

Encourage greater use of Gaelic in the National Park



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- All public bodies implement their Gaelic language plans in full. Develop a suite of support tools for Gaelic, in collaboration with local businesses and community / cultural groups.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Develop the Gaelic Language Plan for the Park Authority.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote Gaelic, especially through work on sustainable tourism, community development and relevant heritage projects.





## B9: Mental and physical health



### OBJECTIVE

Improve the mental and physical health and wellbeing of the people of the National Park through greater connection with nature and the outdoors.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Review, update and deliver the Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Extend the health walks programme to every community in the National Park.
- Increase the number of opportunities for green volunteering.
- Make greater use of green health directories to support self-led green health activities.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead the development and delivery of Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 projects – green health etc.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support suitable initiatives through grant aid and advice.

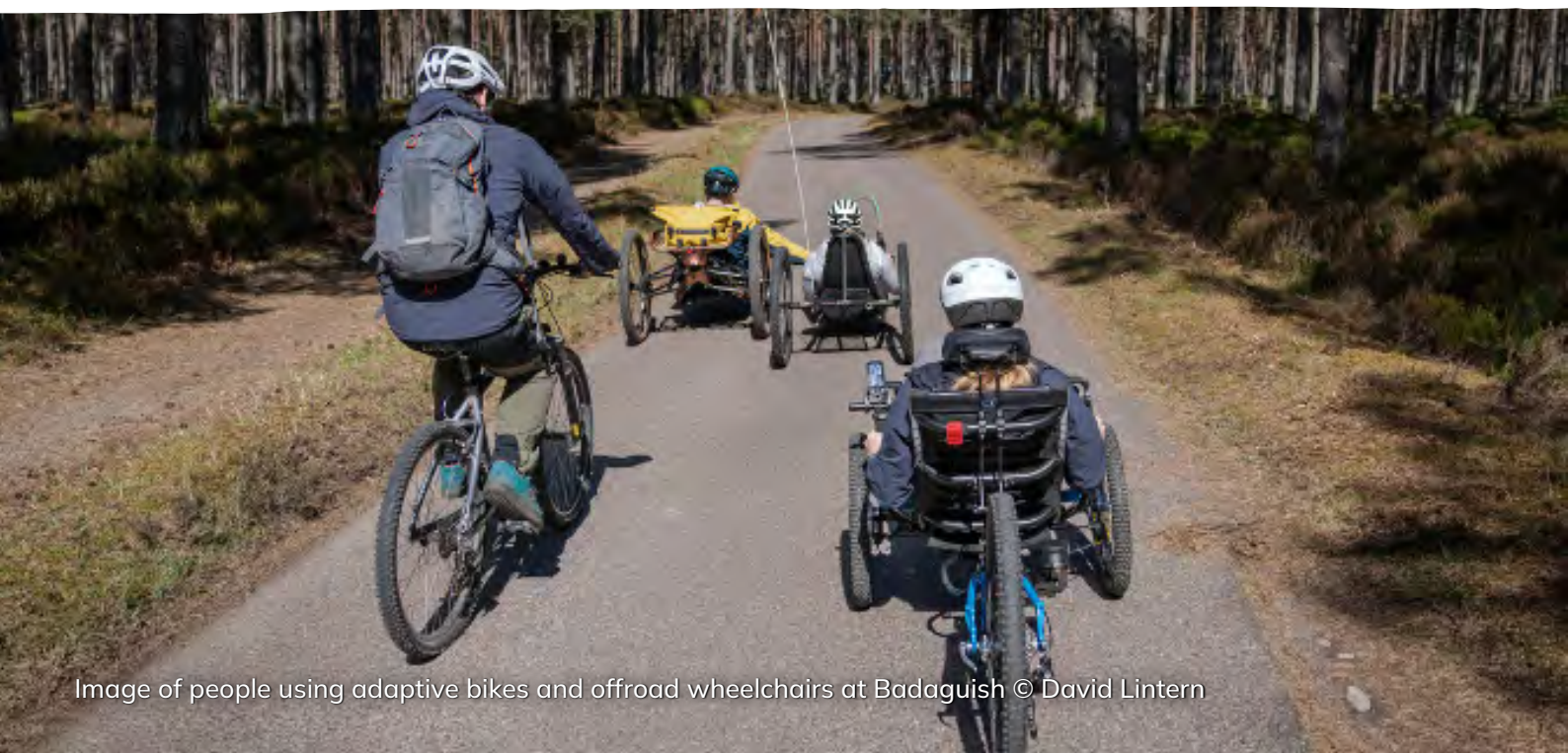


Image of people using adaptive bikes and offroad wheelchairs at Badaguish © David Lintern

# B10: A Park for All



## OBJECTIVE

There will be better opportunities for everyone to enjoy the National Park and the visitor profile will be more diverse, especially with regards to people who are disabled, from lower socio-economic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ and from minority and ethnic groups.



## ACTIONS BY 2027

- Work with the Cairngorms Equalities Advisory Panel to address systemic issues and deliver a Park for All.
- Review, update and deliver the Active Cairngorms Action Plan, infrastructure plans and Tourism Action Plan.
- Grow the role, remit and influence of the Cairngorms Youth Action Team (see People policy B1).
- Develop targeted support programmes to overcome specific barriers to enjoying the National Park, including looking at business and infrastructure capacity.
- Conduct regular surveys of residents' and visitors' values and attitudes to key issues in the National Park.
- Refresh the Park for All campaign to address barriers to participation from groups / sectors that are under-represented in the National Park.



## DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead on developing and delivering the new Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Deliver the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan and Sustainable Tourism Action Plan.
- Develop the Equalities Mainstreaming Report and Plan
- Refresh and promote the Park for All campaign.
- Lead the coordination of Equalities Advisory Panel.
- See objective B1: Working-age population, specifically the reference to the Cairngorms Youth Action Team.



## INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote suitable schemes and share information with under-represented audiences.
- Support suitable projects and initiatives through grant aid and advice.



# B11: Volunteering and outdoor learning



## OBJECTIVE

Increase the number of volunteer days spent caring for the National Park, taking an inclusive approach to volunteering recruitment. Support and deliver opportunities for outdoor learning, linked to the special qualities of the National Park.



## ACTIONS BY 2027

- Review, update and deliver the Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Develop and expand the volunteer, junior ranger and John Muir Award programmes.
- Support communities in maintaining and improving their local environment (path network, litter collection, open spaces, species and habitat work etc).



## DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead on delivering the new Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Lead on the recruitment, training and coordination of volunteers to help care for the National Park.



## INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Work in partnership with landowners, communities and third sector bodies to use volunteers as part of our efforts to care for the National Park.





Place







## C1: Access to housing



### OBJECTIVE

Ensure that there is sufficient affordable housing stock to enable people to live and work within the National Park.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Introduce short-term let control areas and short-term let licensing to increase the supply of mid-market properties available for local residents and workers.
- Secure investment in the private rented sector to provide long-term housing for workers and local people.
- Develop partnership approaches led by local businesses and community-led initiatives to address accommodation needs for workers and local people.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver and monitor the current Local Development Plan.
- Lead the development of the new Local Development Plan.
- Coordinate a community-led housing network.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote the need for investment in public / community ownership of land.
- Work with local authorities to purchase housing land through local housing strategies and strategic housing investment plans.
- Support community and business housing projects and initiatives through grant aid and advice.

## C2: New housing



### OBJECTIVE

Deliver new housing in the National Park and ensure as much as possible is secured for key workers and / or to resolve affordability issues.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Deliver at least 200 new affordable and mid-market rent homes through local authority strategic housing investment plans and affordable housing delivery programmes.
- Use the next Local Development Plan to identify further locations where more than 25% affordable housing is required and bring this up to 75% affordable overall.
- Support communities to deliver community-led housing solutions, including by making the most of powers to buy land and taking a more proactive role in management where appropriate.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver and monitor the current Local Development Plan.
- Lead the development of the new Local Development Plan.
- Coordinate a community-led housing network.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote the need for investment in public / community ownership of land.
- Work with local authorities to purchase housing land through local housing strategies and strategic housing investment plans.
- Support community and business housing projects and initiatives through grant aid and advice.
- Support the development and monitoring of mechanisms to promote housing for people living and working in the National Park.



## C3: Housing and community benefit



### OBJECTIVE

Work with communities to ensure that the majority of land allocated for development around villages and towns in the National Park is controlled by communities or public bodies to help manage long-term development needs.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Review options and funding for public sector purchase of allocated development land.
- Support communities to use all possible options to access land for the developments they need.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead the development of the new Local Development Plan.
- Coordinate a community-led housing network.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Share best practice and sources of funding with communities.
- Promote the need for investment in public / community ownership of land.
- Work with local authorities to purchase housing land through local housing strategies and strategic housing investment plans.
- Support community and business housing projects and initiatives through grant aid and advice.

Image of affordable housing in Tomintoul  
© Louise Fenlon



## C4. Village and town centres



### OBJECTIVE

Ensure villages and town centres in the National Park are thriving places where people live, shop and meet.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Review mechanisms available to the public sector to encourage regeneration of our town and village centres.
- Promote business and community-led collaborative projects to encourage local expenditure and supply chains.
- Develop a rural approach to the '20-minute neighbourhood' concept in the National Park.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Promote regeneration through the Wellbeing Economy Action Plan and community action plans.
- Lead the development of the new Local Development Plan.
- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 projects – active travel, community grant scheme.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Financially support targeted initiatives and collaborative business organisations (eg Growbiz, Countryside Learning Scotland, Cairngorms Business Partnership).
- Participate in the Scotland's Towns Partnership scheme.
- Support suitable projects and initiatives through grant aid and advice.



## C5: Visitors to the National Park



### OBJECTIVE

Work to stabilise visitor numbers in the peak season, focusing growth on quieter months and on those areas that have the infrastructure and capacity to accommodate additional visitors.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Review, update and deliver the Cairngorms Tourism Action Plan to promote areas with geographic and / or seasonal capacity in a sustainable manner.
- Develop a strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan to provide higher quality infrastructure at key visitor hotspots and for key sectors (eg camping and motorhomes).
- Collect and share high quality data on visitor numbers, behaviour, perceptions and aspirations.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan and Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan.
- Lead the development of the Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Undertake visitor surveys and collate and share visitor data.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support projects that carry on the legacy of partnerships such as Badenoch: The Storylands, Cairngorms Dark Sky Park and the SnowRoads scenic route to further develop the National Park's tourism offering.
- Use digital technology to monitor and influence visitor distribution and behaviour.
- Support suitable initiatives through grant aid and advice.

## C6: A sustainable destination



### OBJECTIVE

Secure the national Park's reputation as an international exemplar in sustainable tourism and the management of protected areas.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Submit a Tourism Action Plan to EUROPARC by 2023 and secure accreditation.
- Maintain our status as part of the Glasgow Declaration (Climate Action in Tourism).



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan and Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan.
- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 projects – active travel, community grant scheme.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support suitable initiatives through grant aid and advice.





## C7: Transport to and around the Park



### OBJECTIVE

Promote a modal shift towards sustainable and active travel in the way visitors and commuters get to, and everyone moves around, the National Park.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Work to ensure bike capacity as part of the Highland Mainline development.
- Support Sustrans-led work on promoting and developing the Lochs and Glens Way (formerly National Cycle Network 7) and National Cycle Network 195.
- Promote low-cost initiatives to access the National Park by public transport (see also People objective B10 – A Park for All).
- Promote innovative approaches based on ‘mobility as a service’, demand-responsive transport initiatives, improved connectivity of bus routes, and e-scooters, electric car schemes, car share schemes etc.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

Deliver the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan.

Deliver Cairngorms 2030 projects – active travel, community-managed climate grants scheme, Glenmore transport project.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support suitable initiatives through grant aid and advice.
- Promote the need for transport investment in the National Park.

## C8: Accessible path and cycle network



### OBJECTIVE

Improve path, cycle and outdoor access networks to give outstanding opportunities to experience the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park to the widest range of people, while minimising disturbance to vulnerable species, habitats and sites.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Develop and implement a new Cairngorms Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan.
- Review the Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Complete the extension of the Deeside Way to Braemar.
- Increase promotion of the Speyside Way and provide options for cycling.
- Consider all potential mechanisms to reduce disturbance on key species (see Nature objective A13 – Species recovery) and recreational impacts on high ground.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan.
- Develop and deliver the Active Cairngorms Action Plan, including proposals to reduce disturbance to key species and habitats.
- Lead on the planning and investment in the Speyside Way long distance route.
- Deliver Cairngorms 2030 projects – active travel, community grant scheme.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Work in partnership with Cairngorms Business Partnership to increase the promotion of – and business engagement in – the Speyside Way.
- Work to support community path groups.
- See objective B11: Volunteering and outdoor learning.



## C9: High-quality visitor experience



### OBJECTIVE

Welcome visitors and provide a high-quality experience, while managing their impacts through providing better infrastructure and high-quality ranger services.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Support the implementation of the Cairngorm Mountain masterplan.
- Support a coordinated family of ranger services across the National Park.
- Map accessible facilities, so people can identify in advance of their journey available accessibility support.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan.
- Develop and deliver the Active Cairngorms Action Plan.
- Continue to develop the Park Authority ranger service and coordinate and support a wider family of ranger services across the National Park.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Assist Highlands and Islands Enterprise in the delivery of the Cairngorm Mountain Masterplan.
- Assist Cairngorms Business Partnership to ensure effective promotion of accessible facilities to visitors.



Image of visitors at Landmark © Landmark Forest Adventure Park

## C10: Cultural heritage



### OBJECTIVE

Safeguard and promote the Park's cultural heritage and provide opportunities for everyone to experience and learn about the National Park's outstanding historic environment, history and culture.



### ACTIONS BY 2027

- Develop a Cairngorms cultural heritage network, building on the success of the Badenoch: The Storylands project, Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership and Cateran Ecomuseum.
- Provide grant funding for community heritage projects that contribute to a cultural heritage network.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Lead the development of a Cairngorms Cultural Heritage network as part of Wellbeing Economy Action Plan, with a particular focus on community involvement and interpretation.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Support suitable initiatives through grant aid and advice.
- See objective B8: Gaelic language and culture.







## Corporate services and communications



# Corporate services and communications



## D1: Planning service



### OBJECTIVE

Deliver a high-quality planning service for the National Park.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Deliver a development management service.
- Deliver the Local Development Plan.
- Carry out monitoring and enforcement activity as required.
- Strive for continued service improvement.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- See various actions in the Nature, People and Place sections.

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## D2: Partnership Plan delivery



### OBJECTIVE

Coordinate the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the National Park Partnership Plan.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Develop and implement an effective performance management framework.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Influence and advice on partners' resourcing and delivery plans as they relate to investment and activity in the Cairngorms.



## D3: Human resources



### OBJECTIVE

Be the best small public body to work for in Scotland.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Human resources and wider organisational policy and procedures are in place which reflect and, where appropriate, go beyond national policy, industry standards and staff feedback, and thereby contribute to positive overall staff survey feedback and engagement.
- Meet the unique and diverse needs of all Park Authority staff.
- Achieve our recruitment and retention targets, as well as absence and staff safety standards.
- Achieve equalities targets and delivery of equality outcomes.

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## D4: Community-led local development programmes



### OBJECTIVE

A responsive, effective accountable body for the community led local development programmes we support.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Provide services and support in line with our responsibilities as an accountable body: financial stewardship, governance, human resources and organisational support.



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Recognise the National Park as a distinct community-led local development area and achieve our funding aspirations.

## D5: Cairngorms 2030



### OBJECTIVE

Lead the successful delivery of the Cairngorms 2030 programme.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Programme delivery phase funding application approved.
- Programme milestones met.
- Programme's performance management framework shows that we are effectively delivering the agreed programme outcomes.

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## D6: Communications



### OBJECTIVE

Effectively communicate the work of the Park Authority and partners in delivering the National Park Partnership Plan.



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Develop and deliver a new Communications and Engagement Strategy, aligned to key Partnership Plan objectives.
- Coordinate communications activity across a range of channels, matched to specific audiences and our desired outcomes (including behaviour change).



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Work with partners to establish regular sharing of audience intelligence, key activities and comms learnings / successes.
- Demonstrate the value of partnership with the Park Authority and encourage others to collaborate.



## D7: Equalities, diversity and inclusion



### OBJECTIVE

**Celebrate the diversity of stakeholders that live, visit and work in the National Park through our communications activity.**



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Refresh the 'Park for All' campaign to ensure audiences from all backgrounds can enjoy everything the National Park has to offer.
- Deliver specific communications campaigns aligned to our Public Sector Equalities Duty (including LGBTQ+ communities, ethnic minorities, people in income poverty and audiences with disabilities).



### INDIRECT DELIVERY

- Provide a platform for under-represented individuals / communities of interest to share their stories.
- Provide advice and training for key partners on how to adopt a similar approach.

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## D8: Policies and procedures



### OBJECTIVE

**Implement robust, effective and efficient internal control and administration that support the delivery of our corporate objectives.**



### DIRECT DELIVERY

- Conduct a scheduled review and renewal of policies and procedures.
- Ensure external review mechanisms support policy development.
- Act on all agreed recommendations within an appropriate timeframe.
- Fully transition data management and IT services to support hybrid and cloud-based working.

# Corporate key performance indicators

Staff turnover – with a target of not more than 10% in rolling 12-month period.

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Formal case load – health and safety and staff processes, with a target of four formal cases in a rolling 12-month period.

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Complaints – number and percentage dealt with in timescale.

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Freedom of information / environmental information regulations / subject access requests – number and percentage dealt with in timescale.

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Park Authority greenhouse gas emissions – annual reduction in the Park Authority's greenhouse gas emissions based on statutory modelling.

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Finance – budget and outturns managed to +/- 2% of break-even.



# Key partnerships and mechanisms

The Park Authority is involved with, or leads, a range of partnerships across the National Park to help deliver the Partnership Plan. These partnerships are crucial to our success across the key themes of Nature, People and Place.

## Partnerships

- Active Cairngorms
- Angus Glens Partnership
- Cairngorms Connect
- Cairngorms Economic Steering Group
- Cairngorms Local Action Group Trust
- Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum
- Cairngorms Nature Partnership
- Catchment Partnerships
- Cairngorms Tourism Partnership
- Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group
- Deer Management Groups
- East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership
- Equalities Advisory Panel

## Mechanisms

- Communications and engagement
- Community led-local development
- Community support and planning
- Corporate services
- Equalities, diversity and inclusion
- Land management and conservation support
- Outdoor access management – statutory function
- Outdoor learning and outreach
- Planning service – statutory function
- Preparation of the National Park Partnership Plan – statutory function
- Ranger services and visitor infrastructure
- Sustainable tourism and visitor management
- Volunteering



# Outline budget 2023-27

The table below sets the overall budget context for the Park Authority.

Annual operational plans will direct financial and staff resources into the priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan and agreed by the Park Authority board. The figures for 2024 to 2025 onwards are indicative.

## Cairngorms National Park Authority – forward financial projections

	23-24 £000	24-25 £000	25-26 £000	26-27 £000
Cairngorms National Park Authority capital	1,100	1,200	1,100	1,100
Cairngorms Park Authority resource	7,044	7,044	7,044	7,044
Peatland restoration capital	4,143	4,042	4,307	4,593
Peatland restoration resource	614	645	676	710
Nature challenge grant	250	300	325	325
Community-led local development	330	360	400	440
Other generated income	182	185	190	200
<b>Grant and generated income</b>	<b>13,663</b>	<b>13,776</b>	<b>14,042</b>	<b>14,412</b>
Project and programme income	1,921	7,000	7,000	7,000
<b>Total funds under management</b>	<b>15,584</b>	<b>20,776</b>	<b>21,042</b>	<b>21,412</b>

continued on page 63

	23-24 £000	24-25 £000	25-26 £000	26-27 £000
Staffing and board	5,033	5,391	5,606	5,830
Running costs	945	973	1,002	1,032
Cairngorms 2030 programme contribution	285	450	450	450
Peatland restoration capital investment	4,143	4,042	4,307	4,593
Nature	1,003	976	878	787
People	607	591	531	476
Place	865	842	757	678
Corporate support and communications	796	511	511	566
<b>Total planned expenditure</b>	<b>13,677</b>	<b>13,776</b>	<b>14,042</b>	<b>14,412</b>
Project and programme expenditure	1,921	7,000	7,000	7,000
<b>Total annual projected expenditure</b>	<b>15,598</b>	<b>20,776</b>	<b>21,042</b>	<b>21,412</b>



Image of view of Glen Einich © Peter Cairns / Northshots



**Cairngorms**  
National Park

Pàirc Nàiseanta a'  
**Mhonaidh Ruaidh**

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