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## CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

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- Title:** Update and look forward
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- Purpose:** This paper provides an update and flavour on the main areas of work undertaken and planned which will deliver the key themes in the Outdoor Access Strategy by the CNPA staff and partners.

### **Action Theme 1: Improving path provision and quality**

#### **IMPLEMENTING THE CORE PATHS PLAN**

1. **Path Signs** – There are new path signs in Strathdon and Dulnain Bridge to compliment the new path leaflets. New signs are being installed shortly in Dalwhinnie.
2. **Path Projects**- Further funding has been given to the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust to implement the following projects:
  - a. Upgrading of the Speyside Way between Netherport and Cromdale. This has been completed and provides improved access for a wider range of users;
  - b. Complete the Tarland to Aboyne cycle path providing a valuable off road link between the communities;
  - c. Funding for the new Strathdon Bridge linking the Hall with Waterside and Heughead to provide a safer walking and cycling route for residents in the area to access the hall and hotel.

### **Action Theme 2: Promoting responsible outdoor access and management**

3. **Promoting the Scottish Outdoor Access Code** – the Tread Lightly concertina leaflet was introduced to the Rangers at their Gathering in early March. The first round of feedback has been very favourable and a further re-print has been done. Further resources for Rangers are being developed – a write-on information board; an A3 poster and leaflet holders, all themed with Tread Lightly and National Park branded. The next development will be encouraging take up of the leaflet by accommodation providers, Visitor Information Centres and outdoor activity businesses.
4. **Capercaillie Signage** – in the early spring we offered to produce signage for land managers to help them manage visitor pressure in areas sensitive for caper at critical times of year – April to August. Half a dozen estates took us up on the offer and we were able to incorporate their own brands alongside the Park brand on the signs. More detailed work is underway supporting Boat of Garten community and Seafeld Estates in promoting responsible access in Boat of Garten woods.

5. **Dog banners** – we recently funded the production of 5 outdoor banners for use at events such as farmer markets, dog events e.g. Top Dogs Day Out etc. Each banner is 1000mm x 700mm, with reinforced eyelets for hanging and features one of the key dog related messages from the outdoor access code. Images from the national SNH campaign were utilised to ‘continue the theme’ but the wording was tweaked to reflect Cairngorms specific issues.

### **Action Theme 3: Promoting Visitor Information about outdoor access opportunities**

6. **Community Path Leaflets** - The Strathdon, Dulnain Bridge and Angus Glens leaflets are at the printers. New leaflets for the Blair Atholl and Dalwhinnie communities will be completed by September 2012.
7. **Boat of Garten map boards-** CNPA staff have been working with the Boat of Garten community to develop three map boards for the community path network based on the community path leaflet map. Plans are under development to do a similar exercise in Kingussie and possibly Carr Bridge.

### **Action Theme 4: Promoting sustainable transport for enjoyment of the National Park**

8. **Active Travel Audits** – The report for the Aviemore Active Travel Audit is in draft form and is currently with HITRANS for review. It will be discussed at the Active Travel Group: a grouping of local authority and public sector transport planners, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May.

### **Action Theme 5: Promoting healthy lifestyles**

9. Health walks continue to flourish and possible funding from a Health Board is looking likely over the next three years.

### **Other National Park Initiatives**

10. **National Park Plan Two-** On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March the CNPA Board was updated on the analysis of consultation responses to the draft Cairngorms National Park Plan and asked for a steer on how to address the main issues raised in the development of the Plan. For the long term outcome of **People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences** the suggested approach has changed little overall. A further five year outcome to meet or exceed the expectations of visitors is proposed to give a clear focus to the development of sustainable tourism and visitor management, reflecting how important the Park is for a wide range of visitors. A new ‘Sharing the Stories’ programme of work has been proposed to bring together the work that goes into helping visitor facing staff, promoting the Park, sharing heritage with different audiences and promoting responsible behaviour.

11. **Inclusive Cairngorms** – Inclusive Cairngorms last met on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March and highlighted a desire to see the rangers trained in equalities issues and deliver a targeted range of events for excluded groups.
12. **Boat of Garten Wildlife Ranger** - Boat of Garten is looking for a part-time, seasonal ranger to help people enjoy their local woodlands more responsibly, with funding to support this initiative coming from the CNPA. This is a one season pilot which will be reviewed in the Autumn.
13. **Landscape Toolkit** - The Cairngorms National Park Landscape Toolkit is a new development. It contains landscape information for planners, advisers, decision makers and the public. It's there to help inform policy development, land management decisions and to assist those proposing to make a planning application for a development that may affect the landscape of the Cairngorms National Park. To find out more visit: <http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/landscape-toolkit/>

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*May 2012*

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