

CORPORATE PLAN REPORTING

Conservation and Land Management	
Priority 1 – Support landscape-scale conservation, specifically the expansion of native and montane woodland, peatland restoration, natural flood management and Capercaillie management	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver peatland restoration and woodland expansion targets 	<p>PEATLANDS:</p> <p>Following delays due to Covid-19, six legacy projects carried forward from 2019 started in the late summer of 2020 with two of these completing by March 2021. We were unable to attract any suitable contractors for other legacy projects or for new projects, and there remains a significant lack of contractors. Actual restoration management totalled only a 131 hectares in 2020/21 against a target of 1170 hectares. Since 2018 a total of 2172 hectares have been restored.</p> <p>Discussions with Scottish Government resulted in agreement for a three year capital funding package of £8.45m to deliver approximately 3,500 hectares of peatland restoration. An expansion of the Peatland ACTION team in the CNPA is underway with a new Programme Manager and Project Officer in post. Recruitment for another Project Officer and a Peatland GIS/Data Officer has started.</p> <p>A programme of works, covering nearly 550 hectares is planned this year as well as finalising the necessary administration to running our own peatland programme.</p> <p>Our peatland intern finished in April and mapped about 40% of the CNP, so further work is needed. We also require GIS expertise to help with using the imagery and data we will start collecting with our drone. (Both Emma and Stephen are now licensed drone operators).</p> <p>WOODLANDS: From 2017 until the last update given in December 2019, 2948 ha of woodland has been created</p>

	<p>through the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS). Since then at least 342 ha of woodland has been approved by Scottish Forestry for planting, including a 275 ha native woodland scheme at Balavil. However, further woodland expansion continues to progress in key areas through managing deer populations, with an encouraging 1451 ha of natural regeneration in the Highland conservancy approved since the last update. We are also in discussion with nine other private estates that are each looking to create at least 100 ha of new woodland, in some cases much more than this. Two of these are part of the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership. This upsurge of interest in woodland creation may lead to around 9000ha of new woodland over the 5 year period of the Park Plan – a significant increase on the current target. Uptake of the Woodland Challenge Fund in its first year (2019/20) was low, with two successful applications from Glen Banchor and Corriechullie. Since April, however, there has been noticeably greater interest, with two applications received to date and, following discussions with landowners and agents, several more likely during the current financial year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Cairngorms Nature Strategy with wider partnership 	<p>The current Cairngorms Nature Action Plan (2019 – 2024) is approaching the half way mark this summer. The Strategy Group continues to meet quarterly to monitor and oversee delivery of the three main aims of landscape-scale conservation, action for priority species and involving people. The current plan maintains commitments to the conservation of rare and endangered species, woodland expansion, peatland restoration, nature friendly farming and freshwater restoration and highlights the importance involving and engaging people, advocating the socio-economic benefits of nature and the contributions made to biodiversity by all types of land management in the Park.</p> <p>At the mid-term report stage, delivery of the Action Plan is progressing very well overall. 83% of targets and actions are considered as either complete or progressing as expected; 11% are delayed or requiring additional effort, largely due to COVID-19 restrictions during 2020/21; 4 % are considered to be at significant risk of not being delivered; and 2% are unreported. The three areas of work that are assessed as being at risk of targets not being met or work not progressing satisfactorily are: meeting the target for peatland restoration, expanding home range occupancy and breeding success of raptors, and meeting the target for capercaillie population status.</p> <p>Funding for delivery has been significantly boosted by the Biodiversity Challenge Fund. Works totalling over £200,000 have been coordinated by CNPA and partners e.g. creating wader habitat, fresh water peal mussels’ translocations, pine hoverfly breeding and aspen planting. Funding continues to be available from Scottish Government, to be delivered within</p>

	<p>one financial year on capital projects, with all landowner agreements in place. As such, CNPA is in a good position to support the development of new projects, assuming the risks that funding continues in a similar vein.</p> <p>The Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend has again been delivered on line. There were over 1000 attendees to events on the website and webinars, 835 unique users on the website, 2267 page views in total and 141 families signing up to engage with Cairngorms Nature in the future through the explorers packs and newsletter. Taking forwards the areas of work involving more people in conservation and nature in the Park, the opportunity is there to position the BIG Weekend as a flagship for a wider programme of engagement.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Capercaillie Framework 	<p>The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project was awarded a further grant from National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver the findings of the development phase, completed in March 2020. Total project funds are £2.9million, including financial contributions from CNPA, NatureScot, Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Seafeld Estates, Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland and in-kind contributions from volunteers and supporting partners. Forest managers involved in the project draw in significant amounts through the Forest Grant Scheme (FGS) and a project specific grants programme to fund smaller schemes where FGS criteria are not met, involving and supporting a wider range of land managers. Project funds are allocated to local communities via devolved allocations of up to £100,000 per community, through commissioning innovate genetics and social science research, land management contracts and directly employing gamekeepers, ecologists and project staff - all delivering capercaillie conservation across the National Park from July 2020 until July 2023.</p> <p>Capercaillie habitats are hybrid spaces where people and nature coexist. Involving people to secure wider ownership of solutions and treating conservation as a socio-economic issue as well as an ecological one is now critical to prevent extinction in Scotland. The project complements the ongoing, ecologically focussed work being done by agencies and organisations with a people focussed approach, empowering communities of place and interest to develop and take ownership for their own ideas as to how they can play their part in capercaillie conservation. The project will encompass five main strands of activity across the National Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve and create 10,000ha of capercaillie habitat; • raise awareness and understanding of the plight of capercaillie and the ways people can get involved;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help five further communities of place and interest create and deliver their own capercaillie action plans; • research the genetic diversity of capercaillie in the National Park to help inform action; • strengthen and co-ordinate current monitoring and research <p>Full details of the work to date and future plans are on the project website https://www.cairngormscapercaillie.scot</p>
Priority 2 - Ensure deer management is focused on delivering public interest priorities specifically the expansion of native woodlands and peatland restoration	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support population modelling and herbivore impact assessments 	<p>Comprehensive Habitats Impacts Assessments (HIA) implemented for Dwarf Shrub Heath habitats across CNP. Comprehensive HIA for Blanket Bog habitats implemented across all Deer Management groups (DMGs) within CNP. Data will also advise priorities for Peatland Action projects. DMGs.</p> <p>Comprehensive update of HIA assessment across West Grampian DMG (WGDMG) undertaken in 2021.</p> <p>Supporting population model development, based on regular counts, across West Grampian DMG and South Deeside North Angus DMG (SDNA DMG). Cairngorms Speyside DMG population management based on habitat performance.</p> <p>Upper Deeside and Donside DMG initiating annual counts to advise ongoing population modelling. South Grampian DMG (SGDMG) focused on population management to address issues on Caenlochan SAC in partnership with NatureScot.</p> <p>Working with DMGs to ensure cull plans for 2020/21 are delivered despite challenges associated with severe downturn in venison market due to COVID19.</p> <p>Movement towards development of Strategic Land Management Plan (SLMP) (incl. deer) agreed with WGDMG, with steering group and independent chairman appointed, working with Strath Caulaidh Ltd. Memorandum of Understanding agreed with SGDMG and SDNA DMG in support of development of SLMP as part of CNPA Heritage Horizons bid.</p> <p>Report on deer numbers and associated habitat impacts across CNP working with Strath Caulaidh Ltd received, discussed at CNPA Board and published.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with Deer Management Groups (DMGs) to deliver public interest priorities 	<p>Deer Working Group report submitted to SG and SG have published their response including acceptance of actions directly associated with CNP.</p> <p>Working with NatureScot, South Deeside North Angus DMG and South Grampian DMG regarding cull planning to address Caenlochan SAC impacts.</p> <p>New DMG plans expected to reflect Climate Change Emergency and Biodiversity Loss</p>

Priority 3 - Support sustainable moorland management to deliver greater habitat diversity and good management practice	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver with estates the work programme of the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership (ECMP) 	<p>Work Programme covering 9 individual ECMP project topics continues.</p> <p># Wader transect monitoring continuing for a fourth year in spring 2021. Habitat improvements for waders have been or will be implemented on all ECMP estates during 2020 and 2021, funded by Biodiversity Challenge Fund 2, Peesie Project, or the estates themselves.</p> <p># Peatland Restoration projects completed during Autumn 2020 on Balmoral, Invercauld, Mar. Projects planned for 2021 on Mar Lodge with additional potential projects identified on Glenlivet & Mar. New projects being developed for Glenavon & Delnadamph.</p> <p># Scrub expansion projects for Delnadamph and Mar Lodge to be carried out in 2021. New native woodland proposals for Balmoral, Invercauld and Glenavon are being considered.</p> <p># Collaborative raptor monitoring involving estate staff, Raptor Study Groups and consultants continuing for third year in 2021, including early season vantage observation surveys. The discovery of a poisoned golden eagle on Invercauld estate in Spring 2021 has resulted in that estate leaving the ECMP.</p> <p># Discussion around interpretation and implementation of muirburn maps is on-going in relation to potential licencing and definition of peatland. ECMP contributing to Muirburn Code working group.</p> <p># Implementation of mountain hare monitoring continues with results contributed to GWCT national dataset.</p> <p># Engaging People: ECMP coverage in Ballater-based interpretation facility due to be completed early summer 2021.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group 	<p>Cairngorms Uplands Advisory group (CUAG) last met on 4th May 2021. We had helpful discussions on deer management, the Rural Land Use Partnership process, the upcoming National Park Partnership Plan consultation, current work to assess the potential positive/negative impacts of beaver should they ever move into the National Park and finally on the use of middens and 'stink pits'.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate raptor persecution and develop wildlife tourism project around raptors 	<p>Work with Police Scotland and NatureScot ongoing to try and reduce incidents of raptor crime in the Park. Plan to put sat tags (which will identify precise point of mortality) on 3 eagle chicks summer 2021. Ongoing discussion re how best to take forward broader raptor work in the Park including improved monitoring, conservation projects and ways to shift the 'culture' around raptors in parts of the Park, including the development of raptor tourism projects.</p>

Visitor Experience	
Priority 1 - Continue to ensure visitor infrastructure meets the expectations of visitors to the National Park and help deliver a sustainable tourism economy	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish Speyside Way extension, the Mountains and the People Programme and start Deeside Way extension 	<p>Speyside Way Extension – The Speyside Way extension has been constructed and is being well used. The Newtonmore ‘sculpture’ start/finish location is installed with a formal opening being planned for Sept 2021. Path signage is being installed with further improvements at Tromie and Insh. Grantown and Kincaig communities are seeking funding for improvements in their communities. Cairngorms Business Association and MoraySpeyside have secured funding to promote the route going forward.</p> <p>Deeside Way – Braemar to Invercauld Bridge planning consent approved with funding being investigated.</p> <p>Mountains & People - The 5 year project was completed in Jan 2021, delayed by Covid, but upgrading 51.8 km of mountain path in Cairngorms out of a five year target of 53 km. Further work with Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) is ongoing to agree how we best support the maintenance of these paths and the volunteers that the project trained in path maintenance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Tourism Action Plan and develop and deliver with partners a Visitor Giving scheme 	<p>Tourism Action Plan – Cairngorms Tourism Partnership (CTP) has met several times to monitor delivery of the Action Plan which underpins the Park’s status with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. CNPA led on a mid-term review of the Action Plan, which was considered by CNPA Board in March 2021. We are in discussions with Europarc about extending the current five year arrangement until 2022 so that development of the next Action Plan follows on from approval of the National Park Partnership Plan.</p> <p>A Tourism Emergency Response Group has met regularly, along with a Management for Visitors Group to plan and manage for Covid related work.</p> <p>Voluntary Giving – CNPA Board agreed the principles of this work June 2018 & Cairngorms Trust launched the arrangements in May 2019. The Trust is now working with a range of businesses across the Park and a Partnership Group is in place (chaired by Brian Woods with Pete Crane representing CNPA) to advise on development of the scheme and the projects to be funded.</p> <p>Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) - CNPA successfully secured funding for two projects on National Nature Reserves at Glenmore (multiuse tarmac path) and Muir of Dinnet (car parking, toilet upgrade and sewage disposal) with both projects now complete. Aberdeenshire Council has secured funding for improvements to Glenshee public toilets (Summer 2021) and CNPA has bid for Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan funding to develop detailed,</p>

	approved and costed plans for improving visitor infrastructure at key visitor destinations around the National Park. Expression of Interest are also being invited for CNPA capital funding as part of the visitor infrastructure improvement programme that fits with the approved visitor management plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress with delivery of Cairngorm/Glenmore Strategy 	<p>Highland Council and CNPA have funded further roadside improvements from Beach Car Park along Loch Morlich with improvements scheduled for summer 2021.</p> <p>The Cairngorm Mountain Masterplan has been launched and repair work on the funicular railway is underway. CairnGorm Mountain has been granted planning consent for a campervan site at Coire Ciste and is planning improvements to visitor interpretation at the mountain.</p> <p>The greater number of visitors using of Glenmore and Cairngorm post COVID19 lockdown indicates the need for partners to review the current Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy and agree a clear partnership action plan going forward.</p>
Priority 2 - Increase physical activity in both residents and visitors and support delivery of Scotland's Natural Health Service	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver Active Cairngorms with Active Aviemore and Health Walks as flagship projects 	<p>Active Aviemore – Highland Council, Hitrans, Sustrans, NHS Highland are developing an active travel link to the new Aviemore Hospital and Transport Scotland are designing a Non-Motorised User (NMU) link from Aviemore to Carrbridge. The main multi use infrastructure in Aviemore will form part of the Heritage Horizons bid. Dulnain Bridge & Kingussie communities have secured Sustrans funding to improve active travel - the former for detailed designs for an NMU link to Grantown-on-Spey. Laggan community has secured funds for stage one design.</p> <p>Active travel is a significant part of the Heritage Horizons Lottery Bid and if successful will support the delivery of active travel in many more communities. Sustrans are supporting a 3 year active travel post in the National Park to take forward this work.</p> <p>16 Health Walk groups within the National Park are slowly starting to re-open Health Walks as we come out of Lockdown</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and deliver volunteering programme and specifically Volunteer Rangers 	<p>38 Volunteer Rangers have now been trained and are supporting the work of partners cross CNP as part of our ongoing project supported by Cairngorms LEADER. After being 'on hold' due to Covid the volunteers started to return to the role in May 2021.</p>
Priority 3 - Create a 'Park for All' by encouraging people from all backgrounds to come and recreate, learn in or visit the National Park	

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support and promote the John Muir Award and Junior Ranger programme 	<p>In 2020 a total of 972 John Muir Awards were completed, considerably down on normal due to Covid-19 restrictions. There are currently in May 2021 2278 people registered as undertaking a John Muir Award. Activity is slowly getting back to normal as restrictions ease.</p> <p>There has been no Junior Ranger activity in 2020 or to date in 2021, it is hoped to restart some activity later this year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Inclusive Cairngorms and partners to reduce barriers and encourage participation. 	<p>CNPA Equality Advisory Panel has met 6 times since its inception in October 2021 and has received and input to a range of CNPA programmes and is engaged in supporting the development of Equality Outcomes for the next 3 years. The CNPA has committed to the Backbone Symposium which aims at improving representation of BAME groups within the sector. Events are planned in June and September with a view to developing an action plan across the sector.</p> <p>Backbone are being supported to work with some 100 Syrian refugees based in and around Inverness encouraging them to visit and enjoy the National Park while learning how to repeat and share these experiences with others but this work is now on hold with COVID19.</p>

Rural Development	
Priority 1 - Support delivery of housing for local needs through an efficient and effective planning service	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Local Development Plan 2020 	<p>Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 adopted by CNPA Board on 26 March 2021.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community-led housing in the National Park 	<p>5 communities are actively looking to develop community led housing projects.</p> <p>Dulnain Bridge – Have secured funding through Highland Council to assess the feasibility of project and develop associated business plan as well as funding from the Scottish Rural Housing Fund and the support of Seafeld Estate. Consultancy work to be undertaken by Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust (HSCHT)</p> <p>Braemar –Project to build 15 affordable houses for rent has progressed significantly. Main application to the Rural Housing Fund was submitted in February 2020. Braemar Community Limited has also secured loan funding from CAF Venturesome which now enables the project to go out to tender for the design stage. Land acquisition is also progressing with Heads of Terms for option agreed.</p>

	<p>Ballater – Working group established and were planning to update housing needs demands survey while investigating potential sites and options available. Work has been delayed by COVID19.</p> <p>Boat of Garten – Have identified a site for 2 x 2 bed bungalows and HSCHT undertaken feasibility study. Planning application for planning permission in principle called in by CNPA in May 2021.</p> <p>Tomintoul – Funding has been secured by Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT) from Scottish Land Fund to buy the Old School site. Main application to the Rural Housing Fund for construction of 12 properties has been submitted and CNPA Planning Committee approved planning application for 12 houses subject to conditions and payment of a developer contribution for demand-responsive transport.</p>
Priority 2 - Support communities, specifically focussing on the most fragile, to deliver their agendas for change	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude Tomintoul/Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, develop new focus area in Badenoch and help deliver Great Place Scheme 	<p>The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership project completed in February 2021, with the final report submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2021. The legacy projects are now underway.</p> <p>Badenoch Great Place Scheme.</p> <p>The Badenoch Great Place Project was set up with the vision that by the end of the project, Badenoch would be renowned as a place within the Cairngorms National Park with a strong character and identity based on its distinctive cultural heritage. It is hoped to encourage people to come to the area, stay a while and learn more about this less well known part of the Cairngorms National Park. The project is now entering its final stages and alongside delivering a range of events and activities to promote and celebrate the heritage of the area, much work has been ongoing behind the scenes to develop a tourism offering that draws on the tangible and intangible heritage of the area and presents it in modern and innovative ways. This will be showcased through the Badenoch Storylands App which is due to go live in mid June 21. It will be an “Area Destination” App, showcasing the heritage of the area and bringing it alive for visitors in modern innovative ways. As well as an interactive map, the App will have the series of suggested walking, cycling and driving routes, augmented by virtual reality models, storytelling and more general visitor information. Much of 2020 was spent developing the content that will populate the App and a project website www.badenochstorylands.com which launched in 2020. The last few months will see the many strands brought together through a variety of engagement and skills building activities and groundwork planning for the future. The Project will culminate in September with the Badenoch Heritage Festival 2021 and Conference which will showcase the interest, passion and excitement that has been generated over the</p>

	past three years and should raise the profile of Badenoch in the years to come.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community organisations to deliver projects that help deliver NPPP 	<p>Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey (VABS) - Have continued to be at the forefront of the community response to COVID in Badenoch and Strathspey, supported by the CNPA's Rural Development and Communities Manager. They secured and administered over £100k of COVID support funding for area and provided significant support to a myriad of community-led groups and organisations. They are now refocusing on their core work of supporting a huge range of community groups with governance, finance and project support whilst also being a key partner in the Badenoch Great Places Project, sitting on the Board, Team and employing the Project Officer. VABS & CNPA now looking at how to restart & refresh the programme of Community Action Planning which has been in abeyance since COVID started.</p> <p>Marr Area Partnership (MAP) – Has continued to provide a vital COVID community support network on Deeside working closely with Aberdeenshire council to meet local needs including managing an Aberdeenshire Council support fund for the Marr area communities. Aberdeenshire council is withdrawing its (substantial) funding to all its area partnerships over the next 3 years. MAP are considering its future remit and role in the context of this.</p> <p>Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust – The Trust was the lead COVID community response focal point in the area, running a community response line, operating a community larder and supporting those in need. Having been forced to close both its income generating businesses (hostel and Discovery Centre) they were successful in obtaining support grants that have carried them through the lockdown periods. They are now focused on reopening and getting both businesses up and running again. Having secured funding from the Scottish Land Fund they took ownership of the Old School site in late 2020, and demolished the old buildings in early 2021. After a successful bid to the Rural Housing Fund they have been able to engage a contractor on a design and build and have just secured planning permission approval for the site. Build work is expected to commence on 12 affordable homes this summer (8 for rent, 4 to sell).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully conclude LEADER programme and consider future funding for Community Led Local Development 	<p>The Cairngorms Trust now has approved 39 projects in the programme to date, with a total value of now standing at £3.991 million at 30 April 2021 and LEADER grants totalling £2.452 million within that total. Some £1.276 million of the project value supports Economic Development and Farm Diversification projects.</p> <p>The Trust has now fully committed all project funding allocations, with a small number of projects still open and coming to a conclusion by the revised deadline for Programme closure of December 2021.</p> <p>The Director of Corporate Services has played a lead role on behalf of the LEADER Network on the future of</p>

	Community Led Local Development (CLLD), representing the network throughout 2020/21 on Scottish Ministers' Rural Economy Working Group. An options paper on the future of CLLD has now been circulated, with £3 million available nationally in the current year to take forward work on determining the future shape of CLLD in Scotland.
Priority 3 - Work closely with the business community and partners to support a sustainable Park economy	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and help deliver Economic Strategy for the Park with partners 	<p>The CNPA approved Economic Action Plan for the National Park in December 2019 and approved a Green Recovery Plan for the National Park in response to the impacts of COVID19 on the economy in June 2020. The CNPA ran a Green Recovery Fund in 2020 and is in the process of assessing applications for its 2021 Green Recovery Fund in May 2021. The Growbiz business enterprise support programme has been delivered successfully and had further funding confirmed until the end of October 2021. The programme has three strands: 1:1 Business Support (over 140 businesses supported last year in 232 1:1 sessions, totalling over 400 hours - 63 of these sessions were with new or pre-start-up businesses.), Women's Enterprise Network and a Business Mentoring Training Programme. The Smart Village project has also concluded: Braemar's new community portal is now live while Grantown created new aerial videography footage to enhance their website. The Cairngorms Economic Steering Group met in May with special meeting with Centre for Local Economic Strategies and Wellbeing Economy Alliance to look at Community Wealth Building in anticipation a successful Heritage Horizons bid outcome in June.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure impacts of A9 dualling are understood and addressed where appropriate by the Park Authority 	<p>The CNPA withdrew an objection to the A9 Dalraddy to Slochd section in March 2020, following a commitment from Transport Scotland to fund the development of an alternative non-motorised user route to link Aviemore and Carrbridge. Planning for that project is being led by Transport Scotland with the support of CNPA and Highland Council.</p>

Corporate Services

Priority 1 - Implement the Organisational Development Strategy and embed the organisational and cultural improvements to make the CNPA the best small public body in Scotland

Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement, review and refresh Organisational Development Strategy as part of continual improvement work. 	<p>Over the last 12 months, the OD strategy has focussed on supporting staff through the pandemic. Going forward, an OD programme Board has now been established:</p> <p>To coordinate final implementation of current Organisational Development Strategy and the migration of the organisation from business continuity operations to “new normal” operations;</p> <p>To coordinate the development of revised Organisational Development Strategy during 2022/23 on the back of the staff survey in Autumn 2021;</p> <p>To coordinate the delivery of the Organisational Development Strategy and the work associated with the architecture needed for the organisation to deliver (IT, data management etc.)</p> <p>Best Companies survey has been contracted for October 2021 in keeping with our 2 yearly cycle for this exercise, which will feed in to evolving future ODS.</p> <p>CNPA was recognised this year as one of the Top 10 Flexible Organisations in Scotland.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support effective staff consultation processes 	<p>Staff Consultative Forum (SCF) continues to work effectively, with support of 2 board members and good engagement with the trade union. The SCF involved engagement with staff around: - the Business Continuity Plan and guidance around staff accessing the office; Lockdown Survey results and future working; the Management Restructure and the Voluntary Exit Scheme; 2021/22 pay award.</p> <p>Over the course of the COVID19 business continuity arrangements, we have also successfully deployed a number of staff drop-in sessions, supporting effective two-way communications with all staff on the evolution of the Authority’s operations and our underpinning policy approaches.</p>
Priority 2 - Ensure that the office extension, existing accommodation and ICT facilities are ‘fit for purpose’ and help to deliver the ODS	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete extension project 	<p>Extension completed on budget in August 2018, and staff have now settled well in the building. Rental for the extension has now commenced on basis of expected values.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement GIS Strategy 	<p>We have agreed and initiated a collaboration with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs GIS Team to drive forward the GIS Strategy within Cairngorms NPA over the course of 2021/22. Cairngorms NPA will support additional staff resource in the LLTNPA team, given the Authority access to the full team resources, together with the existing experience and skills of the team, rather than a reliance on a single GIS post within the organisation. This project will tie in with the GIS focus</p>

	developing in the Cairngorms Peatland Programme team, mentioned previously in this update.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement cyber security framework and wider IT development 	Cyber Security Plus Accreditation has now been achieved and follow up work is ongoing. Following delays over the period of the COVID Business Continuity Plan period, we are now in the process of establishing our updated IT and Digital Strategy together with an underpinning action plan. This work ties closely into the future evolution of the Organisational Development Strategy updated above.
Priority 3 - Deliver ongoing service improvement, including appropriate shared service development and operation, to the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver corporate support to Scottish Land Commission (SLC), and charitable and community organisations. 	<p>The authority has agreed to SLC's request to extend the shared service arrangements provided by Cairngorms NPA for a further two years. We continue to support their pay remit submissions and wider organisational development; staff consultation and HR advisory requirements.</p> <p>The Authority continues to play a role supporting a wide range of charitable and community organisations formally, through membership of Boards, Committees and groups, and informally through provision of advice and grant support.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accommodation and facilities support to NPPP delivery partners 	<p>While there has been a general suspension of office and facilities use over the COVID BCP period, the Authority has deployed pool cars and other facilities in support of community responses to the pandemic.</p> <p>In planning around the reopening of our offices, we are conscious that many organisations are rethinking their staff deployment and office needs, as are we. We will be involved in discussions with the aim of facilitating partners and their staff continuing to play their priority roles in NPPP delivery, making flexible use of the Authority's facilities where possible.</p>
Priority 4 - Promote and support the highest standards of governance and management, including equalities actions, within the Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement effective and efficient management and control systems. 	Our internal and external audit review processes continue to confirm the effectiveness and efficiency of our management and control systems. Further information on the work of audit over the course of the year can be found in the Audit and Risk Committee's report to the Board, presented on 28 May 2021. Overall, we continue to receive positive feedback from internal audit on our control environment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Greening 	Greening Policy adopted during Climate change week in October 2018. Youth Development Strategy adopted winter

Strategy and deliver Youth Development Strategy	2017, and implemented on an on-going basis: - IT apprentice joined in August 2018, and progressed exceptionally well. The IT Apprentice left at the end of August 2020 to pursue a degree course in IT at Aberdeen University, and a new 2-year IT Apprentice joined the Authority on 14th September. We have supported a Foundation Apprentice since September for a one day/week for the next year (during term-time), supporting our Business Administration Services. In addition, we have supported 2 Internships over the last year (HR Intern and Gaelic Internships) on a minimum of 4-month contract and have just recruited an admin intern through Inclusion Scotland. We have recruited 4 Trainee Rangers on the government funded Kickstart Scheme.
Communications	
Priority 1 - Deliver the Communication and Engagement Strategy and increase awareness, engagement and involvement with the Park	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Communications & Social Media 	<p>A Digital Communications strategy is being implemented to support the Communications & Engagement Strategy, with specific targets to increase awareness through digital communications by achieving 400,000 website sessions and 50,000 social media followers by 2022. At the end of 2020 we reached 328,579 website sessions, a 7% increase from 2019 and an 11% increase in overall users (this despite the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on visitation to the Park area).</p> <p>During 2020 our social media channels reached 48,159 followers, a 19% increase on the previous year with a combined reach of nearly 7.5 million, a 15% increase over 2019. More encouraging still, user engagement (i.e. those that liked, shared or viewed content) across all platforms rose by 98% to over 700,000.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns: Cairngorms Nature, Active Cairngorms & 'Make it Yours' 	<p>Cairngorms Nature: As in 2020, the Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend has remained a largely online-only event in 2021, taking place from 14-16 May 2021. However, in addition to the range of webinars, films, blogs and drop-in sessions, this year we are giving away up to 200 Cairngorms Nature Explorer activity packs. Crammed full of nature watching ideas to do in your local area, the pack also includes recycled pencils, notepad, and a bug box to get nature discoveries under way. The Cairngorms Nature Art Competition is also back by popular demand, open to all primary aged children. We are also venturing into the world of live webinars, with events hosted by SE LINK and Saving Wildcats.</p> <p>The event will reach people who may be unable to physically join in with the BIG Weekend, giving them the opportunity to immerse themselves in our fantastic wildlife here in the Cairngorms. It will be interesting to see what take-up is like for events this year, with a certain amount of 'digital fatigue' – coupled with the easing of lockdown restrictions – potentially</p>

impacting on numbers, but we remain hopeful of a positive outcome. All events will be available at www.cairngormsnaturebigweekend.com

Active Cairngorms: following the First Minister's announcement of a phased approach to easing lockdown restrictions, we have been working with partners at a local and national level to coordinate our approach to visitor comms. We fed into two national campaigns – led by VisitScotland and NatureScot – that set the overall framework for the Easter and summer season; have chaired a specific group on comms for motorhomes and campervans; and have fed into other groups on wildfires, littering and SOAC. Our plans have been guided by a combination of the Scotland-wide framework, lessons learnt from last year including the #CairngormsTogether framework, and feedback from key stakeholders. We are working closely with colleagues in CBP, VisitAberdeenshire, FLS etc to develop a suite of resources that can be used by all partners to ensure consistency of messaging, including digitised community path guides, traffic light system for attractions / businesses that are open, simple SOAC messaging, and guides to some of the less busy parts of the Park that still have capacity to welcome larger numbers of visitors.

Due to Covid-19, ranger-led events and our health walks were cancelled, and the Wee Walks Week planned for September 2020 was postponed until September 2021. During lockdown CNPA promoted Scottish Government health messages and actively encourage people to take their daily exercise. As restrictions have begun to lift, the focus has shifted to promoting responsible access through our media relations, social media and the production of educational resources including infographics. We have also promoted our 17 community path leaflets to encourage residents to use the resources on their doorstep and encourage visitors to support local businesses in the communities. Our Information and advice on COVID19 page has been completely updated to include up to date information on car parks, toilets and camping services.

'Make it Yours' (MIY): In the absence of the usual in-person sessions with visitor-facing staff across the Park, we are developing a video training resource c. 10 mins in length, designed to provide bitesize information for businesses and their employees. Our aim is that, as lockdown measures are eased, the video will provide visitor-facing staff with information about the National Park and help them understand a bit more about what visitors are looking for from their visit (based on visitor survey data etc.)

	<p>At the start of the Covid-19 lockdown the CNPA set up a Cairngorms Tourism Emergency Response Group, chaired by Janet Hunter. The group's purpose is to provide consistent and comprehensive analysis of the implications of Covid-19 for tourism, to coordinate communications with the tourism industry, ensure close working between key agencies and the private sector, to gather, share, facilitate, interpret and disseminate information, and agree relevant actions and delivery plans. Membership consists of; CNPA, Cairngorms Business Partnership, VisitAberdeenshire, MoraySpeyside, VisitScotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise.</p> <p>Updates have been sent to businesses and Local Information Centres in and around the Park to provide advice on the latest Scottish Government Guidelines through the MIY network of 180 Brand Charter Holders. Work is ongoing to collate post Covid-19 research results to inform how we can best prepare for tourism during 2021. CNPA is also supporting a GrowBiz initiative to develop 3 Smart Village projects in the National Park - in Badenoch, Grantown-on-Spey and Deeside. This will involve the development of a web portal for each of the 'villages' and is a good opportunity to promote the usage of the free 'Make it Yours' resources – especially the images and videos.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver stakeholder engagement & events 	<p>Throughout the pandemic, regular updates on how the CNPA and its partners are responding to the emergency situation have been shared with all interested stakeholders. A Communications Grid continues to be used to help coordinate our communication activities across the organisation, and to deliver stronger and more consistent messages about the work of the Park and role of the Park Authority. The Communications Grid identifies a core theme and key messages for each month of the year alongside the communication activities: digital communications, traditional media, stakeholder communications and events and is managed by the Management Team and Organisational Management Group.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Communications: publications, consultations, media & issues management, Gaelic Language Plan 	<p>In order to gather views from a range of key stakeholders and ensure the next National Park Partnership Plan reflects the priorities of those individuals and organisations most critical to its success, we plan to carry out both an informal and formal consultation between June and December of 2021. The informal consultation will be a balance of web-based resources (promoted through social media, our website and partner comms channels) and targeted face-to-face engagement, once social distancing guidelines allow this at an appropriate scale. We are trialling use of a web-based consultation platform called Commonplace as the main hosting location, but as and when conditions allow, we will be able to feed in responses from focussed interview and survey work alongside this.</p> <p>Our current Gaelic Language Plan is due to run until June 2022; however, conversations have taken place with Bòrd na Gàidhlig about extending this agreement for another year, as our current arrangements only cover a four year period (versus the standard five year term). An extension would enable us to bring the Gaelic plan in line with the creation of</p>

	our corporate plan, and would fit with the timetable for renewal of the National Gaelic Language Plan, which runs from 2018 to 2023. We provided an update to the Bòrd in the spring and will do so again in early summer, including details of a brand new Heritage Interpretation Toolkit and Shinty Trail online resource.
Priority 2 - Ensure high quality internal communications that help to deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan	
Key Work Areas	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Development Strategy 	<p>Since the CNPA offices have been closed due to COVID19 a staff e-bulletin has gone out to keep everyone informed of work being carried out across the organisation. This was done weekly but more recently has moved to two-weekly. Team meetings are held regularly by most teams and all staff meetings have continued using video conferencing. Staff virtual ‘drop-in’ sessions with HR and Corporate Services as well as two staff surveys have collected staff views on working from home during lockdown and proposals for lifting restrictions as staff start to work back in the office and out on site. Further drop in sessions are scheduled as we begin to plan for an office return “post-Covid”,</p> <p>Whilst over the last 12 months the OD strategy has focussed on supporting staff through the pandemic, going forward, an OD programme Board has now been established to coordinate final implementation of current Organisational Development Strategy and the migration of the organisation from business continuity operations to “new normal” operations; to coordinate the development of revised Organisational Development Strategy during 2022/23 on the back of the staff survey in Autumn 2021; to coordinate the delivery of the Organisational Development Strategy and the work associated with the architecture needed for the organisation to deliver (IT, data management etc.).</p> <p>Best Companies survey has been contracted for October 2021, which will feed in to evolving ODS.</p> <p>CNPA was recognised this year as one of the Top 10 Flexible Organisations in Scotland.</p>