

**CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

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Purpose

This paper presents an update of current communications activity, plus outlines a number of key priorities for the next quarter. It complements recent board updates on our overall communications approach and findings from the formal NPPP4 consultation.

Recommendations

The Governance Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the breadth of work carried out by the Comms team in the past three months and discuss the identified priorities for Q4 of 2022.**

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I. Key comms deliverables / achievements

<p>a. Websites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The website redevelopment project has geared up significantly, with a range of stakeholder workshops taking place with Park residents, local businesses and the Equalities Advisory Panel (further workshops are planned with land managers and visitors). We are also preparing an online survey to gather views of existing users of the site, and our agency partners are conducting a full review of both our site and a number of partners' (eg VisitCairngorms.com) to better chart how visitors and data move between them, identifying any pinch points. At this stage, it seems likely that the new site will be delivered in two parts: an easy to search 'administrative' site to house functions such as our planning portal, meetings, outdoor access information, publications etc; and a 'shop window' site designed to showcase the work taking place to deliver the Partnership Plan.• Following the completion of a Digital Accessibility Centre (DAC) audit, we have now updated cairngorms.co.uk so that it complies to the AA standard under the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1). This work has included changing the colour of key navigation elements to make them more legible, providing text alternatives to maps and graphics, amending multiple downloadable pdfs, and making all elements controllable by keyboard.• DAC have also delivered two bespoke training sessions for staff across the organisation on how to create content, design websites and edit documents to make them accessible to the widest audience possible. The sessions have also been recorded and will be a useful resource for staff to draw upon in the future.• A new 'mega-menu' has been added to the homepage of the site to make it easier for visitors to find what they are looking for. This includes new highlight windows which signpost users to newly updated content, e.g. latest news or major projects.• A new community-owned assets map was developed to showcase over 90 assets currently owned or managed by community interest organisations. Alongside this we launched the Cairngorms Creative Directory, spotlighting more than 80 creatives working in the Park featuring poets, painters, sculptors and storytellers. This is the first part of the Community Arts and Culture element of Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030.• We are developing a dedicated microsite for the Partnership Plan, providing an easy-to-navigate and updatable version of the document for us to keep website visitors in-the-loop on developments over the next five years. The site will be influenced by both the branding and web development exercises and is slated to go live around the Partnership Plan launch on 23 August.• A new Commonplace site is in the process of being finalised for Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030, focusing (at least initially)
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	<p>on the active travel side of the programme. The site features a bespoke heatmap for residents and visitors to the Park to tell us what improvements are required to make it easier, safer and more enjoyable to get around by foot, bike or wheelchair. It is due to launch in early August and will be promoted to contributors to the NPPP4 consultation from last year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team are exploring a variety of options for improving the setup of live streamed CNPA meetings. This will impact not only our approach in the board room itself, but also other meeting rooms and any potential offsite board / planning meetings we deliver in future. Four local suppliers have conducted site visits and we are currently appraising these options before taking forward work in the latter part of the year.
<p>b. Social media and blogs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After five years with the Park Authority, Sian Jamieson left CNPA at the end of May. Sian made a huge contribution to the organisation over her time, growing our social media channels by 64% and transforming our approach to digital content creation. After a very competitive interview process, we are delighted that Brenna Jessie will be joining us on 19 September as Sian's replacement. Brenna joins us from Rape Crisis Scotland, where she has been managing the participation and comms team (with a particular focus on digital channels), and previously held similar roles at Scottish Women's Aid and a couple of other public and third sector organisations. • We launched our first digital Managing for Visitors advertising campaign in June, targeting those who do not typically follow our existing channels. Whilst the campaign still has a month or so to go, we have already reached an audience of over 1.5m, with posts ranging from responsible dog walking to wild swimming, littering, toileting and the danger of wildfires. Customisable assets have been shared with all estate, DMO and NGO partners, and accompanying videos have also been created. Data from the campaign will inform our long-term comms approach and help us refine messaging for hard-to-reach audiences. You can see an example here. • As part of our NPPP4 promotion, a series of infographics and video pieces have been created to highlight changes made to the plan as a result of audience feedback. You can see an example infographic here. These updates were shared via our social channels and to the over 900 subscribers to our NPPP4 Commonplace platform. • Alongside a number of new Cairngorms Voices posts (showcasing the people who help make the National Park tick), we produced a long-format news piece and photo story highlighting ECMP's conservation work helping protect wader species. As part of the piece, we commissioned a local photographer to go out with Michael Bennet, Head Keeper at Delnadamp, and we hope to repeat this approach in future seasons to paint a more complete

	<p>picture of the work being carried out on estates across the Cairngorms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently in the initial planning stages for Wee Walks Week with the outdoor access team, reviewing content we currently have and exploring the possibility of using the event as an opportunity to mark the completion of the Speyside Way. • Following the Cairngorms Nature Big Weekend in May, the team have been reviewing our activity across the website and social media. Across all channels, our posts reached 350,000 people and attracted nearly 3,000 likes and shares.
<p>c. Press and media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fourth and final episode of our new podcast series Cairngorms Characters (produced in partnership with CBP and The Big Light) aired last month. The series attracted an audience of over 2,000 people in its first five weeks of transmission, and all four episodes will remain available for the foreseeable future for further promotion. We are currently exploring options for follow up activity, including the potential of a broadcast plus podcast series with BBC Scotland, Channel 4 or Channel 5. • A huge part of the team’s time is currently devoted to the launch of the new National Park Partnership Plan, taking place at Boat of Garten Community Hall on 23 August. The event will feature speeches from Lorna Slater MSP (Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity), Xander McDade, and spotlight sessions on each of the Nature, People and Place themes. A press release (also translated into Gaelic) will be accompanied by a photocall on the morning of 23rd, and we plan to record various short video pieces to share across social media. • The Heritage Horizons engagement programme continues to gear up, with media releases created for the launch of the new creative directory, a blog from Janet Hunter on the wellbeing economy, plus preparations made for the launch of our active travel consultation. • Sticking with Heritage Horizons, we have produced a second 3-min video explaining how the programme hangs together. The film is narrated by 16-year-old local resident Cailean Mckerron, and features many of the individuals and partners who will be instrumental in making the project a success. • News updates over the period include planning stories about affordable housing in Braemar and the approval of a family bike trail at Cairngorm Mountain. Conservation news including beaver and capercaillie board papers and freshwater pearl mussels were also picked up fairly widely. • We launched a new board e-newsletter last month, drawing upon advice from members of the former Comms and Brand Group. The newsletter will go out once a fortnight and highlight recent and upcoming CNPA activity, as well as key news from partners / elsewhere in the sector. The team are also conducting a review into all existing CNPA e-newsletters at present to ensure they

	<p>match our agreed target audiences (and are in line with GDPR best practice).</p>
<p>d. Public / stakeholder engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were delighted to welcome Kasia Stringer-Ladds to the team as our new Heritage Horizons Comms & Engagement Officer in mid-July. Kasia has previously worked in the universities sector, managing comms for multi-partner projects, including coordinating online and offline comms for a large, externally funded research programme. She will be instrumental in ensuring engagement activities for all 24 projects run according to plan and that we capture key stories as the programme develops. Kasia and the team are currently assisting with the development of various consultation / engagement events for active travel projects, Keep Scotland Beautiful-led climate workshops, the launch of the outdoor dementia activity centre and much more. • Discussions have taken place with CBP about broadening our existing managing for visitors' community meetings to establish a regular pattern of community drop-in sessions with a more flexible agenda. If successful, these events would allow us to roll out everything from Heritage Horizons engagement to conservation and land management project updates, but discussions are still at an early stage. • CNPA signed up to the LGBT Youth Charter in mid-May and we have held introductory meetings with the LGBT Youth team, at which a range of activities were discussed including a targeted comms campaign engaging and celebrating LGBT residents and visitors in the Park (due to be delivered within the next 12 months). • Following our previous board update on National Park UK's Green Space Dark Skies project, we are pleased to confirm that a community-focused event will be taking place at an undisclosed location in the Park over the next month or so. Details are being kept under wraps to avoid large crowds gathering, but the event will be captured on film both for the project website and as part of a Countryfile special in the autumn. GSDS is specifically designed to reach out to under-represented audiences, giving people a unique opportunity to engage with nature as part of a collaborative cultural event.
<p>e. Publications and branding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May we told you that we had commissioned four photographers to capture a range of people images for use in NPPP4, Heritage Horizons and across a variety of CNPA publications and channels. Just a few months later and we have captured just shy of 1,000 new images, over 100 of which feature non-white and disabled audiences, nearly 200 people 'new to nature', and over 300 featuring young people and families. Another key strand of this work was capturing rural workers in the Park, from gamekeepers to stalkers and farmers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The branding project continues to make good progress and is on track to deliver a significant update in time for the new Partnership Plan launch in August. Stakeholder engagement workshops have taken place with partners including CBP and the Cairngorms Trust, and draft documents have been drawn up both on visual identity and strategy / positioning. We will be sharing findings with the committee at an upcoming session once they are in a more developed form.• As mentioned above, the NPPP4 launch is scheduled for Tuesday 23 August at 12 noon. In addition to arrangements for the event itself, we will circulate a 16-page document to 14,000 households across the Park, summarising both the plan and how residents' feedback helped shape the final outcome. The document will be printed on 100% recycled paper using eco-friendly inks to minimise our environmental impact. This will be the first of a new series of physical newsletters, due to be published three times a year (the next of which will go out in late October / November).• Alongside the doordrop, the team have been working with a creative agency to produce an easy-to-navigate, visually appealing print version of the Partnership Plan, due to be published on 23 August and shared with attendees at the launch event. The document features many of our newly commissioned images of people in the National Park. The print run will be relatively small, but the document will also be made available as an interactive page-turning pdf online.• Elsewhere, interpretation for the new Clarack car park is close to being finalised, discussions are ongoing with RZSS about their new Scotland's Wildlife Discovery Centre, and a second site visit is planned at the new Cairn Distillery near Grantown.
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2. Priority comms activity over the next three months

In line with the priorities outlined in the Comms Strategy update at the October board meeting and the governance committee update in January, we are taking forward a range of activities over the next three months; these are summarised below. These projects will take place alongside a regular programme of Comms activity, coordinated through our centralised Comms Grid.

- a) **Finalise NPPP4 materials and launch the document on 23 August**
- b) **Onboard new team members across Heritage Horizons and digital comms**
- c) **Rollout of Heritage Horizons engagement programme**
- d) **Creation and distribution of new Park-wide physical newsletter**
- e) **Finalise the branding project and rollout findings across all CNP / CNPA channels, including stakeholder engagement (e.g. brand charter businesses)**

- f) Pull together a comprehensive brief for the new website and carry out recommendations from web development tender exercise and DAC audit**
- g) Further develop Cairngorms Voices website platform and explore options for follow-up podcast / broadcast activity**