



**Draft**  
Cairngorms National Park Plan  
2012-2017



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## Draft Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012–2017

### Public Consultation

### **Monday 19 September – Friday 9 December 2011**

This Draft Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012-2017 (the Draft Plan) has been prepared by the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. On 8 July 2011 the CNPA Board approved the Draft Plan for consultation starting on 19 September 2011 and ending at 5pm on 9 December 2011.

In addition to the Draft Plan, an Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, an interim Habitats Regulations Assessment, and an Equalities Impact Assessment Screening report of the Draft Plan are available for information.

The Draft Plan builds on the current National Park Plan 2007-2012 that was approved by Scottish Ministers in 2007. It sets out a long-term vision and objectives, and what the CNPA considers necessary in order to deliver the four aims of the National Park in a collective and co-ordinated way over the next five years. Following the consultation period on the Draft Plan, the CNPA will make changes to it, before submitting a final Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012-2017 to the Scottish Ministers for approval in 2012.

The CNPA wants your help to develop the next National Park Plan. The Draft Plan is meant to stimulate and challenge you to tell us how things can be done better. The final National Park Plan is a plan for many public, private and voluntary organisations to use in the Park, based on what's best for it. If you live or work in the Park, visit it, or are simply interested in it, what the National Park Plan does is relevant to you. If you have played a role in delivering the current National Park Plan and are likely to do so in the future, your resources, knowledge and expertise are what will make the National Park Plan an effective tool for managing the Park.

continued...

## CONSULTATION SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2011

We want the consultation process to focus your responses on the parts of the Draft Plan and issues in it that need most attention. We have asked **28 questions** that we would like you to help answer. The full list is available in Appendix 2 of this publication. You don't have to answer them all, but using them to respond to the Draft Plan is the most effective way to improve or change the final Park Plan.

You can respond to the Draft Plan or comment on the assessments by completing the response form on the National Park Plan page of the CNPA website.

You can also respond in writing or by email to:

Cairngorms National Park Authority

**FREEPOST NAT 21454**

Grantown-on-Spey

Moray, PH26 3BR

Email: [parkplan@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:parkplan@cairngorms.co.uk)

**[www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)**

If you choose one of these methods, you must also complete a Respondent Information Form to ensure that we handle your response appropriately. You can get the Respondent Information Form from the CNPA offices, download it from the CNPA website or request a copy to be sent to you. If you respond by writing or email, please clearly refer to the question or section of the Draft Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012-2017 you are referring to so your response can be analysed.

The responses to the Draft Plan will be analysed by an independent contractor and a report of the consultation will be published by the CNPA in 2012.

If you have any questions please contact:

Cairngorms National Park Authority

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Fax: 01479 873527

Email: [parkplan@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:parkplan@cairngorms.co.uk)



**This is your chance to influence how the Cairngorms National Park will be managed over the next five years.**

The Cairngorms National Park is unique and it is special. At its heart, the huge granite mountains have shaped the climate, nature, people, landscapes and culture around them. They have helped establish the unique and world famous habitats and rare species of the Park and made it a stronghold for British wildlife.

The mountains have created a place with a sense of wildness and space that has inspired passion in the people who live and who have visited the Park for generations. It is central to the culture of Scottish skiing and snowsports; to Scottish mountaineering; and from the paths around villages, through forests, farmland, lochs and rivers to moorland and mountain tops, it is a place of outstanding recreation.

The mountains have moulded vibrant communities with rich and distinct cultural traditions and history. They have influenced the ways people live and how they manage the land as forest, moor and farmland. The Cairngorms National Park is a place of home as well as a place of holiday. It is a priceless part of our identity.

We think these special qualities are the essence of what people who live, work and visit the Park hold dear, but what makes the Park special to you?

Tell us your views about what the next steps should be to ensure the Cairngorms National Park is cared for so that future generations can continue to live and work in it and enjoy it. **Your view really does count!**

## Seo agad cothrom airson buaidh a thoirt air mar a tha Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh air a stiùireadh thar na còig bliadhnaichean ri thighinn.

Tha Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh diofraichte agus sònraichte. Aig a chridhe, chruthaich na beanntan mòra de chlach-ghràin gnàth-shìde, nàdair, daoine, cruthan-tìre agus cultaran timcheall orra. Chuidich iad gus àrainnean sònraichte agus gnèithean gann na Pàirce a tha ainmeil air feadh an t-saoghail a steidheachadh agus e na àite sònraichte do fhiadh-bheatha Bhreatainn.

Tha na beanntan a' cruthachadh àite a tha a' faireachdainn iomallach agus a tha air dìoghras a thoirt do luchd-còmhnaidh agus luchd-tadhail na Pàirce airson linntean. Tha e aig meadhan cultur de sgitheadh ann an Alba agus cur-seachadan sneachda eile, streapadaireachd na h-Alba, agus bho shlighean timcheall bailtean, tro choilltean, fearann-tuathanais, lochan is aibhnichean gu mòintichean is mullaich nam beann, 's e àite sònraichte a th' ann airson cur-seachadan a-muigh.

Tha na beanntan air coimhearsnachdan beothail a chruthachadh le cultaran is eachdraidh a tha beairteach agus sònraichte. Tha iad air buaidh a thoirt air dòighean beatha muinntir an àite agus mar a tha iad a' stiùireadh fearann mar choilltean, mòintichean agus fearann-tuathanais. 'S e dachaigh a th' ann am Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh a bharrachd air àite airson làithean-saora. 'S e pàirt cudromach agus luachmhor a th' ann de ar dearbh-aithne.

Tha sinne den bheachd gu bheil iad seo na buadhan sònraichte a tha aig cridhe de na tha cudromach do dhaoine a tha a' fuireach, ag obair agus a' tadhail air a' Phàirc, ach dè tha sònraichte dhutsa mun Phàirc?

Innse dhuinn do bheachdan mu dheidhinn dè bu chòir dhuinn dhèanamh gus cùram a ghabhail do Phàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh gus am b' urrainn do ginealaichean ri thighinn a chumail orra a bhith a' fuireach agus ag obair ann agus a' faighinn tlachd fhaighinn. **Tha do bheachdan cudromach!**

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## I Introduction

### National Parks in Scotland

There are two National Parks in Scotland – Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, and the Cairngorms. There are a further ten National Parks in England and three in Wales. New National Park Plans for both Scottish National Parks are currently being developed for the period 2012-2017. These build on the successful delivery of the first plans approved in 2007 and are a good opportunity for anyone with an interest in managing Scotland's National Parks to reflect on our collective experience to date.

A National Park is an internationally recognised brand – throughout the world National Parks represent some of the best landscapes and environments in which people seek enjoyment, exhilaration, relaxation and inspiration. In the UK, National Parks are also places where people live and work.

Scotland's National Parks are a national asset. Together, they cover approximately 10 per cent of Scotland's land area and contribute significant benefits at a national scale. They are an internationally recognised part of our tourism economy – places that attract visitors to enjoy some of the best of Scotland. They are places to develop and trial innovative approaches to managing rural Scotland, enhancing landscapes and biodiversity, reconciling competing land use objectives and maintaining thriving rural communities.

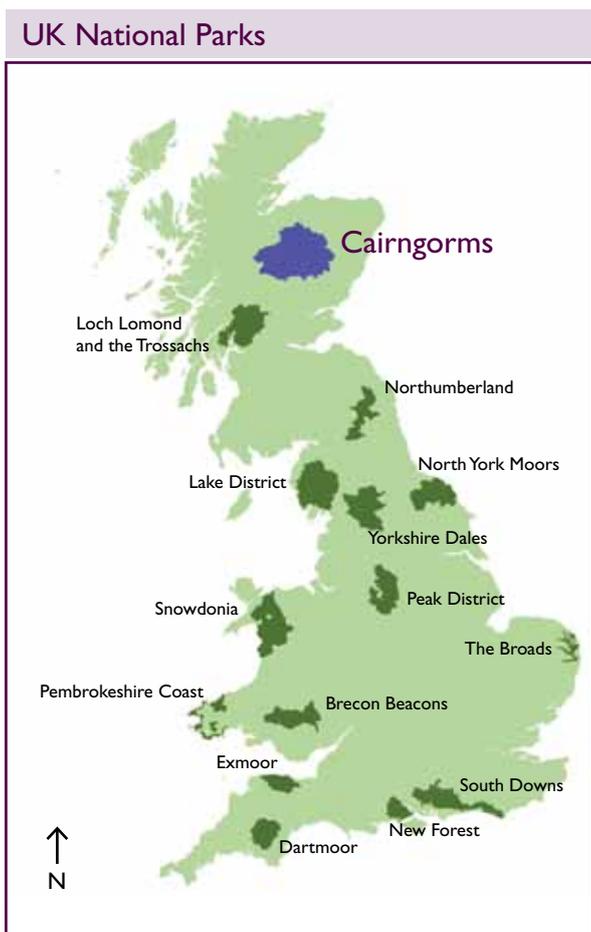
The Cairngorms National Park was established on 1 September 2003.

### The aims of Scottish National Parks

The Scottish Parliament designated the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs as National Parks for three reasons:

- Each area is of outstanding national importance because of its natural and cultural heritage;
- Each area has a distinctive character and coherent identity;
- Designation as a National Park meets the special needs of each area and is the best means of ensuring that the National Park aims are collectively achieved in a co-ordinated way.

It is clear that National Park status means these areas need to be managed differently, to address their special management needs, and in particular



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that a more co-ordinated approach is required in each area to deliver the aims of National Parks.

While the legislation sets a common framework for National Parks in Scotland, it is clear from the Scottish Parliament's first discussions on the subject that within that framework, each National Park is expected to be different in its response to local circumstances – to deliver national benefits while being locally accountable and tailored to local management needs.

There are four aims for Scottish National Parks, set out by the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000:

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
- To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
- To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
- To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

These aims are to be achieved collectively, and in a co-ordinated way. It is their collective delivery, and the management challenges this brings, that lies at the heart of what it means to be a National Park. It is not enough to take each aim in turn, or to trade them off in an attempt to balance each other. What is required in National Parks is an approach that delivers for all four aims together, and that means doing things differently.

At times there will be conflicts in trying to deliver these four aims, and it is in the management of these conflicts that being a National Park should make a difference. The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 recognises in particular that there may be

conflicts between conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage and the other three aims. Where it appears to the National Park Authority that there is such a conflict, the Act requires that greater weight is given to conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage.

The Act recognises that to manage these areas sustainably, the natural and cultural heritage qualities on which designation as a National Park is based, and on which delivery of all four aims ultimately depends, must continue to be conserved and enhanced.

The principle of giving greater weight to conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage where there is a conflict between the aims should not be seen as a last resort, or drawn upon only in extreme cases. Nor, on the other hand, should it be seen as a starting point which gives 'priority' to one aim. Instead it is integral to the way that both National Park Authorities make ongoing decisions about management. It offers a way of reducing or removing conflict in order to reach a point through which all four aims can be delivered.

### **Partnership**

The model of National Parks established by the Scottish Parliament is one based on collaborative management. By contrast, some other international models place almost all management decisions and functions solely in the hands of a National Park Authority. The Scottish model not only acknowledges the breadth of interests and responsibilities spread amongst the public, private and voluntary sectors, but it seeks to build on this in a way that embeds responsibility for National Parks in the organisations and individuals that have direct interests in their day-to-day management. In this way, land managers, businesses, public bodies, local authorities, communities and voluntary organisations all have an opportunity and responsibility to shape and deliver the management of National Parks.

For public bodies, this responsibility is set out explicitly in the National Parks (Scotland) Act which requires all public bodies whose operations affect a National Park to have regard to the National Park Plan. This emphasises the role and opportunity of National Park Plans as a means to join up the work of public bodies in a common focus on the needs of people and place in the National Parks and to deliver benefits for the whole of Scotland.

### **Purpose of National Park Plans**

National Park Plans set the direction and framework for all those involved in contributing to the management and success of these special areas. The plans should set clear targets and outcomes to which all relevant public bodies and other partners commit to delivering.

National Parks are an opportunity to deliver public services and policy in a more joined up way, focused on the needs of people and place,

rather than individual organisational remits. At a time of reducing and constrained public finances, the innovation and collaboration needed to manage National Parks can naturally lead to smarter ways of working, more integrated delivery and better value for money. The development and delivery of National Park Plans are the opportunity to ensure we realise this potential.

### **National Park principles**

The individual National Park Plans set out policies for the next five years within each Park. There are however some long-term principles that are relevant to both National Parks:

#### **Our environment**

The conservation and enhancement of the environment is central to National Parks. This underpins delivery of all four aims and is integral to the sustainable development approaches needed to support communities and businesses to protect these special areas for future generations.

#### **Parks for All**

National Parks are for all of Scotland's people to enjoy. The engagement of local communities and businesses is particularly important to sustaining the Park in the long-term and providing the services and facilities needed for a thriving rural economy.

#### **Trialling new approaches**

National Parks are a real opportunity to trial new approaches beyond business as usual. They are geographical areas that can be used to develop new approaches within a significant but discrete area that can then be rolled out across Scotland.

#### **Tourism and visitor management**

National Parks are national tourism assets that need sustainable approaches to visitor management, balancing the needs of visitors, communities and conservation to deliver high quality destinations.

### **Acting on climate change**

As Scotland's largest designated landscapes, National Parks have a significant role to play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The National Parks have a large role to play, including sensitive renewable energy development, but this should not be carried out at the expense of the special qualities.

### **Partnership**

National Parks are the responsibility of all, not just the National Park Authorities. Key public bodies should identify in their corporate plans how they contribute to delivering the National Park Plan and through that, Scottish Government outcomes.

**Table 1.1 Examples of successful collaboration in the Cairngorms National Park**

**National Parks in the Curriculum for Excellence** – a partnership between seven local authorities, two National Park authorities and Learning and Teaching Scotland to realise the outdoor learning potential of National Parks for children across Scotland.

**Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust** – a charitable trust through which a wide range of partners invest in enhancing outdoor access opportunities, leveraging in more than £3million.

**Cairngorms Business Partnership** – a collaborative private sector organisation combining chamber of commerce and destination management functions offering businesses throughout the Cairngorms National Park a single voice and co-ordinated marketing of the National Park.

**Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group** – a group bringing together the public, private, voluntary and community interests improving mutual understanding and guiding deer management to balance economic, environmental and social benefits.

### **Relationship of National Park Plans to other plans and strategies affecting the Cairngorms National Park**

National Park Plans provide a framework for the management of the Park as well as a focus for action to deliver changes. Many issues require a more detailed level of planning to establish how best to manage or deliver change. This is often

represented by another plan or strategy covering a particular topic, place or issue. These plans and strategies sit within the context of the National Park Plan. There are other plans and strategies that affect the Park and are required by law. Many fit within the context of the National Park Plan.

The National Park Plan provides a context for other plans and strategies within the Park:



### National Park Plans and the planning system

National Park Plans set out the strategic context for development planning in National Parks and are a material consideration in determining planning applications. This Draft National Park Plan provides the strategic context and vision for the Local Development Plan as well as explicit direction through chapter 4 on short-term delivery of the Park Plan and chapter 5 on the land use strategy.

## 2 The Cairngorms National Park

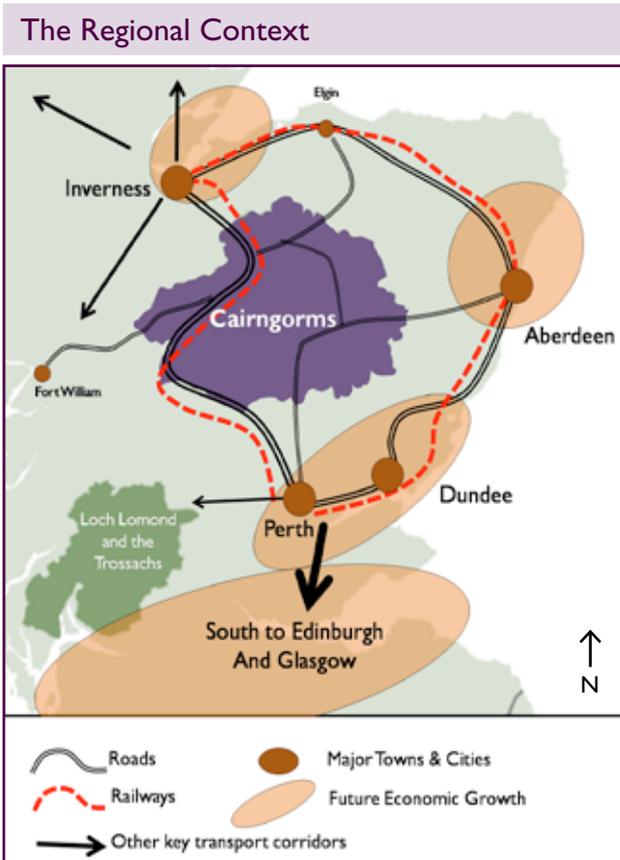
The Cairngorms National Park is the UK's largest National Park at 4,528 square kilometers, comprising about 6 per cent of Scotland's land area. About 17,000 people live in the Park and a further 1.4million people visit it each year. The National Park spans the boundaries of five local authority areas including Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Angus, and Perth & Kinross, bringing co-ordinated management to a special area otherwise fragmented by administrative boundaries.

In economic terms, the National Park is an asset to the wider region and Scotland as a whole, particularly as an internationally recognised tourism destination. The map on this page shows the relationship with nearby cities and areas of future growth in Scotland. Scotland's main north-south road and rail routes pass through the Park. Management of the National Park needs to consider the cross boundary influences, recognise the wider connections and make the most of the Park as an asset for these regions and Scotland as a whole.

### What makes the Cairngorms National Park special?

We know the National Park is special for its natural heritage. The Park has a remarkable geological heritage; it is home to over a quarter of the UK's rare and threatened species; it includes the most expansive areas of arctic-alpine habitat and semi-native pine forest in the UK; its heather moorlands are of international importance; and it includes the upper catchments of major rivers providing water to significant populations downstream.

We also know it is special for its cultural heritage and recreation opportunities. The area has been and remains central to the culture of Scottish skiing and mountaineering; it is known as a destination for adventure sports and outdoor activity; it has thriving local cultures associated with music and shinty for example; and it has some of Scotland's finest examples of planned settlements.



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The National Park does not exist in isolation, but is an integral part of its surrounding areas. In landscape and biodiversity terms, the National Park is intimately connected with its surrounding areas.

People come to the Cairngorms National Park to enjoy it – for inspiration, relaxation, exhilaration or just quiet appreciation. The way people experience, enjoy and connect to the National Park is integral to the way in which we care for it.

The Scottish Parliament designated the Cairngorms as a National Park because of the special qualities that underpin this appeal for people across Scotland and beyond.

Part of what makes the Cairngorms National Park special is that it is a National Park with people living and working in it. People manage the Park, create its vibrant communities, and provide many of the opportunities and services that visitors to the Park enjoy.

The special qualities combine to create the sense of a special place with a Cairngorms identity. They evoke a response that shapes the way people experience and feel about the place. While everyone brings their own perceptions and experience, there are some special qualities that are commonly identified. These relate in particular to the scale and combination of landscape features together with the visual, cultural and recreational experience of the landscape.

The National Park Plan should describe these special qualities as a reference point for other policies and plans.

We think the special qualities of the Cairngorms can be summarised in the four key themes of the Cairngorms National Park Interpretation Guidance 'Sharing the Stories of the Cairngorms':

**Key Theme 1:** The huge granite mountains of the Cairngorms National Park are unique. Their influence has shaped the natural heritage, people, landscapes and culture around them.

**Key Theme 2:** The Cairngorms National Park is made up of a unique mosaic of habitats of very high quality, and exceptional size and scale. It is a stronghold for British wildlife, including many of the UK's rare and endangered species, and those at the limit of their range.

**Key Theme 3:** The Park is a rich cultural landscape. Separated by the great bulk of the mountains, different areas have their own distinct identity and cultural traditions, but they share deep connections to the same environments. The Park is a place of 'Mountain folk' and 'Forest folk'.

**Key Theme 4:** The Park is a place with a sense of wildness and space at its heart, and it inspires passion both in those who live here and those who visit.

Further work in a 2010 study identifies the special landscape qualities of the Cairngorms National Park as follows:

- Magnificent mountains towering over moorland, forest and strath;
- Vastness of space, scale and height;
- Strong juxtaposition of contrasting landscapes;
- A landscape of layers, from inhabited strath to remote, uninhabited upland;
- The harmony of complicated curves;
- Landscapes both cultural and natural.

These special qualities are described in Table 2.1.

### Question 1

What makes the National Park Special to you?

### Question 2

Do you agree with these descriptions of the special qualities?

### Question 3

Are there other special qualities you think should be explicitly identified in the National Park Plan?

**Table 2.1 Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park**

<b>The Mountains and Plateaux</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The unifying presence of the central mountains</li> <li>• An imposing massif of strong dramatic character</li> <li>• The unique plateaux of vast scale, distinctive landforms and exposed boulder-strewn high ground</li> <li>• The surrounding hills</li> <li>• The drama of deep corries</li> <li>• Exceptional glacial landforms</li> <li>• Snowscapes</li> </ul>
<b>Moorlands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive moorland, linking the farmland, woodland and the high tops</li> <li>• A patchwork of muirburn</li> </ul>
<b>Glens and Straths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steep glens and high passes</li> <li>• Broad farmed straths</li> <li>• Renowned rivers</li> <li>• Beautiful lochs</li> </ul>
<b>Trees, Woods and Forests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dark and venerable pine forest</li> <li>• Light and airy birch woods</li> <li>• Parkland and policy woodlands</li> <li>• Long association with forestry</li> </ul>
<b>Wildlife and Nature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dominance of natural landforms</li> <li>• Extensive tracts of natural vegetation</li> <li>• Association with iconic animals</li> <li>• Wildness</li> </ul>
<b>Visual and Sensory Qualities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layers of receding ridge lines</li> <li>• Grand panoramas and framed views</li> <li>• A landscape of many colours</li> <li>• Dark skies</li> <li>• Attractive and contrasting textures</li> <li>• The dominance of natural sounds</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinctive planned towns</li> <li>• Vernacular stone buildings</li> <li>• Dramatic historical routes</li> <li>• The wistfulness of abandoned settlements</li> <li>• Focal cultural landmarks of castles, distilleries and bridges</li> <li>• The Royal connection</li> </ul>
<b>Recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A landscape of opportunities</li> <li>• Spirituality</li> </ul>

Source: The Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park; Scottish Natural Heritage; Commissioned Report No. 375

### 3 Vision and Strategic Objectives

#### Vision

Our time frame for the vision in the first National Park Plan was 25 years to 2030. However, we value the place we call the Cairngorms National Park as a result of hundreds, thousands and even millions of years of history. It will continue to be here far beyond 2030 and our thinking should look generations ahead.

We want the National Park Plan's Vision to be simple and compelling. We think the Vision can be made clearer and stronger by changing it to: **An outstanding National Park, enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together.**

“An outstanding National Park, enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together.”

#### Strategic objectives

We propose three Strategic Objectives to provide a clear direction for delivery in the Park over the next five years. We have identified three objectives that we think address the most significant issues facing the Park and are the most important to address during this Plan period.

- 1 To ensure the Cairngorms National Park is a special place where the natural and cultural heritage is conserved and enhanced. (see page 19)
- 2 To develop a sustainable economy that supports thriving and resilient business and communities. (see page 20)
- 3 To ensure the Cairngorms National Park delivers an outstanding visitor experience and is an international benchmark for sustainable tourism. (see page 21)

### What progress have we made so far?

The first National Park Plan (2007) set out 23 long-term outcomes to which that plan and subsequent plans could work towards. They are set out below for information.

A natural starting point for planning the next five years is to assess our progress towards these outcomes over the past five years. We think the outcomes continue to provide a comprehensive and relevant framework for managing the Park. However, we also think that they could be condensed and updated to provide a shorter list and still convey the same sense of direction.

### Question 4

Do you think the long-term outcomes should be updated and condensed? If so, how?

### The long-term outcomes of the first National Park Plan

#### A special place

1. The distinct character of the Cairngorms **landscape** and its diverse mix of mountains, straths, glens, forests and farmland will be conserved and enhanced, shaped by natural processes and positive management.
2. The sense of **wildness**, particularly in the high montane areas, will be enhanced and renowned as a particular special quality of the area that continues to be enjoyed by many.
3. The Park will continue to have a rich **biodiversity** which will be better connected and able to adapt to a changing climate. Areas of national and international importance will be exemplars of good management, set within a broader network of well managed habitats.
4. The important **geodiversity** record in the Park will be widely recognised and will be well managed and conserved.
5. There will continue to be **an active and productive land management** sector that conserves and enhances the special qualities and is a significant economic asset.
6. The **built heritage** of the Park will be safeguarded and new buildings will complement or enhance their setting, including the settlement pattern and character.
7. The **archaeological evidence and material records** of previous generations will be well recorded and understood, actively cared for and safeguarded.
8. The **cultures and traditions** associated with the people and communities of the Park will be well recognised and continue to evolve as part of a living culture that secures tomorrow's cultural heritage.

#### A sustainable economy

9. There will be **thriving and sustainable communities** throughout the Park that are confident to share their ideas, experience and culture in actively shaping their own future and enjoying a sense of ownership of the National Park.
10. There will be a wide range of opportunities for people in the National Park to develop their **skills and employment options** that will meet the needs of individuals and businesses.
11. The outstanding environment of the Park will stimulate economic activity, **businesses will thrive**, and the Park will be an economic asset to the wider regional economy.

12. Delivering **economic, social and environmental sustainability** will be an integral part of every business. Businesses will manage their impacts to ensure a positive contribution to the area's communities, environment and special qualities.
13. People will be able to access **housing** that meets their needs through rent or purchase. Housing of all types will be of good quality and new development will implement sustainable design principles.
14. The National Park will be a leader in **sustainable rural transport**. Infrastructure and provision will meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors and strengthen the regional interaction of the Park. Barriers to transport and dependence on private car use will have reduced, helping to facilitate sustainable development.
15. There will be a **vibrant renewable energy, recycling and waste sector** in the National Park together with greater awareness and action by individuals, businesses and organisations. This will result in more sustainable patterns of use, supply and management of energy, water and waste.
16. The Cairngorms National Park will be **renowned** in Scotland and internationally and will make a significant positive contribution to Scotland's national identity.
17. The Cairngorms National Park will be an internationally recognised **world class sustainable tourism destination** that consistently exceeds residents' and visitors' expectations in terms of quality of environment, services and experience.
18. There will be an excellent and integrated network of routes to enjoy **outdoor access** across the Park that meets the needs of residents and visitors.
19. There will be an even higher quality and increased range of **outdoor recreation** activities available and accessible to a wider range of people of all abilities to enjoy the Park.
20. There will be a high level of understanding and widespread practice of **responsible behaviour** in the Cairngorms. Outdoor access will be enjoyed and managed as an integral part of a broader recreational experience and in ways that promote enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park while conserving them.
21. **Interpretation** of the National Park will be of an internationally high standard revealing the significance and meaning of the National Park and its special qualities, helping people to understand and enjoy the area.
22. The Park will be a significant **national learning resource** that raises understanding of the special qualities of the area and sustainable development, while also contributing to national objectives.
23. Key gaps in **knowledge** will have been addressed, and the National Park will lead the way in research on issues such as sustainable development and rural tourism. Information will be widely accessible and contribute fully to the knowledge economy of the region and Scotland.

### Summary of progress to date

The following sections give a summary of progress to date in the themes associated with each strategic objective.

### To ensure the Cairngorms National Park is a special place where the natural and cultural heritage is conserved and enhanced.

The special qualities of the National Park are the basis for its designation and their conservation and enhancement underpins delivery of all four aims of the National Park.

#### Over the period of the first National Park Plan:

- The National Park has become the focus for a range of habitat and species projects including the Scottish wildcat, rare plants, red squirrels, water voles, wetlands and waders, aspen, raptors, black grouse, capercaillie and riparian woodlands.
- The National Park has become a focus for a range of land management and farming projects including monitor farms, green farms, farmers guide to climate change and animal health initiatives.
- The Land Based Business Training Programme has delivered training to over 200 businesses and 4,800 individuals.
- Active catchment management groups have developed and grown on the Rivers Spey, Dee and South Esk, now providing effective mechanisms to bring together land use interests and manage the water resource, and associated land use issues, on a big enough scale.
- A partnership approach between the public, private and voluntary sectors has developed, recognising the key role that land owners and managers play in shaping the special qualities of the Park. Initiatives such as Wildlife Estates Scotland being piloted in the Cairngorms National Park demonstrate this partnership and the opportunity the National Park offers for innovation.
- Research and policy to conserve and enhance the special qualities has been implemented including: an analysis of the special landscape qualities of the National Park; assessing and mapping the wildness qualities of the National Park; adoption of supplementary planning guidance on natural heritage and wildness; review of the Cairngorms Forest and Woodland Framework; completion of the Cairngorms Deer Framework; new Landscape Character Assessment; Cultural Heritage Audit; and habitat network mapping.
- Effective networks for all those with an interest in land management to exchange information, discuss issues and provide advice have been established including the Cairngorms Farmers Forum, the Cairngorms Land Management Forum and the Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group.
- A Cairngorms Biological Recording System has been established, bringing together over 100,000 new records of species presence and delivering courses on species identification.
- Over 30 community heritage projects have been supported, creating more opportunities for communities to share their experience in conserving, promoting and enjoying their local heritage.

### To develop a sustainable economy that supports thriving and resilient business and communities.

Communities and business in the Park face real challenges over the coming years as Scotland's economy adjusts to a lower carbon future. Both communities and businesses in the Park rely on the local and wider economy for jobs, homes, people and products, and the economy of the Park is closely linked to its natural resources and the way we appreciate them as special qualities.

#### Over the period of the first National Park Plan:

- Businesses have increasingly worked together to promote the Park and its special places as a destination. The Cairngorms Business Partnership has evolved a strong focus for the private sector and is working to market the Park as a destination for visitors from all over the world.
- The Cairngorms Business Partnership has piloted and developed new technology to help visitors find out about products and services in the Park. People can now download an 'i-Phone app' that provides up to date information from businesses and helps people decide on what and when to visit – by providing information about snow sports conditions for example.
- The Cairngorms National Park brand has been established and used to help market businesses ranging from the 'Cairngorms Hostels' to 'Cairngorms Farmers' Market' in the Park. 21 per cent of businesses in the Park now use the brand.
- The Cairngorms Local Action Group has invested £2.5million through the LEADER programme in projects that support communities and businesses in the Park.
- Hundreds of people and land based businesses in the Park have been supported by training courses in many topics that help them deliver public benefits in the Park.
- Woodfuel has developed as a low carbon heat source in the Park, with information for consumers and suppliers of products. A local network of woodfuel products and the businesses that supply and maintain the woodfuel boilers and stoves is developing.
- The Cairngorms 'Food for Life' programme is developing local food products and networks to help people eat local food and strengthen supply chains.
- Communities throughout the Park have been helped through the 'Our Community – A Way Forward' initiative to produce their own community needs surveys and develop action plans to address their needs. Communities continue to be supported in developing their plans further, engaging the whole community in planning further into the future, and building their skills, resources and ability to work with public agencies to improve services. An electric vehicle was used by the Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Company to help highlight and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- More than 250 affordable houses have been built in the Park in towns, villages and countryside, through both public funding as well as private contributions from house builders and landowners.
- Research to find out more about the characteristics of the economy, the population of the Cairngorms and the different sectors within it was carried out including The Economic and Social Health of the Park study; and The Cairngorms Business Barometer which continues to provide feedback on business confidence.

**To ensure the Cairngorms National Park delivers an outstanding visitor experience and is an international benchmark for sustainable tourism.**

The Cairngorms National Park is already a great place to visit and to enjoy. The high quality opportunities, products, facilities, and services mean that most people enjoy their visit to the National Park. The Cairngorms National Park has had a Sustainable Tourism Strategy since 2005 and was the first UK National Park to gain the Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. A revised Sustainable Tourism Strategy was prepared in 2010 and provides the framework for future development of sustainable tourism in the National Park.

**Over the period of the first National Park Plan:**

- More people have become aware of the Cairngorms National Park and the expectations of visitors have increased.
- The National Park brand has been managed to help reinforce the core values and associations with the National Park by visitors and businesses; 82 per cent of visitors know they are in a National Park.
- The National Park has had a higher profile in the media, with stories about its special qualities and the opportunities to enjoy them. In 2010, the Adventure Travel World Summit was held in Aviemore, raising the profile of the Park across the world. Following the world summit, the Cairngorms National Park was listed amongst the top 20 places to visit in 2011 by National Geographic Magazine.
- There has been significant investment by the private and public sector in visitor facilities and services. Visitor centres have been updated and branded with National Park material. Interpretation guidance has been established and used, helping to inform National Park information and orientation materials, and helping businesses provide tailored interpretation and local information.
- Outdoor access recreation opportunities have been improved for all abilities through the identification of core paths and a £2million programme of path improvement and maintenance has been carried out. Signage and information about opportunities has also been strengthened.
- The Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust has been established, building on the successful record of the Upper Deeside Access Trust.
- A very wide range of tourism related businesses and communities have been supported through training programmes and courses.
- 10,000 outdoor learning opportunities have been delivered through the John Muir Award. National Parks are better connected to the Curriculum for Excellence as outdoor learning opportunities.

### Challenges we faced over the past five years

Developing and implementing a first National Park Plan for a new Scottish National Park was always going to present challenges. Since 2003, when the Cairngorms National Park was established, there has been a new designation, new legislation, new National Park Authority, and new relationships to build between people and organisations in the Park.

There are inevitably tensions as people and organisations find their feet, learn to trust each other, and work together developing partnerships. Many organisations and individuals have an interest in the Cairngorms National Park and help manage the Park. That's one of the reasons why the National Park was established – to improve the co-ordination of management across the many administrative and operational boundaries that cover the Cairngorms.

Here are some of the challenges that influenced the delivery of the current National Park Plan:

- Continued decline in the health of some rare and threatened species and habitats.
- The complexity of the Scotland Rural Development Programme and the challenges of making a new national support scheme work for a National Park.
- Co-ordination of public sector activity in the Park and establishing the Park as the visitor and customer focus that goes across organisational remits.
- Dealing with the direct economic effects of the credit crunch and with reduced public sector funding.
- Improving access to housing for people earning typical wages in the Park.

### Challenges we will face to 2017

We know many of the challenges we will face over the life of the next National Park Plan.

Some of the main issues and challenges will be:

- The collective challenge of reduced public spending. This affects both what the public sector can do itself and what it pays the private and voluntary sectors to do.
- The real economic effects of transition to a low carbon economy in Scotland where oil and gas costs are higher, making life in rural and remote communities more difficult.
- Diversifying the economy and increasing the profitability of business sectors so that earnings in the Park increase.
- Developing an IT and communications infrastructure that provides high speed broadband and mobile communications to meet business, visitor and community needs.
- Funding for community development and support will be less easily accessed and may become available as loans. Communities will need to develop more sources of income to maintain and develop facilities.
- The increased likelihood of sudden and extreme weather events as a result of climate change and the effects they may lead to such as flooding or landslides.
- Successfully managing and mitigating the pressures on rare and threatened species and habitats brought about by a changing climate, or by combinations of factors we do not yet understand.

## 4 What should our focus be for 2012-2017?

The first National Park Plan made a lot of progress in working towards the Vision for the National Park. We want the second plan to build on that success by setting clear priorities for work and achievable outcomes. We also want it to reflect the collective experience and learning by partners of how to work together most effectively in the Park.

### Five-year outcomes for the Park

This section of the Draft National Park Plan sets out what we think the organisations who deliver the National Park Plan should focus their work on over the next five years to make further progress towards the Vision. The five-year outcomes are the way we will achieve our strategic objectives and deliver the Scottish National Outcomes.

Our 10 proposed five-year outcomes for the Park are:

- 1 More people will learn about, enjoy and help to conserve and enhance the special natural and cultural qualities of the Park. (page 26)
- 2 The quality and connectivity of habitats will have improved, enhancing the landscape at a Park scale. (page 30)
- 3 The species for which the Cairngorms National Park is most important will be in better conservation status in the Park. (page 33)
- 4 The qualities of wildness in the Park will be greater. (page 36)
- 5 There will be a better targeted programme of advice and support for land managers in the Park that delivers the National Park Plan. (page 39)
- 6 The economy of the Park will have grown and diversified, drawing on the Park's special qualities. (page 42)
- 7 Settlements and built development will retain and enhance the distinct sense of place and identity within the landscapes of the Park. (page 45)
- 8 Business and communities will be successfully adapting to a low carbon economy. (page 48)
- 9 The Park's communities will be more empowered and able to develop their own models of sustainability. (page 51)
- 10 The Park's recreation opportunities will have improved the health and enjoyment of residents and visitors. (page 54)

These are our suggestions based on discussions with public agencies, local communities, voluntary sector organisations and business so far.

We want the outcomes to be ambitious and to make real changes in the Park, and to be realistic about what the resources available to different organisations can achieve. We hope you agree with them, but you may think other outcomes are more important, or know of better ways of achieving them. We particularly want to know what you and your organisation can do to achieve them. We have posed questions to help you respond on the issues that we need feedback on and that will help us prepare the final National Park Plan.

### **Question 5**

**Do you agree this set of outcomes provides the right focus for the next five years? If not, what else is more important?**

### **Question 6**

**Which are the most important outcomes to you?**

The National Park Plan provides co-ordination in managing the Park. One of the lessons learnt from delivering the first National Park Plan was that 'how' we do things changes over time as we learn and circumstances change.

We want this Park Plan to provide a strong framework to focus work and draw together the best people to deliver it, but we don't want to be prescriptive about how the work is done. For that reason, we have proposed what we think the appropriate work programmes and delivery mechanisms should be, and who should be involved, but have not yet detailed exactly how the outcomes should be delivered. That sort of planning is best done by the relevant partners together and should be able to adapt over time.

The following sections set out in more detail what we want each outcome to achieve, the programmes or packages of work we think are needed to achieve them, and who's most important to planning and delivering that work.

### **Monitoring our progress**

We will all want to know how well we are doing at achieving our outcomes. The simplest way of doing that is to identify indicators of progress and targets to aim towards.

We don't expect indicators to tell us everything about each outcome. Nor, do we want the indicators to be so difficult to measure that they distract from working to achieve the outcomes. We want one or two relevant and easily recorded measures that will be a helpful guide to our work. We want our targets to be ambitious but achievable. They should help motivate us and demonstrate real changes or achievements.

Each outcome has some suggestions of possible indicators and targets. Many of you who will respond to the Draft National Park Plan have expertise in specialist areas and access to useful data or suitable indicators. We have asked a question about indicators at each five-year outcome. If you can provide better data for indicators or targets please let us know by answering those questions.

### **Delivering for Scotland**

Our draft five-year outcomes are also intended to help deliver the Scottish Government's National Outcomes. The 15 National Outcomes set by the Scottish Government describe what the Government wants to achieve in Scotland. They provide the link through which public bodies and others can show how their work to manage the National Park is delivering the wider ambitions for Scotland.

Table 4.1 summarises where the proposed five-year outcomes will make a significant contribution to National Outcomes. We think the National Park Plan makes a significant contribution to 12 out of the 15 outcomes. We don't think the National Park Plan will make a direct contribution to achieving outcomes 2, 9 or 15, though it will support other work to achieve them.

<b>Table 4.1 The contribution of our draft five-year outcomes to Scottish National Outcomes</b>		<b>Draft five-year outcomes</b>									
<b>No. National Outcomes</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.										
2	We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.										
3	We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.										
4	We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.										
5	We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.										
6	We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.										
7	Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.										
8	We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.										
9	Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.										
10	We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.										
11	We live longer, healthier lives.										
12	We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.										
13	We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.										
14	Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.										
15	We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.										



Here's what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 1:

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continual improvement of marketing and promotional material</li> <li>• Test new and innovative interpretation methods that help convey the significance and meaning of the special qualities</li> <li>• Continued promotion of innovative ways of encouraging responsible outdoor access</li> <li>• A wider range of people who are able to participate in learning, enjoying and helping to conserve and enhance the Park</li> <li>• Promotion of enhancement of sites and experiences where people come into contact with natural and cultural heritage</li> <li>• Interpretive material is visitor focused, based on the Park and its special qualities, and not on corporate or organisational identity</li> <li>• More co-ordinated and collaborative management for visitor needs and pressures across land management boundaries</li> <li>• Increased opportunities to volunteer to conserve and enhance the special qualities through labour; recording of natural and cultural heritage information, and/or financial contribution</li> <li>• Caring for special qualities becomes a core message for tourism business</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP) Marketing Framework</li> <li>2 Delivery of the Cairngorms Sustainable Tourism Strategy</li> <li>3 Development of a Cairngorms volunteering programme to co-ordinate and expand volunteering opportunities for all that conserve and enhance the Park's special qualities</li> <li>4 Development of a cultural heritage programme that provides a co-ordinating framework for interpreting the significance of the Park's cultural heritage; helps communities explore and share their cultural heritage through advice, training and support; and develops web resources to help record, collate and access information about the Park's cultural heritage</li> <li>5 Updating and delivery of the Cairngorms Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Group (CRAGG) Strategy to deliver an outstanding visitor experience and manage visitor pressures across land ownership boundaries</li> </ol>	<p>CBP, VS</p> <p>STF &amp; Partners</p> <p>CNPA, RSPB, NTS, FCS, CBP, Voluntary Groups</p> <p>RCAHMS, HS, LAs, CNPA, Community Groups</p> <p>CRAGG</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix 1

continued over...

## CONSULTATION SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2011

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous development of National Parks within the Curriculum for Excellence</li> <li>• Increase the use of the Park for school activities and outdoor learning</li> <li>• Increase the use of the Park for informal education and outdoor learning such as the John Muir Award</li> </ul>	<p>6 Development of National Park learning resource materials for formal and informal education, outdoor learning and business</p> <p>7 Develop a web-based research hub to provide a focus for knowledge exchange and research collaboration in the Park</p>	<p>LTS, CNPA, LAs, CBP, RSPB, Voluntary sector</p> <p>UHI, Hutton Institute, CNPA, Researchers</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

### Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 1:

Indicator	Target for 2017
Number of school children using the Park through the Curriculum for Excellence	To increase by 100%
The number of volunteer days spent caring for the National Park	To increase by 100%
The financial contributions made by visitors towards caring for the Park's special qualities	To increase by 100%
The number of tourism businesses involved in active care for the Park's special qualities	To increase by 100%

**Question 7**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 1 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

You can respond to some or all of these questions by completing the response form at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) or in writing or by email (see pages 3-4 for details).

A full list of questions is available in Appendix 2.

## Five-year Outcome 2

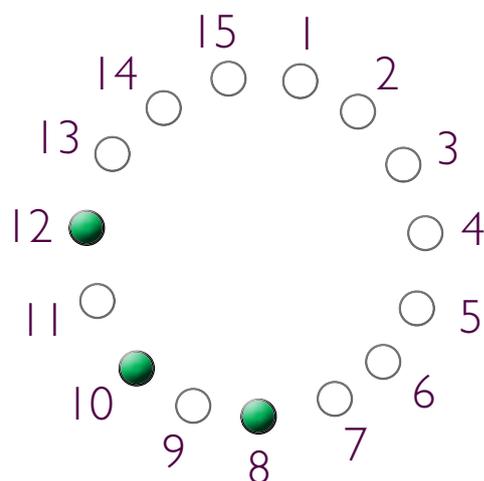
The quality and connectivity of habitats will have improved, enhancing the landscape at a Park scale.

The Park has an outstanding patchwork of habitats that support many important species. It's one of the reasons the Park is a special place. Many of the best examples are designated sites with particular management to conserve them. However, many habitats and species would do better if there were larger areas and better connection between them. This outcome is intended to focus work to 2017 on establishing a few significant enhancements to habitats in the Cairngorms National Park.

In order to achieve changes that will make a real difference, we think the focus should be on two habitats in particular. Woodlands and wetlands are two of the most diverse habitats in the Park, supporting some of the Parks rarest and most threatened species. They also play an important role in helping the Park and its species adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Woodland, together with peatland, is a very significant carbon store for Scotland. It helps regulate local climate by giving shelter and providing shade, and helps prevent erosion of soils. Wetlands play a vital role in managing flood risk by storing water and slowing its flow downstream. They also help maintain water quality by catching pollutants and other material in the water.

This five-year outcome would help deliver the National Outcomes marked green.



See page 25 for list of National Outcomes.

### Here are some of the benefits this outcome would bring by 2017:

- There will be more of some of the most valuable habitats – particularly woodland and wetlands – and they will be better connected with similar areas.
- Many of the UK's rarest and threatened species that rely on those habitats will be better able to adapt to changes in climate.
- Increased wetland and floodplain habitat will reduce some of the risks of sudden flooding.
- More estates and land management units will plan across their boundaries, further improving connectivity of habitats and the ability of the species which rely on them to do well.
- The landscape experience and views will be enhanced.
- Increased carbon storage in woodland.
- Better understanding of ecosystems in the Park.

Here's what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 2:

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased native woodland establishment and forest cover</li> <li>• Management to improve the quality of native woods and increase diversity of species</li> <li>• Increased natural flood management through creation and management of wetlands</li> <li>• Maintenance of an effective moorland network</li> <li>• More estates demonstrating successful management for biodiversity</li> <li>• Increased management planning across estate boundaries</li> <li>• Better understanding of ecosystems and the links between them</li> <li>• Support and advice for land managers to be tailored to the needs of the National Park</li> <li>• Greater engagement in, awareness and understanding of the need for and implications of habitat quality and connectivity improvements by the public</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Landscape scale habitat enhancement programme that identifies opportunities for woodland and wetland expansion and connection for habitat improvement, species conservation and landscape character benefits</li> <li>2 Further development of Catchment Management Partnerships</li> <li>3 Delivery of the Cairngorms Deer Framework</li> <li>4 Targeted and proactive advice and support for land managers</li> <li>5 Communication, awareness raising and engagement to help the public see benefits of improvement to habitat quality and connectivity and understand the role of land management in achieving it</li> </ol>	<p>CNPA, SNH, FCS, SEPA, SLE, RSPB, NTS, Local Land Managers and Communities</p> <p>Catchment Management Partnerships</p> <p>CDAG, CNPA, SNH, FCS, SLE</p> <p>SEARS, SLE, NFUS</p> <p>LBAP, CNPA, SNH, RSPB, NTS, SLE, NFUS</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

**Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 2:**

Indicator	Target for 2017
Increase in area of woodland in the Park	Increase of 5%
Increase in area of active floodplain	Increase of 5%

**Question 8**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 2 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

You can respond to some or all of these questions by completing the response form at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) or in writing or by email (see pages 3-4 for details).

A full list of questions is available in Appendix 2.

### Five-year Outcome 3

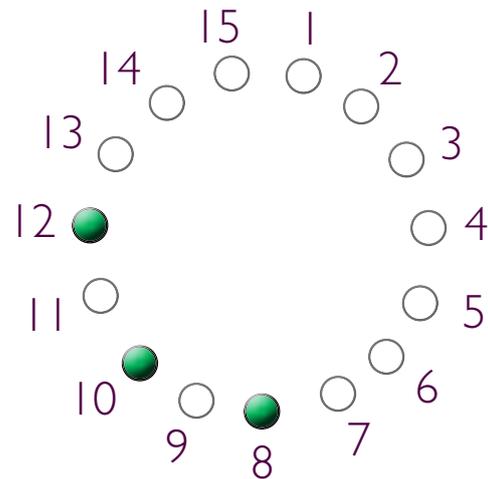
The species for which the Cairngorms National Park is most important will be in better conservation status in the Park.

The Cairngorms National Park is internationally important for some species and they are what make it a special place for many people. Many species will benefit from the habitat improvements that will be achieved through five-year outcome 2.

This outcome adds to it by targeting the few critically rare or threatened UK species for which the Cairngorms is important and where additional action, protection or support is required. In some places, this will build on the particular management of designated sites. In others it requires action to deal with specific threats to species.

One of the issues of management for rare and threatened species is that the techniques used or actions needed sometimes affect the ways in which people expect to work in or enjoy the Park. A further part of this outcome will be increasing people's understanding of the special needs of some of these vulnerable species so that management to help them is supported by the people who live, work and visit the Park.

This five-year outcome would help deliver the National Outcomes marked green.



See page 25 for list of National Outcomes.

#### Here are some of the benefits this outcome would bring by 2017:

- Some of the UK's rarest and threatened species for which the Cairngorms is important, for example wildcat, breeding waders, capercaillie and raptors will do better.
- There will be fewer cases of wildlife crime.
- There will be effective management of invasive non-native species.
- Better understanding by the public of the importance and sensitivity of rare and threatened species and support for management.

Here’s what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 3:

What’s needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved habitat quality and connectivity at a landscape scale across estate boundaries</li> <li>• A revised Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan that identifies the species for which action is needed most and the actions to improve their conservation status</li> <li>• A reduction in wildlife crime</li> <li>• More estates demonstrating successful management for biodiversity</li> <li>• Increased management planning across estate boundaries</li> <li>• Better understanding of ecosystems and the links between them</li> <li>• Support and advice for land managers to be tailored to the needs of the National Park</li> <li>• Better understanding, communication and sharing of good practice in managing recreation impacts on sensitive species</li> <li>• Greater engagement in, awareness and understanding of the needs of rare and threatened CNP species by the public</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Local Biodiversity Action Plan and Partnership review to provide focus for delivery</li> <li>2 Wildlife crime reduction partnership</li> <li>3 Development and expansion of Wildlife Estates Scotland Initiative.</li> <li>4 Invasive non-native species programme, reducing the spread and removing the source of invasive non-native species</li> <li>5 Targeted and proactive advice and support for land managers to deliver conservation</li> <li>6 Communication, awareness raising and engagement to involve and help the public to see benefits of special management for rare and threatened CNP species</li> </ol>	<p>LBAP Partnership</p> <p>SG &amp; SEARS, Police Forces, CNPA, SLE, SGA</p> <p>SLE, SNH, CNPA, Estates</p> <p>LBAP, SEARS</p> <p>SEARS, SLE, NFUS</p> <p>LBAP, CNPA, SNH, RSPB, NTS, SLE, NFUS</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

**Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 3:**

Indicator	Target for 2017
Active conservation projects for priority LBAP species	100% of priority species
Estates actively participating in level 2 of the Wildlife Estates Scotland Initiative	50% of eligible species

**Question 9**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 3 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

You can respond to some or all of these questions by completing the response form at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) or in writing or by email (see pages 3-4 for details).

A full list of questions is available in Appendix 2.

## Five-year Outcome 4

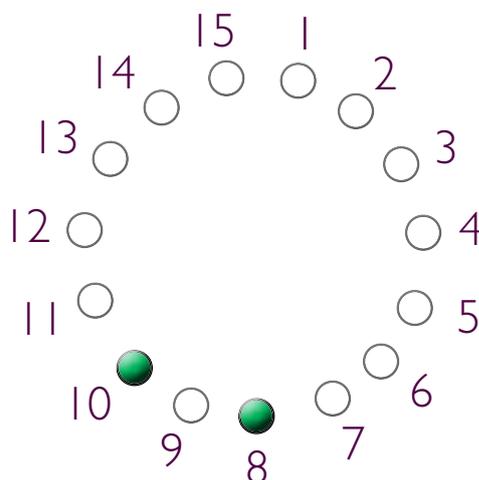
### The qualities of wildness in the Park will be greater.

One of the things that makes the Park a special place is the experience of wildness within it. It is a special quality of the Park that is under threat across Scotland. That means conserving and enhancing what we already value about it, as well as seeking opportunities to enhance wildness in the Cairngorms.

The most significant threats to wildness are from inappropriate development, sometimes from hill tracks and increasingly as a result of wind farm developments that change the landscape, the setting and views to and from the National Park.

This outcome is intended to make sure the Cairngorms National Park continues to be a place where people can experience wildness. There are two distinct parts to delivering the outcome. The first part is about protecting the Park from dramatic or incremental and cumulative changes that would significantly change its setting and character. The second part is about managing places in ways that maintain or enhance the qualities of wildness; building on the hundreds of years of management that have created the Park we experience today.

This five-year outcome would help deliver the National Outcomes marked green.



See page 25 for list of National Outcomes.

### Here are some of the benefits this outcome would bring by 2017:

- The Cairngorms National Park will remain an important and accessible place for people to experience wildness.
- The Cairngorms National Park will remain an attractive tourism destination with a distinct brand identity known for its wildness.
- By maintaining wildness qualities, a range of other biodiversity, landscape and recreation benefits will be delivered.

Here's what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 4:

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate development that would significantly reduce the qualities of wildness experienced in the Park will not happen</li> <li>• The Park will continue to have a diverse range of habitats, species and landscapes</li> <li>• Land management will continue to deliver multiple public benefits</li> <li>• Active management of infrastructure in remote places to minimise unnecessary intrusion, including the removal of redundant or abandoned infrastructure</li> <li>• Land managers will all follow best practice guidance on the design and maintenance of hill tracks</li> <li>• People will continue to be able to experience wildness throughout the Park</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Landscape scale habitat enhancement programme that identifies opportunities for woodland and wetland expansion and connection for habitat improvement, species conservation and landscape character benefits</li> <li>2 Protection of the Park's special qualities and wildness from inappropriate development in or outside the Park through the Local Development Plan and development management</li> <li>3 'Quality in Design' programme that demonstrates good practice in the design of development and of habitat management such as woodland creation – reinforcing or improving some of the qualities of wildness</li> <li>4 A programme of information, interpretation and experiences that celebrate habitat expansion and the sense of wildness in the Park</li> </ol>	<p>CNPA, SNH, FCS, SEPA, SLE, RSPB, NTS, Local Land Managers and Communities</p> <p>SG, CNPA, LAs, SNH</p> <p>CNPA, SNH, RSPB, NTS, SLE, A+DS</p> <p>CNPA, SNH, RSPB, NTS, JMT, SLE</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

**Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 4:**

Indicator	Target for 2017
Increase in qualities of wildness in the Park	10% increase in area characterised as high or medium wildness

**Question 10**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 4 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

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A full list of questions is available in Appendix 2.

## Five-year Outcome 5

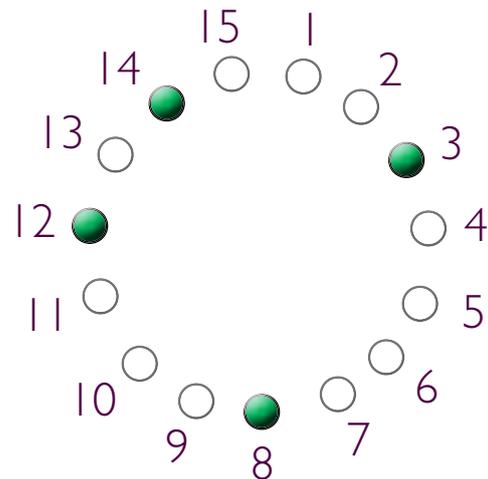
There will be a better targeted programme of advice and support for land managers in the Park that delivers the National Park Plan.

The ways that the land in the Park is managed delivers a wide range of public benefits, contributes to the special qualities of the Park and helps make the Park a special place. The management of land and land based business also underpins much of the rural economy and supports rural communities.

Many land managers are given public support to deliver those benefits through national schemes. The systems of support are complicated – both for land managers who would like to access them, and for the public sector agencies who must deliver the service. The need to deliver the service across Scotland can make it difficult for it to reflect differing local or regional needs and distinctiveness.

The Cairngorms National Park is a place with special management needs and pressures where it should be possible to tailor the support system to support the best possible combinations of public benefits in the right places. This outcome is intended to make sure that happens in future, and to set in place a more effective and easily used service for its land manager customers.

This five-year outcome would help deliver the National Outcomes marked green.



See page 25 for list of National Outcomes.

### Here are some of the benefits this outcome would bring by 2017:

- Effective delivery of five-year outcomes 2 and 3.
- Land management actively contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Supporting skills development within the land management sector.
- More effective and efficient public sector service delivery giving a better service to land managers.

Here’s what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 5:

What’s needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of the public benefits that are delivered in different parts of the Park to guide priorities for land management support and advice</li> <li>• Proactive and co-ordinated support and advice targeted at specific priorities and public benefits</li> <li>• Training and advice for land managers that helps them plan for and deliver priorities and public benefits</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 A programme to identify the public benefit priorities of different parts of the CNP and reconcile competing land use objectives</li> <li>2 Co-ordinated advice and support for land managers to deliver CNP public benefits</li> <li>3 Continued delivery of the Cairngorms Land Based Business Training (LBBT) Project that provides customer led training and skills development for land based business</li> </ol>	<p>SEARS partners, Land Managers</p> <p>SEARS partners, SLE, NFUS</p> <p>CNPA, LEADER, SEARS, SLE, NFUS</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 5:

Indicator	Target for 2017
The number of land management units receiving Rural Priorities contracts to deliver CNP priorities	60% of eligible land holdings
Customer satisfaction with the training and skills support	90% satisfaction

**Question 11**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 5 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

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A full list of questions is available in Appendix 2.

## Five-year Outcome 6

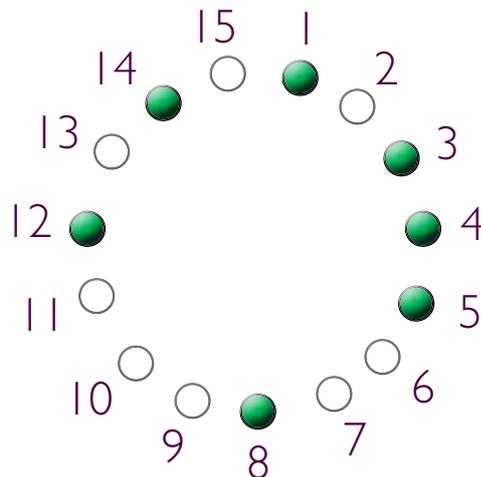
The economy of the Park will have grown and diversified, drawing on the Park's special qualities.

The Park's economy, like many rural economies, is based around a series of volatile or fragile sectors, with relatively low wage structures. Tourism is a key strength, but compared with other parts of Scotland, it is a disproportionate part of the economy of the Park, particularly in Badenoch and Strathspey, both in terms of value and employment. Farming, forestry and wild game are all also distinctive parts of the employment structure of the Park.

The dominance of these low paid sectors means that many of the people working in the Park are relatively worse off than people in other parts of Scotland. This has straightforward implications for the amount of money spent in the local economy by them, and for their ability to pay for necessities such as housing, transport and energy. It is exacerbated by the attractiveness of the Park as a place to move to by those who have generated wealth elsewhere.

This outcome is intended to strengthen the economy of the Park, developing greater resilience to future pressures, and supporting the communities who live here. It means strengthening the existing sectors and businesses, but also means diversifying the economic opportunities of the Park, encouraging new business sectors to start up and grow. For that to happen, the Park needs to build on its foundation as a great place to live and become a more attractive place for business, with infrastructure that supports business development and an effective network of support and advice.

This five-year outcome would help deliver the National Outcomes marked green.



See page 25 for list of National Outcomes.

### Here are some of the benefits this outcome would bring by 2017:

- There will be a culture of creating a business friendly environment.
- Business growth will not be constrained by IT and communications infrastructure.
- Unemployment will remain low.
- More businesses will pay higher wages.
- The Park will continue to attract people who want to work here.
- Economic growth will support vibrant communities.
- The value of tourism will grow.
- The expectations and needs of visitors will be understood and addressed.
- There will be greater visitor satisfaction, improved business performance and more repeat visits to the Park.

**Here's what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 6:**

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism in the Cairngorms</li> <li>• More businesses will start and prosper in the Park as a result of its special qualities</li> <li>• More business start ups will come from the non-land based sector</li> <li>• The exemplar businesses that use the Park's special qualities will be highlighted and promoted</li> <li>• IT and communications infrastructure will be improved to the highest possible standards</li> <li>• There will be support for businesses that builds capacity to use improved IT and communications infrastructure</li> <li>• Business development support will demonstrate how to use the Park's special qualities</li> <li>• Business development support will help existing as well as new businesses</li> <li>• Workers need to be able to find suitable housing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism in the Cairngorms</li> <li>2 Business support and development services and advice tailored to CNP business needs and opportunities, using exemplar practices in the Park and co-ordinated between public and private sector</li> <li>3 Infrastructure improvement for business development – high speed broadband, enhanced telecoms coverage, transport connectivity, access to housing for employees</li> </ol>	<p>STF and partners</p> <p>CBP, Enterprise networks, LAs, CNPA</p> <p>Enterprise networks, SG, CBP, CNPA, Telecoms Companies</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

**Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 6:**

Indicator	Target for 2017
GVA of the Park	An increase of 10% over inflation
Number of businesses in the Park	10% increase on 2010
Number of jobs created	To have grown by twice the % population increase
Business confidence from the Cairngorms Business Barometer	Maintain or increase confidence
Visitor satisfaction	Increase in the average visitor satisfaction score in Cairngorms Visitor Survey

**Question 12**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 6 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
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## Five-year Outcome 7

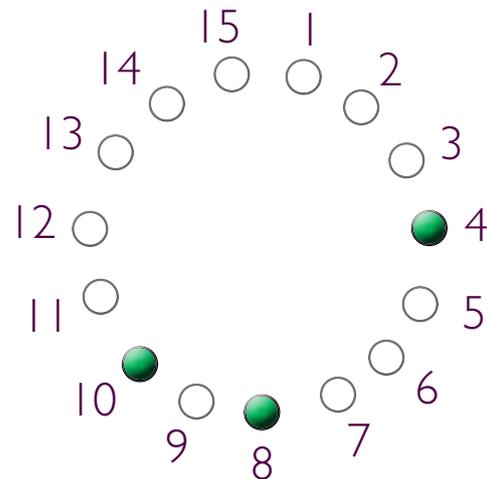
Settlements and built development will retain and enhance the distinct sense of place and identity within the landscapes of the Park.

The distinct character and identity of the Cairngorms National Park is one of the things that makes it a special place. This is reflected in the National Park designation and the way the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classes Scottish National Parks as a category 5 protected area: “where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.”

The basic structure of the landscape – the mountains and valleys – is formed by the geology of the Park and changes slowly over time. For as long as people have lived in the Park, they have left impressions on the landscape and evidence of their ways of life. The way that we use, manage and live in the land continues to influence the colours, textures and structures in the wider landscape.

Many of the most obvious stamps of people in the landscape come through our built development and the settlements where most people live. The settlements contribute to our sense of place and to the quality of life for those who live in and visit them. Built development elsewhere in the countryside can either enhance

This five-year outcome would help deliver the National Outcomes marked green.



See page 25 for list of National Outcomes.

or detract from the quality of landscape depending on its design and siting.

Managing changes in the landscape of the countryside and of our settlements is important in order to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Park. In practice, this means making the most of opportunities to conserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics that we like and avoiding changes that would erode or remove them.

This outcome is intended to focus work on managing changes in the built environment and enhancing the settlements of the Park and its wider landscape. It is closely linked to our appreciation and enjoyment of the outstanding natural and cultural heritage of the Park.

**Here are some of the benefits this outcome would bring by 2017:**

- Settlements of the Park will continue to be attractive and well functioning places to live and work.
- The distinctive character of our settlements will be protected and enhanced giving a sense of place for residents and visitors.
- The public spaces in and around settlements will be appealing and well used community spaces, supporting the environment on which local businesses depend.
- The landscape of the Park will continue to have a distinct Cairngorms identity.

**Here’s what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 7:**

What’s needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New development is designed and sited in ways that retain and enhance the sense of place and Cairngorms identity</li> <li>• Public space in settlements is well designed and maintained</li> <li>• Conservation areas in towns and villages are effectively conserved</li> <li>• Opportunities to enhance existing streetscapes are identified</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ‘Quality in Design’ programme that demonstrates good practice and innovation in the design of development</li> <li>2 Proactive guidance for new development in location and siting through the Local Development Plan</li> </ol>	<p>CNPA, LAs, A+DS</p> <p>CNPA</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

**Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 7:**

Indicator	Target for 2017
The number of high street improvement projects that have been implemented	All projects completed

**Question 13**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 7 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
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A full list of questions is available in Appendix 2.



Here's what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 8:

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and advice tailored to business and community needs</li> <li>• Need a reduction in waste and more efficient waste recycling schemes for business and domestic waste</li> <li>• Need to build more effective connections between businesses and public agencies</li> <li>• Increase the functional use of paths for transport by foot/cycle etc</li> <li>• Improve public transport promotion and connection with paths</li> <li>• Increase the installation and generating capacity of small-scale renewable energy schemes</li> <li>• Increase the energy efficiency of existing building stock</li> <li>• Public transport will be lower carbon</li> <li>• Increase support for demand responsive low carbon public transport</li> <li>• Land based and land management businesses will be supported in managing land to minimise carbon loss through appropriate soil, moorland and forestry management</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Training, advice and demonstration tailored to business and community needs on energy and resource efficiency, renewable energy technology, active transport etc</li> <li>2 A programme to identify and deliver infrastructure improvements that will help business and communities adapt to a low carbon economy</li> <li>3 A programme to develop a sustainable local food economy in the Park encompassing production, distribution, marketing, consumption and waste</li> <li>4 Pilot ways of reducing the energy needs of old buildings and funding to deliver solutions across the Park</li> <li>5 'Quality in Design' programme that demonstrates good practice in the design of sustainable development that adapts to and mitigates climate change</li> <li>6 SRDP funding ensuring support for appropriate carbon management of land and climate change mitigation/adaptation measures</li> </ol>	<p>ESTS, SG, LAs, CBP, CNPA, Voluntary organisations</p> <p>CNPA, COAT, LAs, CBP, Enterprise networks</p> <p>SAS, SAOS, SF&amp;D, ZWS, SSN, LAs, VS, CBP, SAC, NFUS, SLE</p> <p>ESTS, SG, HS, RCAHMS, CBP &amp; Local trades/ housebuilders, FCS</p> <p>ESTS, CNPA, SEPA, FCS, CBP, Local trades/ housebuilders</p> <p>SG, SEARS, CNPA, SLE, NFUS</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

**Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 8:**

Indicator	Target for 2017
Energy savings made to existing building stock	25%
The amount of carbon in the land actively stored through land management	To increase year on year
Increase in number of journeys to work in the Park made by foot or cycle	20%
% of population living within connection of high speed broadband	75%
Increase in renewable energy generation within the Park from small scale renewable schemes	300%

**Question 14**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 8 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
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## Five-year Outcome 9

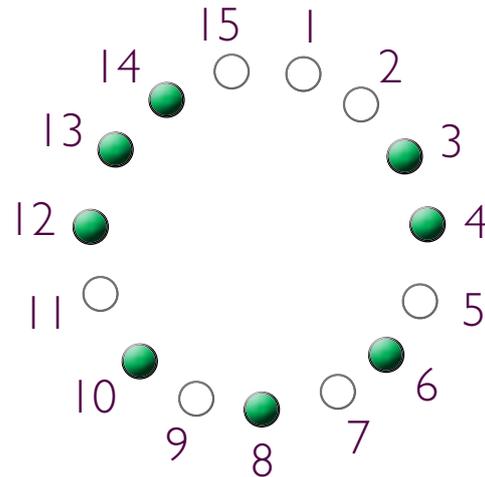
The Park's communities will be more empowered and able to develop their own models of sustainability.

The Park's communities help make it a special place for the people who live here and for visitors to the Park. It is within the thriving communities of the Park that many people learn about and celebrate its outstanding natural and cultural heritage; where people work and play; where they live and love. They define the Cairngorms National Park as much as the mountain and forests.

Each community has its own unique character, set of needs and hopes for the future. However, most are faced with similar challenges such as maintaining and improving community assets; finding the right sort of housing for local needs; improving the way local services are delivered; maintaining or improving the quality of life for different groups of the community; and finding time and money to do the things they'd like to.

During 2010, all the communities in the National Park prepared 'visions' for the future, identifying what's important to them and what they want to be like in the future. Those visions, in each community's own words, are set out in Appendix 4 of the Draft Park Plan. For some communities, the visions build on work they've already done to plan for their future needs. For others, this was a first step. For all communities, the value in preparing their vision for the future comes from their ability to work towards it; through planning and learning; doing what they've planned; and adapting to changes, often over many years and through a great deal of effort and energy.

This five-year outcome would help deliver the National Outcomes marked green.



See page 25 for list of National Outcomes.

This outcome is intended to support the thriving communities of the National Park in planning for their future needs and to help tackle the issues they face.

The National Park Plan can best help the communities of the Park by making a strong framework to support them in their development. It can't itself resolve the individual issues facing each community, but it can put together the tools for communities to tackle things themselves with support from the right organisations. This means providing the right sorts of training and skills development, advice and support to develop plans and projects, and improving both communities' and public sector agencies' ability to work together.

**Here are some of the benefits this outcome would bring by 2017:**

- Communities will have greater influence over how they change and how services are delivered.
- More members of the community will be involved in planning for their future.
- It will be easier for communities to develop

and implement projects that will help them thrive.

- More communities will be able to generate their own income to develop and maintain the facilities and services they want.
- Communities and public agencies will work better together and have a better understanding of each other's needs.

**Here's what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 9:**

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities need to be able to prepare plans for future needs</li> <li>• Communities need to be inclusive and to engage all parts of their community, including businesses, in planning activities</li> <li>• Community Councils, development trusts/companies, local groups etc need to work together more</li> <li>• Public sector provide support for communities to develop and build capacity</li> <li>• Communities able to generate income to support local facilities/services</li> <li>• Community planning partnerships co-ordinate public sector support for community development</li> <li>• Communities need access to affordable and sustainable housing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Support for community development with training and support for planning and developing projects, establishing and running enterprise, involving all the community, business and public sector, and sharing good practice and experience</li> <li>2 Alignment of Community Planning Partnerships and community planning to support local community development</li> <li>3 Innovation in affordable housing provision to find ways of better matching new provision with local needs</li> <li>4 LEADER support targeted at projects that have been developed through inclusive community planning processes</li> </ol>	<p>Community Support Orgs, CNPA, LAs, CBP, Community Dev. Trusts LEADER, ACC</p> <p>LAs, CNPA, Community Support Orgs, Community Councils, LEADER, ACC</p> <p>LAs, CNPA, Community Support Orgs, HSCHT</p> <p>LEADER, CNPA</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix I

**Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 9:**

Indicator	Target for 2017
The number of communities with active community plans being delivered	All communities that have set out a community vision
Number of communities with community development trusts	To have increased by 50%
The number of community projects that have generated income for the community	To have increased by at least 100%

**Question 15**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 9 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

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Here's what we think should be done to achieve five-year outcome 10:

What's needed to deliver this outcome?	What packages of work could deliver it?	Who has the expertise and resources to make it happen?*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance, promotion and development of the core path network and other promoted paths</li> <li>• Promotion of core paths network and other key routes for health walks, active transport</li> <li>• Increase the range of people who take part in physical activities in the Park</li> <li>• Increase recreation opportunities for less active people</li> <li>• Increase public awareness of the health benefits of recreation activities in the Park and how to take part in them</li> <li>• Increase the number of people using paths for active travel</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Ongoing core and promoted paths management, promotion and maintenance</li> <li>2 Development of an 'Active Cairngorms' project to increase the health of residents and visitors linking public health with exercise and the recreation opportunities in the CNP</li> <li>3 Promotion and upgrading of the existing long distance routes in the Park to make active travel along valleys and straths easier</li> <li>4 Establish a 'Mountain Bike Development Cluster' to promote increased participation, mountain bike visitors and sporting success</li> </ol>	<p>CNPA, COAT</p> <p>CNPA, NHS, SNH, COAT, Paths for All Partnership</p> <p>SNH, CNPA, COAT, Paths for All Partnership</p> <p>FCS, Sport Scotland</p>

\* For a full list of abbreviations see Appendix 1

Our suggested indicators and targets for outcome 10:

Indicator	Target for 2017
The number of people in the Park making one or more visits to the outdoors each week	To increase by greater than the national increase
The number of visitors to the Park taking part in active exercise	To increase by more than the national average
The proportion of journeys made to work by active transport in the Park	To increase by 50%

**Question 16**

- A** Do you agree that five-year outcome 10 is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.
- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

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## **5** Managing competing demands on the land – land use strategy

Section 4 of the draft has set out a focus for positive action. The National Park Plan also needs to set out a clear policy framework to help manage competing demands on the land that makes up the Park.

The National Park Plan will set out how the principles of the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework and Land Use Strategy will be applied in a Cairngorms context. This will provide a clear context and direction for the Local Development Plan and wider land use planning and management.

This section of the draft therefore seeks views on:

- A key principle for land use – delivering multiple benefits (pages 57-58)
- The issues facing land use (pages 59-66)
- Proposed policy directions (pages 66-82):
  - Enhance the special landscape qualities
  - Enhance biodiversity
  - Expand and enhance woodland
  - Enhance resilience of habitats and land use to climate change
  - Contribute to a low carbon economy
  - Provide high quality recreation opportunities
  - Target proactive advice and public support to help land managers deliver multiple benefits
  - Develop sustainable patterns of settlement growth, infrastructure and communications

### **Key principle – delivering multiple benefits**

The land that makes up the Cairngorms National Park is a special place. The special qualities set out in section 2 identify many qualities associated with the land that we should conserve and enhance.

The outstanding natural and cultural heritage underpins designation as a National Park. The landscapes and sense of wildness offer a rich source of spiritual and recreational pleasure for many people. It is a land rich in a cultural history that has drawn from, and in turn shaped, the land, and it continues to be an actively worked and managed landscape.

People derive a range of goods, services and benefits from the land. These vary from basic human and community needs to a range of products such as food, timber and the high quality environment on which the significant tourism economy of the area is based. Land management in the National Park also delivers a much wider set of public benefits and services that benefit people in the Park and beyond its boundaries, such as clean water and flood management.

We also know that about 17,000 people live in the Park; that land based businesses make up approximately ten per cent of the Gross Value Added of the economy; and that the outstanding landscape is the basis of the Park's international reputation as a tourism destination – worth £115million to the local economy and more to Scotland as a whole.

The National Park Plan should provide strategic direction and a framework to help achieve the most for these different interests we have in the land in the National Park.

Land use in the Cairngorms National Park is notable for the multiple benefits delivered, on individual management units and at a National Park scale. We propose the following principle should guide land use decisions:

**The management and use of land in the Cairngorms National Park should deliver multiple benefits – delivering the best possible combination of the National Park Plan’s long-term outcomes, always ensuring that the special qualities are conserved and, where possible, enhanced.**

The National Park Plan can set out the high level suite of benefits that can be delivered at a Park scale. It is, though, impractical for the plan to try to reconcile all the potential tensions and determine the precise balance of benefits and priorities across the whole Park.

A programme of work is proposed to define the public benefit priorities and support needs across different areas of the Park. This will offer a more local means to identify the opportunities, priorities and match support and advice accordingly (see land management support programme, section 4 outcome 5).

### **Question 17**

Do you agree with the key principle?

### **Question 18**

If not, why?

### **Thinking big**

At 4,528 square kilometers, the Cairngorms National Park is the UK’s biggest National Park. To deliver the aims on this scale we need to think big, and think about connections. Achieving the four aims collectively means we need to think about the way they interact and affect each other.

Ecosystems are a useful framework to identify these connections and consider how we use and benefit from the land. Ecosystems are a series of connected, living, interacting systems. It is not just individual species or habitats that are important, but the way in which they combine to create our distinctive landscapes and, for example, processing nutrients or creating clean air and water. The Scottish Government’s Land Use Strategy states that land use decisions should be informed by an understanding of ecosystems. That is particularly appropriate in a National Park.

The accompanying **SEA Environmental Report** sets out a summary of the ecosystem services relevant to the Cairngorms National Park. The recently published National Ecosystems Assessment (NEA) (<http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org>) sets out a broad framework for using this approach. The NEA identifies eight broad habitats in the UK that can be associated with ecosystems, of which six are relevant to the Cairngorms National Park:

- Farmlands (page 59)
- Woodland and forestry (page 60)
- Rivers, lochs, wetlands and floodplains (page 61)
- Mountains, moor and heathland (page 62)
- Semi-natural grasslands (page 64)
- Towns and villages (‘urban’) (page 64)

**What are the issues?**

This section looks at each of these broad habitat types in turn, looking at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

**Farmlands** – are mainly confined to the straths of the National Park. Although very little of the farmland of the Park is classed as prime quality (the highest productive capacity), they are a local source of food and an integral part of the economy. The farmlands are close to many of the

rivers and tributaries, and in some cases are part of the functional floodplains of the Park. They can affect the water quality and function of those water bodies, and are an important habitat for wading birds – both for breeding and feeding.

Grazed and cropped farmlands are important in contributing to the range of landscapes in the Park, they provide opportunities for many fine views and an insight into the cultural history of these long-settled straths and glens.

<b>Farmlands</b>	
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farming directly supports 900 jobs</li> <li>• High quality local food products</li> <li>• Rich and diverse landscapes and important cultural 'archive'</li> <li>• Supports distinctive range of rare species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited range of production capability</li> <li>• Fragile processing infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting productive land from other uses</li> <li>• Increased local consumption of local produce</li> <li>• Diversification of produce in different climatic conditions</li> <li>• Enhancement of habitat networks and strengthening landscape character</li> <li>• Build resilience to extreme weather events</li> <li>• Provision of long-term targeted public support for delivery of public and ecosystem benefits including longer term economic sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of productive land to other uses</li> <li>• Loss of edge habitats</li> <li>• Loss of iconic wild bird species</li> <li>• Effects of extreme weather events</li> <li>• Continued reduction in economic viability of farming and reliance on changing public support mechanisms</li> <li>• Loss of skills and of active hill farming heritage</li> <li>• Loss of landscape diversity</li> </ul>

**Woodland and forestry** – the National Park is known for its forests and woodland, including many rare or threatened woodland habitats and associated species. Many of the Park’s woodlands are multi-functional, with many being designated for nature conservation as well as producing timber and providing a fantastic setting for recreation. The extent of productive native woodland is a

particular strength of multifunctional land use in the Cairngorms. Woodlands play an important role in the water system by slowing the discharge of water towards rivers, reducing erosion of soils and landslides. They are also important to local climates – riparian woodland can slow or prevent water temperature increases by shading, and woodland provides shelter from strong winds.

Woodland and forestry	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Productive native woodlands</li> <li>• Recreation infrastructure</li> <li>• A defining characteristic of the Cairngorms National Park</li> <li>• Iconic woodland species and habitats are a key asset for the local tourism industry</li> <li>• Woodland cover improves slope stability and helps to regulate the climate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of natural treelines and transition scrub woodland</li> <li>• Some woodlands are blocks of single exotic species of low value for nature and landscapes</li> <li>• The woodland habitat network is fragmented</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancement of woodland networks including montane and riparian woodland</li> <li>• Increased use of locally grown timber for construction and fuel</li> <li>• Woodland creation and management to build resilience to extreme weather events and help mitigate climate change</li> <li>• Management of recreational use to avoid disturbance to key species</li> <li>• Management to diversify the range of recreational experience and foster understanding</li> <li>• Provision of long-term targeted public support for delivery of public and ecosystem benefits, including longer term economic sustainability</li> <li>• Better integration between management of adjacent habitats (eg moorlands) with woodlands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disease risks</li> <li>• Loss to other land uses</li> <li>• Further fragmentation of native and ancient woodland sites</li> <li>• Recreational disturbance to key iconic species</li> <li>• Effects of extreme weather events and changes in climate (eg wild fires)</li> <li>• Fire and storm risks</li> <li>• Fluctuating timber prices</li> <li>• Reduced profitability of commercial forestry replanted with native species</li> <li>• Inappropriate grazing by stock or wild mammals</li> </ul>

**Rivers, lochs, wetlands and floodplains** – the National Park has the headwaters of three of Scotland’s major rivers as well as many smaller ones. Many are designated for nature conservation, provide popular recreation opportunities and provide water to large populations downstream. There is also an intricate network of high and lower level wetlands and open water bodies, including valley floodplains.

<b>Rivers, lochs, wetlands and floodplains</b>	
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High water quality</li> <li>• Popular recreation opportunities</li> <li>• Reliable water supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modified channels restrict natural flood management in places</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancement of functioning wetlands and floodplains</li> <li>• Adoption and extension of natural flood management techniques</li> <li>• Reduction in pollution sources</li> <li>• Minimisation of water abstraction – reducing water loss following abstraction</li> <li>• Enhancement of quality of recreational use (eg fishing, canoeing)</li> <li>• Hydro power generation</li> <li>• Improving connectivity and function via removing man-made structures and obstacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point source and diffuse pollution</li> <li>• Water abstraction</li> <li>• Rates of erosion and sediment exacerbated by human activity</li> <li>• Effects of extreme weather events and changes in climate to the physical processes, chemistry and iconic habitats/species of open water systems</li> <li>• Introduction and spread of non-native species</li> </ul>

**Mountains, moor and heathland** – this habitat covers much of the National Park and large areas are designated for habitat or species conservation. The National Park is internationally famous and valued for these habitats, and it would be appropriate to make a distinction between mountains and moorland as major habitats in their own right. Moorlands tend to be managed for grouse shooting but overlap with areas of upland wetland and blanket bog.

The peat deposits of moorlands are a significant store of carbon. Moorland is often also used for sheep and cattle grazing as an integral part of the upland farming system and increasingly as a management tool for sporting objectives. The mountains of the Park are of course the major feature in its identity, iconic for both natural heritage and recreation, including five of Scotland's six highest mountains.

Mountains, moor and heathland	
<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique mountain landscapes, a combination of pre-glacial and glacial landforms</li> <li>• Large extent of connected moor and heathland – typical Cairngorms landscape experience</li> <li>• Significant carbon storage</li> <li>• High value for informal recreation</li> <li>• Home to downhill ski resorts as well as shooting and stalking enterprises which are of significant benefit to the local economy</li> <li>• Home to rare arctic-alpine species and habitats</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economically fragile management system</li> <li>• Fragile ecosystems</li> <li>• Rare species vulnerable to climate change</li> <li>• Ski industry vulnerable to climate change</li> <li>• Montane vegetation and soils vulnerable to trampling and disturbance</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing the sense of wildness</li> <li>• Manage changes in habitats – eg towards montane scrub</li> <li>• Maintain patchwork of grazing densities for habitat resilience</li> <li>• Protecting and enhancing carbon storage capacity</li> <li>• Managing erosion risks</li> <li>• Increasing diversity of moorland habitats and species</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change effects on marginal arctic-alpine habitats and species</li> <li>• Inappropriate grazing by stock or wild mammals can adversely affect habitat condition; fail to maximise carbon sequestration; and increase risks of flooding downstream and slope erosion</li> <li>• Illegal killing of birds of prey</li> <li>• Rates of erosion exacerbated by human activity and potential changes brought about by extreme weather events</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diversification of estate management systems to build resilience</li><li>• Planning alternative income sources for ski industry to meet implications of climate change</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduced sense of wildness as a result of visual impact of development</li><li>• Loss to other uses</li><li>• Disease and pest risks to iconic and economically important species (heather and grouse)</li><li>• Loss of stored carbon through erosion, especially of peat</li><li>• Recreational disturbance to some key sensitive species</li><li>• Inappropriate muirburn damaging sensitive habitats and species, and increasing vulnerability to erosion</li><li>• Reduced diversity of iconic species (eg raptors, mountain hares) as a result of trend towards intensive single-species management</li></ul>

**Semi-natural grasslands** – grasslands form the transition from the farmed straths to the moorland and are integral to the stock grazing system. Being integral to the development of crofting

and farming in the area over history, they often contain a significant cultural record of human land use. They also often reveal interesting aspects of the geodiversity of the Park.

Semi-natural grasslands	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant cultural heritage record</li> <li>• Supports distinctive range of rare species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fragmented habitat</li> <li>• Economically fragile management system</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain patchwork of grazing densities for habitat resilience</li> <li>• Protecting and enhancing carbon storage capacity</li> <li>• Maintain grazing to conserve and enhance cultural heritage record</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate grazing by stock or wild mammals</li> <li>• Rates of erosion exacerbated by human activity and potential changes brought about by extreme weather events</li> <li>• Loss to other uses</li> <li>• Loss of stored carbon due to disturbance</li> <li>• Loss of species diversity by reseeding and fertilising</li> </ul>

**Towns and villages ('urban')** – only a small part of the land area of the National Park is within towns and villages (around 13.5 square km or about a third of one per cent of the total land

area of the Park). However, it is in these areas where most of the Park's 17,000 residents live, and where most human activity takes place.

Towns and villages ('urban')	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinctive settlement character</li> <li>• Attractive and popular places to live</li> <li>• Thriving small retail and other businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for travel to services for many communities</li> <li>• Energy inefficiency of many old properties</li> <li>• Lack of IT connectivity</li> <li>• Lack of safe, sustainable routes to services (footpaths/cycleways)</li> <li>• Lack of affordable housing</li> <li>• Some previous development has been on floodplains and is prone to flooding</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the urban form of settlements to better meet community needs</li> <li>• Consolidate and enhance character of settlements through design of new developments</li> <li>• Improve the energy efficiency of existing and new buildings</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance urban green spaces and networks, linking with wider habitat networks</li> <li>• Conserve, enhance, create and provide opportunities for access and views into countryside around settlements, and to local landmarks</li> <li>• Use urban areas to increase local food production through community growing spaces</li> <li>• Use public and private green space to contribute to landscape enhancement of settlement</li> <li>• Support communities to develop more efficient rural transport links</li> <li>• Improve communications and IT infrastructure to reduce need to travel to work locations</li> <li>• Increase use of sustainable urban drainage systems</li> <li>• Avoid development on floodplains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of urban green spaces</li> <li>• Fragmentation of green networks within towns and villages</li> <li>• Changes in character and setting of towns and villages through new development</li> <li>• Loss of long established (but informal) access and views into surrounding countryside</li> <li>• Dispersed rural settlements rely heavily on transport by private car</li> <li>• Effects of extreme weather events and changes in climate to people's property and ways of life</li> </ul>

### A matrix of habitats in the landscape

While the individual habitat types above are valuable in their own right, it is the way in which they come together to form landscapes that creates the special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park. This matrix underpins the multiple benefits characteristic of the Park – the employment and economic contribution, the rich biodiversity and the landscapes people come to enjoy.

This analysis helps to identify the opportunities we want to build on and some of the threats to address.

Some of the significant opportunities emerging include:

- Enhancing habitat connectivity
- Species conservation
- Enhancing resilience to climate change
- Managing the balance of land uses and pressures for land use change
- Improving the support and advice network to support delivery

Significant threats running through many of these habitat types include:

- Habitat fragmentation and loss of connectivity
- Inappropriate grazing from wild or domestic mammals
- Rates of erosion increase through human activity
- Impact of extreme weather events
- Loss of land to other uses – therefore the balance of land uses

### Question 19

Do you agree with the opportunities and threats identified, if not why?

### Question 20

What are the particular opportunities and threats that you think the Plan should address between 2012-2017?

### Proposed policy directions

On the basis of the analysis on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats on the preceding pages, eight policy directions are proposed. These are covered in more depth on pages 67-82. They are:

- 1 Enhance the special landscape qualities (page 67)
- 2 Enhance biodiversity (page 69)
- 3 Expand and enhance woodland (page 71)
- 4 Enhance resilience of habitats and land use to climate change (page 74)
- 5 Contribute to a low carbon economy (page 75)
- 6 Provide high quality recreation opportunities (page 76)
- 7 Target proactive advice and public support to help land managers deliver multiple benefits (page 78)
- 8 Develop sustainable patterns of settlement growth, infrastructure and communications (page 80)

## Policy direction 1

### Enhance the special landscape qualities

The special landscape qualities underpin designation as a National Park. The landscape is the product of many different land use decisions and physical influences, and in itself has become a product which underpins the appeal of the National Park as a visitor destination. Conserving and enhancing these qualities needs work on a big scale, on the scale of the landscape itself. Managing the National

Park in this way will help to meet the UK's obligations under the European Landscape Convention. The Cairngorms Landscape Framework will be completed in 2012 providing an analysis of sensitivity of landscape in all areas of the Park to particular changes as well as opportunities for enhancement.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
Use landscape character areas as a basis to identify sensitivities and opportunities for enhancement.	The CNP landscape character assessment identifies units that can be used to inform land use change decisions. Sensitivities and opportunities can be mapped to provide guidance.
Conserve and enhance wildness, monitoring it as a special quality.	Wildness in the CNP (see map on the following page) can be interpreted as a result of a matrix of natural and cultural qualities. It could be considered as an effective proxy for a range of individual qualities at a landscape scale.
Enhance habitat connectivity.	Existing habitat networks are mapped. Significant opportunities for connectivity of habitat can be identified to guide future incentives.
Promote new approaches to enhancing accessibility to the special landscape qualities for all.	Core Paths provide the basic physical network but incentives and guidance could stimulate imaginative approaches to maximise this investment and make special landscape qualities more accessible.

Contributes to national land use strategy objective: responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people.

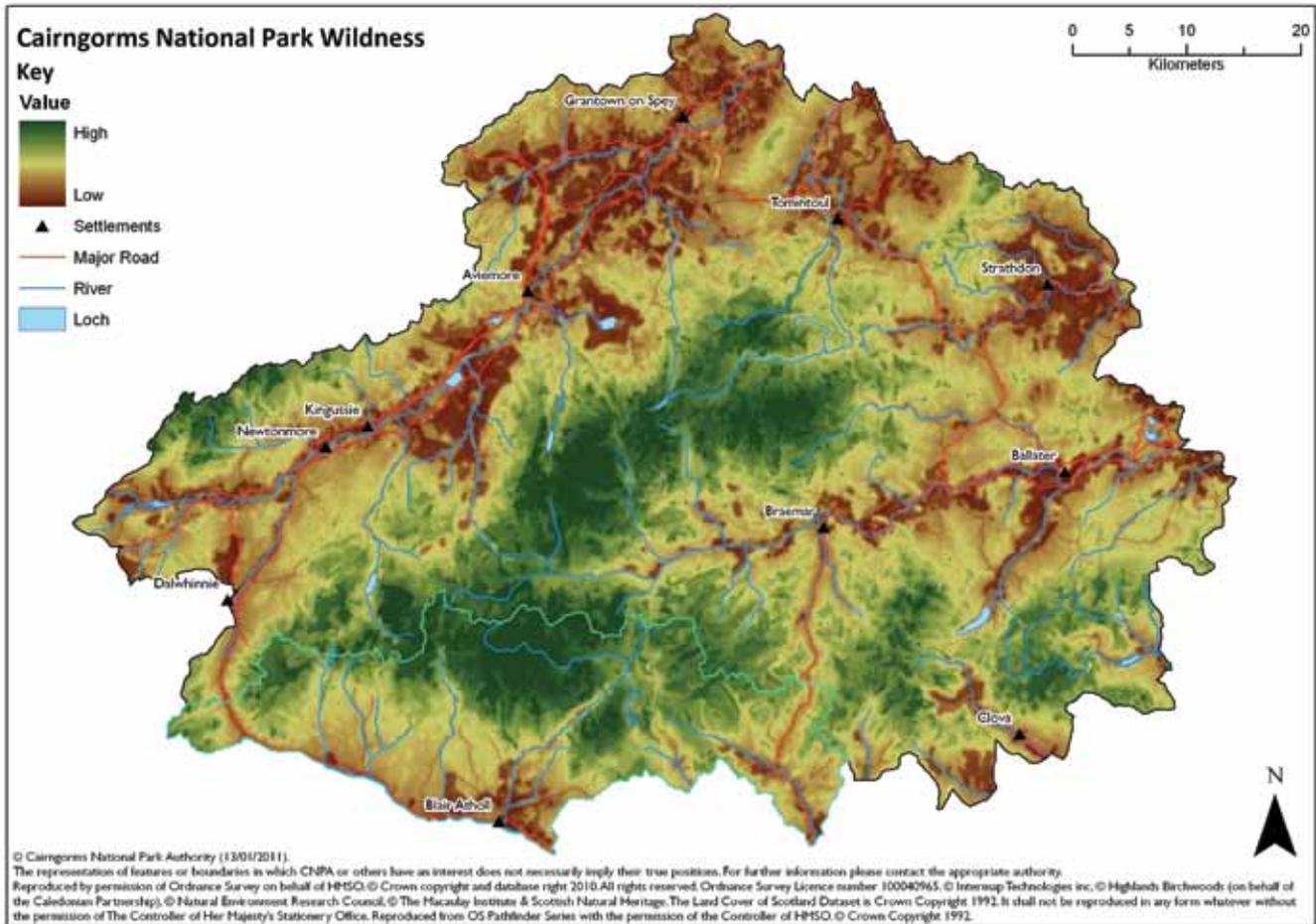
This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● 6 ● 7 ● 8 ○ 9 ○ 10 ●

#### Question 21

- A Do you agree with the proposed approach?
- B Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

MAP – Qualities of wildness in the Park



## Policy direction 2

### Enhance biodiversity

Conserving biodiversity is a national and international policy commitment, and is integral to conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the National Park. The Cairngorms National Park is nationally important for a range of habitats and species such as raptors, waders, capercaillie and wildcat. The National Park can also play a significant part in working towards Scotland's 2020 biodiversity

targets. To conserve and enhance biodiversity at a National Park scale requires a dynamic approach – recognising that species will move and change. Habitat enhancement is key to conserving and enhancing biodiversity in the long-term and building resilience to change. In the shorter term there will also be species for which particular species conservation measures are necessary. The Cairngorms Biodiversity Action Plan provides a focus and point of co-ordination for biodiversity management, and is being reviewed alongside the National Park Plan.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
Achieve favourable condition of designated sites.	Designated sites (see maps on page 70) make up 51% of the Park, so favourable condition would secure habitat quality across a significant area of the Park. However, the effort is limited to specific features and does not address the wider health of ecosystems at a Park scale.
Establish monitoring and reporting systems for key habitat and species states beyond designated sites.	Beyond designated sites there is currently little information available on habitat quality. This is important if the wider ecosystem health and functionality is to be maintained and enhanced.
Adopt a presumption of 'no net biodiversity loss' resulting from land use change or management decisions. Establish a biodiversity fund to direct financial contributions in a co-ordinated approach to enhancement.	Would conserve existing biodiversity through dynamic approach allowing change and enhancement. Would require proactive and objective decisions about mitigation, compensation and enhancement.
Target species action to national and Local Biodiversity Action Plan priorities.	While habitat enhancement is a long-term focus, there are some species for which shorter term conservation action is necessary. This should include action to address unacceptable levels of wildlife crime.

Contributes to national land use strategy objective: responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people.

This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

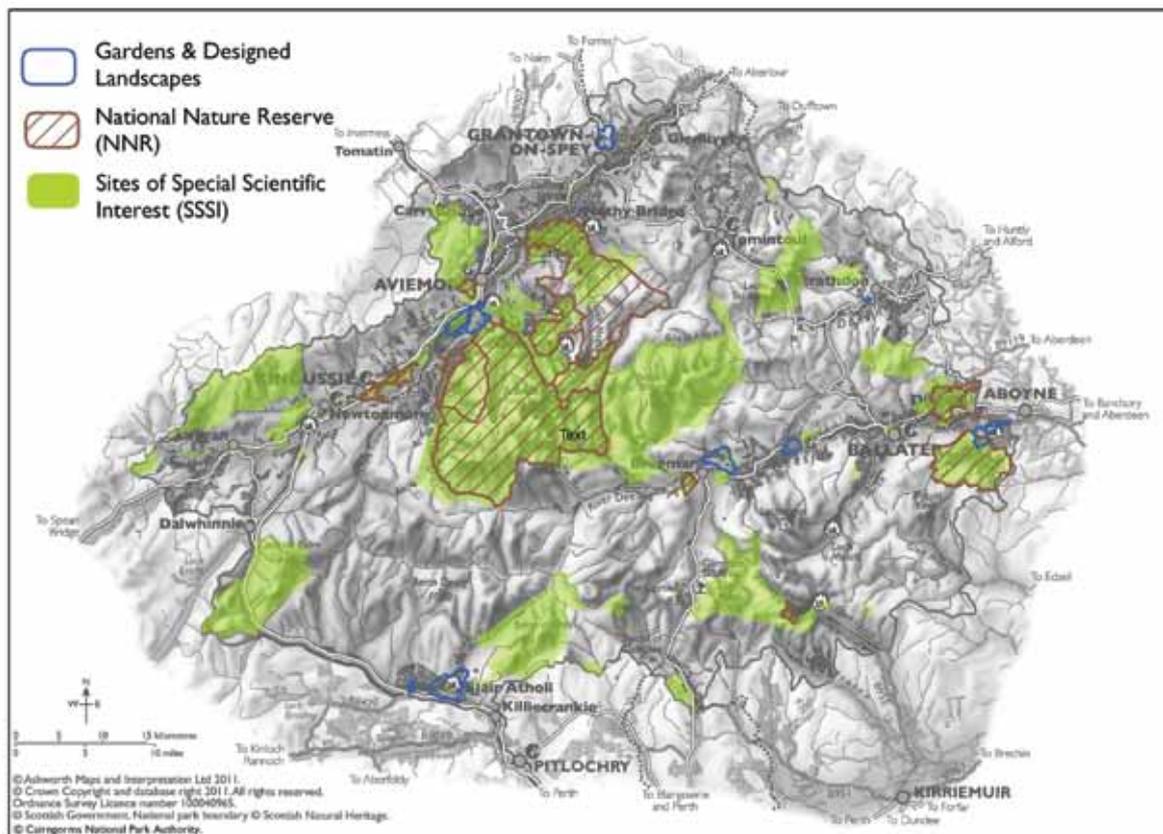
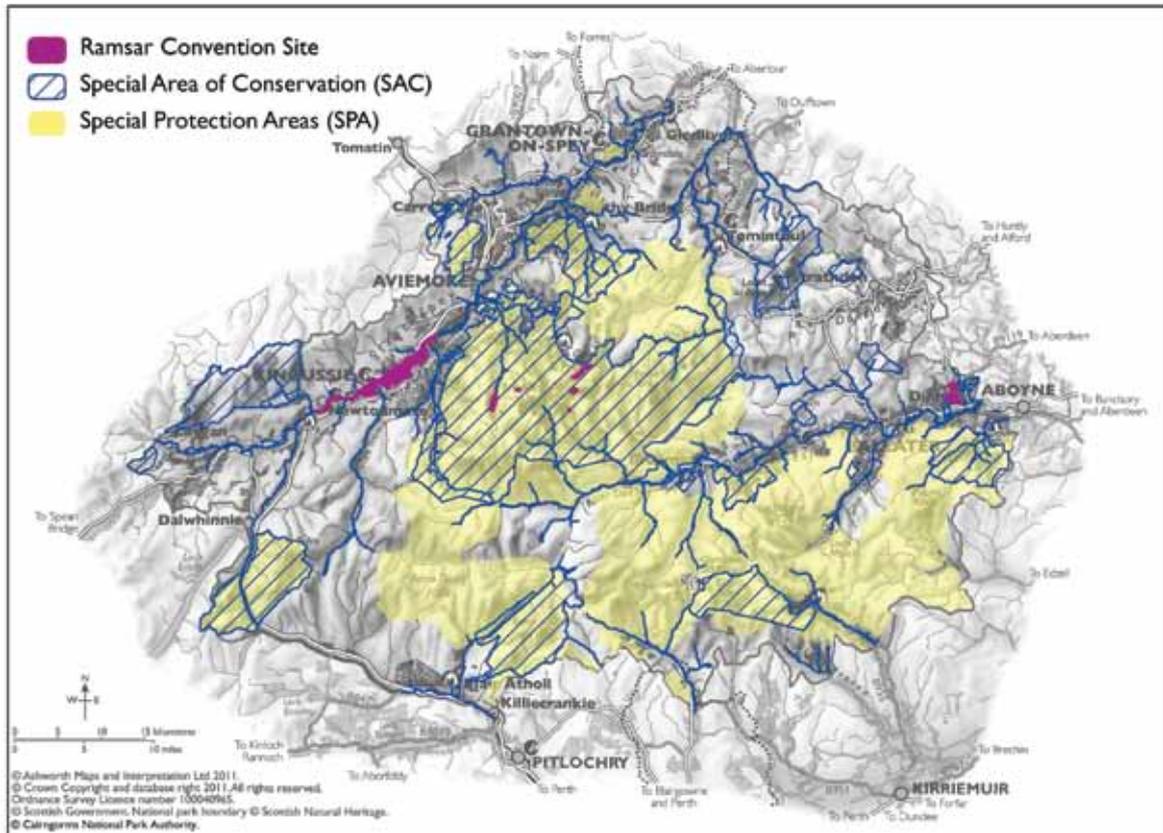
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#### Question 22

**A** Do you agree with the proposed approach?

**B** Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

MAPS – Nature conservation designations



## Policy direction 3

### Expand and enhance woodland

The Scottish Government has a policy objective to increase woodland cover in Scotland to 25 per cent of the land area as an integral part of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Woodlands in the National Park already cover approximately 20 per cent of the area and provide a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits – and could deliver more. In particular there are benefits to be gained for habitat connectivity, natural flood management, slope stability, biodiversity, recreation and employment through woodland expansion.

The Forest and Woodland Framework for the Cairngorms identifies significant potential for woodland expansion in the Park, including some key connections between the woodlands of the east and west of the Park. Woodland expansion should not however, take place at the expense of carbon rich soils, other habitats of high conservation value or agricultural production, and the effects on landscape character, cultural heritage and other special qualities need to be identified and considered. These potential conflicts can be addressed through the land management programme proposed in section 4 outcome 5.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
Expand woodland cover towards 25% of the area of the National Park, targeting expansion primarily to enhance connectivity of the existing woodland habitat network.	Woodland expansion would deliver multiple economic, environmental and social benefits. Expansion should be considered using the landscape character assessment to enhance the special qualities. Increasing connectivity will enhance resilience to climate change and biodiversity targets. The current woodland network and the potential of land to support woodland are shown on the maps on the following pages.
Promote productive native woodlands that deliver economic and environmental benefits.	The Cairngorms has a great strength in its productive native woodland that underpins the range of benefits provided. Expansion should aim to enhance productivity as well as environmental gains.
Promote woodland in places that will contribute to natural flood management (riparian, floodplain and wider catchment woodlands).	Woodland has a significant part to play in natural flood management, intercepting run off, slowing the flow and reducing the effects of flooding.

continued over...

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Policy approach	Implications
Encourage co-ordinated development of woodfuel supply and demand.	Woodfuel is potentially a significant additional market in the Cairngorms, and the demand and supply sides need to be developed in a co-ordinated way to maximise the potential and manage the risks.

Contributes to national land use strategy objectives: responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people; and land based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland's prosperity

This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

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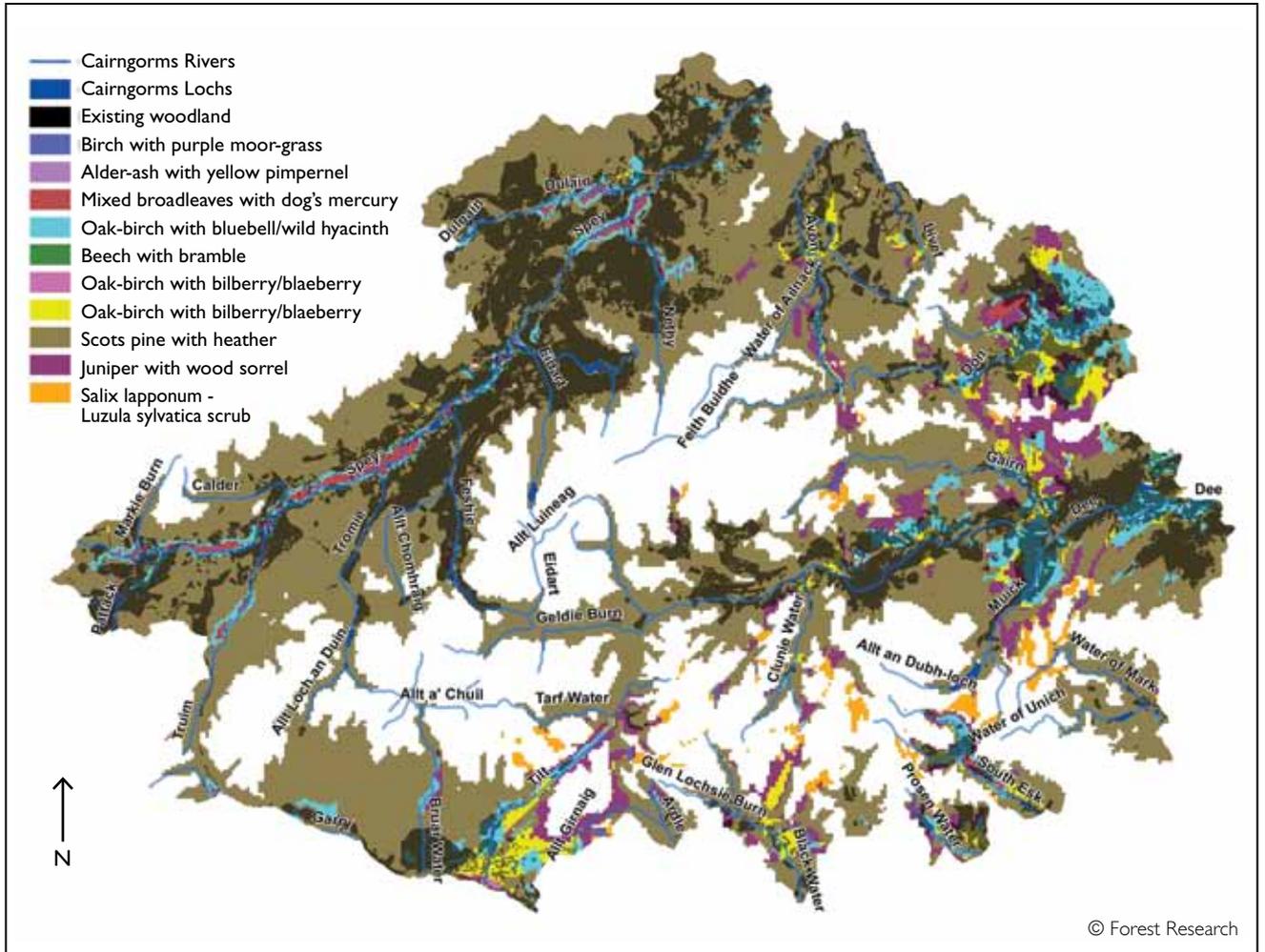
## Question 23

- A Do you agree with the proposed approach?
- B Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

## MAP – Current woodland habitat network map



MAP – Native woodland potential map



Map produced by Stefania Pizzirani and Stephen Bathgate, Forest Research using Ecological Site Classification Model and National Forest Inventory data ©Crown copyright and database right 2011. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100021242

## Policy direction 4

### Enhance resilience of habitats and land use to climate change

Climate change and its policy responses are likely to be significant for the Cairngorms National Park. The fragile montane habitats are particularly susceptible to changes in wind and temperature; species composition of woodlands that are so integral to the character of the Cairngorms could

change; and major rivers of the Park may also change their flood patterns. Land use and the habitats of the National Park will have to continue to adapt to climate change, and to the changes in policy and management seeking to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
Enhance connectivity of habitat networks.	Enhanced connectivity will increase the ability of species and habitats to adapt as the climate changes. Enhanced connectivity of one habitat may come at the expense of another habitat, and these priorities will need to be determined at a more local scale.
Increase natural floodplain functionality.	Increased floodplain functionality will slow the flow of flood waters and reduce the impacts of flooding downstream. It will require long-term public support in return for the benefits provided by long-term land management change.
Enhance vegetation cover to help improve slope stability and tackle unnaturally high levels of erosion and sedimentation.	Increasing biomass helps to stabilise slopes and river banks and makes them less vulnerable to erosion.

Contributes to national land use strategy objective: responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people.

This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● 6 ○ 7 ● 8 ● 9 ○ 10 ○

#### Question 24

**A** Do you agree with the proposed approach?

**B** Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

## Policy direction 5

### Contribute to a low carbon economy

The Scottish Government has set a clear ambition to move to a low carbon economy, which requires changes in practice but also opens new economic opportunities. Land based businesses face increasing costs for fossil fuel based inputs, but also opportunities to reduce inputs, use

and generate low carbon energy, and secure carbon storage and sequestration. Land use is one of the sectors through which the Cairngorms National Park can make a significant contribution to national climate change targets.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
Map significant carbon stores.	Would provide clarity on sensitive areas where carbon management could be considered a priority.
Adopt a presumption against development/ground disturbance on significant carbon stores.	Would provide clarity in land use change decisions.
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from land use practices.	Will help contribute to climate change mitigation and help businesses adapt to rising fossil fuel prices and the emerging low carbon economy.
Promote low impact energy generation and maintain a presumption against windfarms.	A focus on the impacts of generation would enable energy generation that is compatible with the special qualities to proceed, while a presumption against windfarms would provide clarity.
Provide spatial guidance on sensitivities and opportunities for renewable energy generation.	Guidance would provide greater clarity on areas that would be unsuitable for particular technologies and promote positively those areas where there are opportunities for particular technologies.

Contributes to national land use strategy objectives: responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people; and land based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland's prosperity.

This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● 6 ● 7 ○ 8 ● 9 ● 10 ●

#### Question 25

- A Do you agree with the proposed approach?
- B Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

## Policy direction 6

### Provide high quality recreation opportunities

The National Park provides a range of high quality recreation opportunities for all. Combined with the high quality environment, these opportunities are the draw for the 1.4million visitors that come to the Park annually. Continuing to enhance the range and quality of provision, and managing the interactions with other land uses is key to making the National Park work. Delivering the high standards of destination management we aspire to needs a collaborative approach.

Recreation activities can have impacts on other land uses and on the special qualities of the Park. These impacts are normally easily managed by

collaboration and careful management on a site by site or issue by issue basis. The Cairngorms Outdoor Access Strategy provides an effective framework for managing these issues.

One part of the Park, from Aviemore to Cairngorm Mountain, is a particular focus for visitors with a wide variety of recreation activities crossing land ownership boundaries. It is also an area of internationally important sensitive habitats and species. A more co-ordinated approach would help to improve the visitor experience and manage visitor pressures throughout the area.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
Identify areas of need for particular co-ordination in visitor management and establish collaborative management approaches across land ownership/ business boundaries.	Recognises particular needs and circumstances and allows tailored management approaches to be established. The map on the following page gives an indication of visitor numbers and pressures in the Park.
Use the core paths network as the basis for promoting paths and ensuring access for all.	Provides a focus for maintenance and effort to maintain a functioning network of paths.
Trial new approaches to managing recreation in sensitive environments.	The Cairngorms have a particular concentration of areas and routes that are both popular for recreation and home to easily disturbed habitats and species. We need to develop new techniques for managing the issues arising more effectively.

Contributes to national land use strategy objectives: responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people; and urban and rural communities better connected to the land, with more people enjoying the land and positively influencing land use.

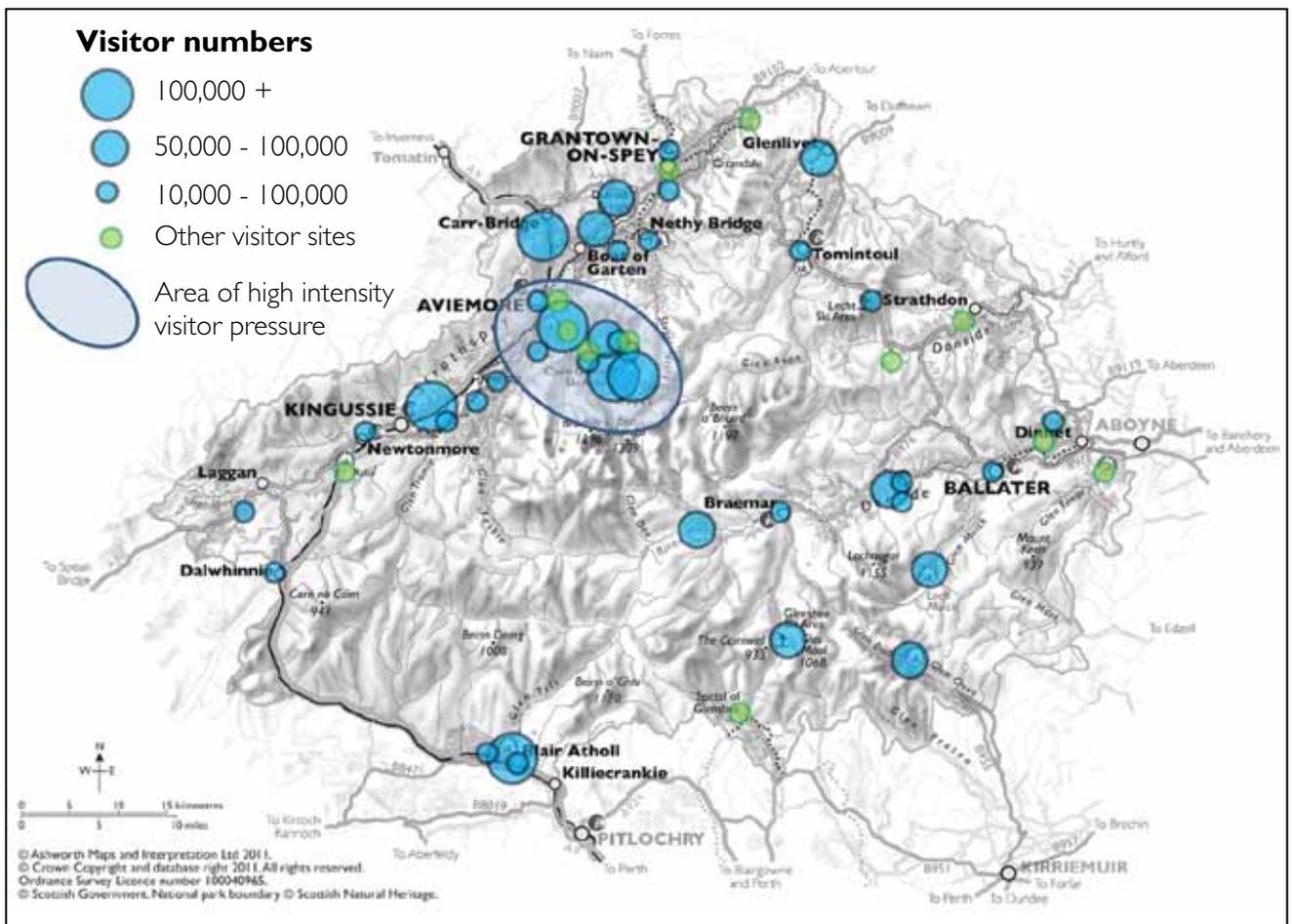
This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

- 1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● 6 ● 7 ● 8 ● 9 ● 10 ●

**Question 26**

- A Do you agree with the proposed approach?
- B Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

MAP – Visitor numbers and pressures (based on available information)



## Policy direction 7

### Target proactive advice and public support to help land managers deliver multiple benefits

There is significant public investment to help land managers deliver public benefits. In the Cairngorms National Park approximately £5million per year has been invested through the SRDP Rural Priorities Scheme. Targeting this support, and the

networks of advice and information to go with it, to the public benefit priorities in the National Park will help land managers to deliver multiple benefits and adapt their businesses to changes ahead.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
Identify the public benefit priorities in 'sub-areas' of the Park using landscape character areas as a basis, to provide clarity for public support.	While it is difficult to reconcile a wide and overlapping range of land uses and benefits at a Park scale, it is possible to identify in more discrete areas what the public benefit priorities are. Through engagement with land managers and other interests this would provide a targeted and transparent basis for public support.
Develop integrated networks of advice through public, private and voluntary sectors.	Would offer a more co-ordinated 'place-based' network of advice to help land managers deliver public benefits in ways targeted to the priorities and opportunities for their area and the Park.
Continue to provide and co-ordinate training to maintain and enhance the skills base for land-based businesses.	Helps to deliver outcomes for the National Park and develops the capacity of individuals and businesses.
Support whole-unit management plans for all farms and estates in the National Park.	Would provide a basis for delivering multiple benefits and identifying collaboration opportunities.
Use catchment management and deer management groups as hubs for land management collaboration.	Could build on existing mechanisms to provide a focus for land managers to collaborate in delivering public benefits and managing the cross boundary implications.
Investigate alternative ways to pay land managers for the value of the public benefits delivered.	Would develop ways to ensure a fair return for existing as well as new and developing public benefits (eg carbon management).

Contributes to national land use strategy objectives: land based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland's prosperity; responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people; and urban and rural communities better connected to the land, with more people enjoying the land and positively influencing land use.

This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

**Question 27**

- A** Do you agree with the proposed approach?
- B** Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

## Policy direction 8

### Develop sustainable patterns of settlement growth, infrastructure and communications

Achieving the vision for the National Park needs communities that are sustainable in economic, social and environmental terms. It needs settlements that create a sense of place, where people want to live and work, and that encourage mixed and balanced communities.

The **Main Issues Report** for the **Local Development Plan** sets out a series of detailed options to guide future built development in the National Park. Those options help to deliver this policy approach.

#### Preferred approach:

Policy approach	Implications
<p>Retain the settlement strategy of the current Local Plan that reinforces the existing pattern of settlement by supporting greater growth in the main settlements and incremental growth to meet community needs in other smaller settlements.</p>	<p>Focuses growth in settlements that are better serviced and can best accommodate growth in a sustainable way. Supports growth in other settlements and areas that is incremental and reflects the existing scale and pattern of settlement. Existing planning consents (unbuilt) support this strategy looking to the next 20 year period.</p>
<p>Develop the new community of An Camas Mòr as the main focus for growth in Badenoch and Strathspey.</p>	<p>Focuses growth in the most sustainable way on a new community with good transport connectivity and the opportunity to plan and develop a functioning community. Relieves pressure for development on other settlements in Badenoch and Strathspey with less capacity to accommodate development.</p>
<p>Reinforce a settlement hierarchy where Aviemore, Ballater, Grantown-on-Spey, Kingussie, Newtonmore and (in the long-term) An Camas Mòr are the main settlements (shown on the map on page 82) and where other settlements play supporting and important local roles.</p>	<p>Each settlement supports a range of services, from schools, shops, visitor infrastructure, transport infrastructure, and service points that are particularly important to their surrounding areas. These are the main settlements of the National Park.</p>

continued over...

Policy approach	Implications
Support well planned improvements to the A9 road and main railway line (shown on the map of transport infrastructure on the following page) as an integral part of enhancing the connectivity of the Highlands. Ensure effective planning of improvements to safeguard natural heritage while maximising the views and enjoyment for visitors to be had from these routes.	Supports the Scottish Government's aspirations to enhance road and rail connectivity and seeks to maximise the benefits to the Park from these routes passing through the area.
Support and promote improvements to IT communications.	Supports economic diversification and growth and the varied needs of communities.

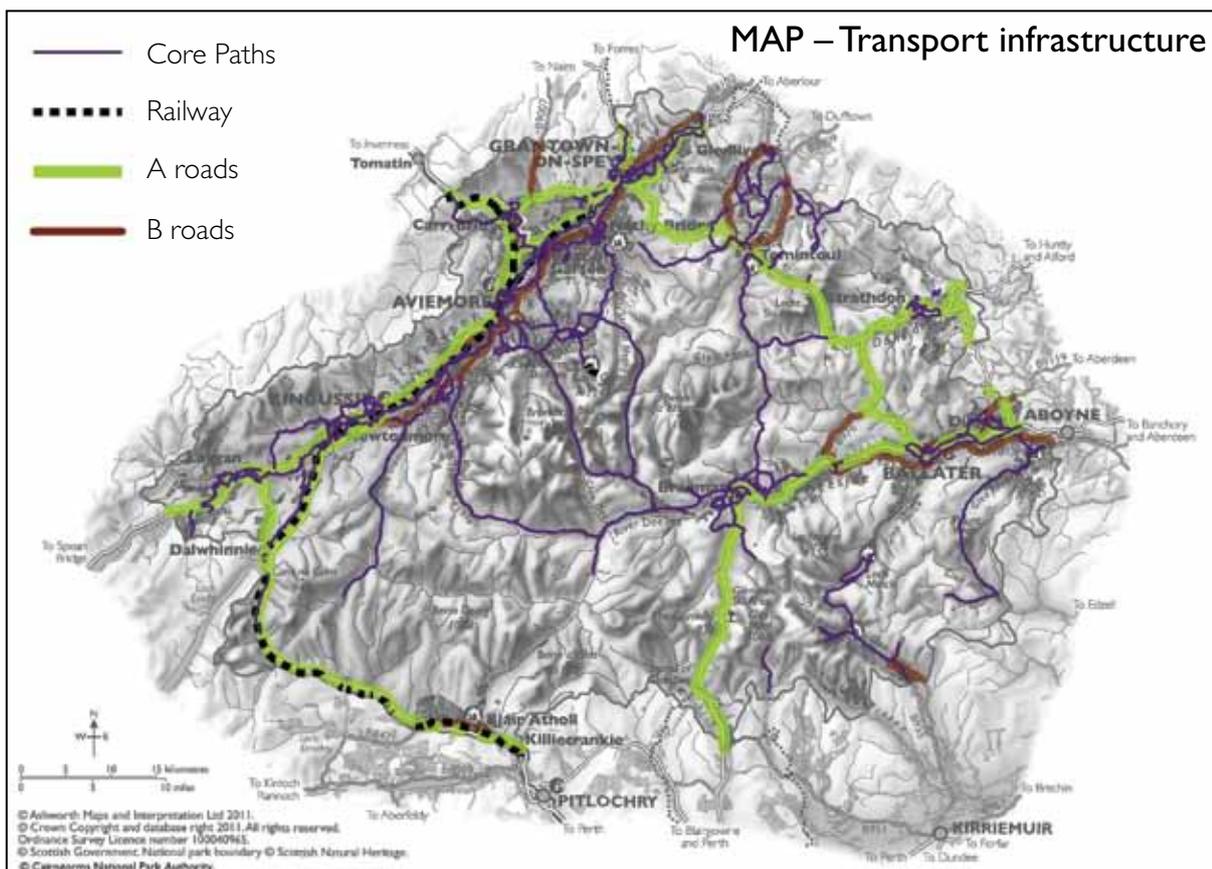
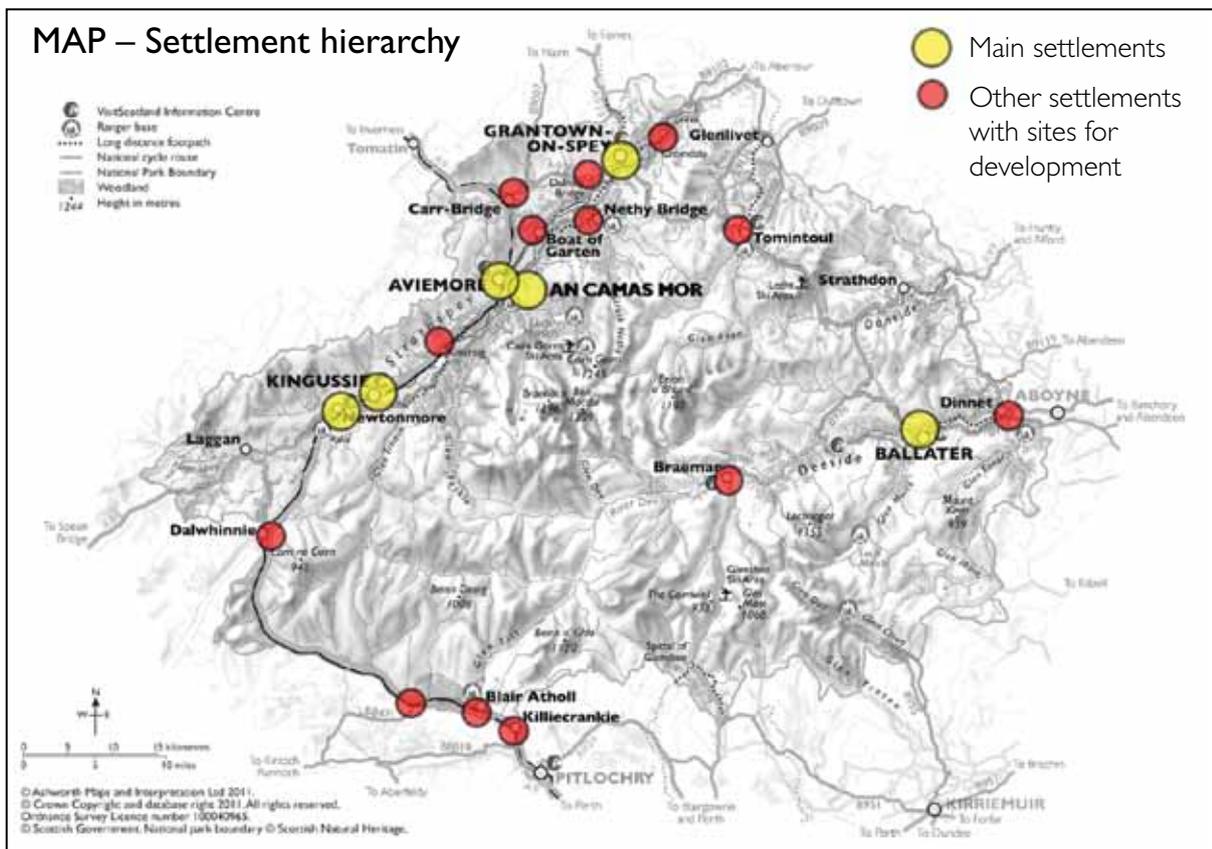
Contributes to national land use strategy objectives: land based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland's prosperity; responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people; and urban and rural communities better connected to the land, with more people enjoying the land and positively influencing land use.

This policy would support the five-year outcomes in green (see page 23 for list of five-year outcomes)

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

**Question 28**

- A** Do you agree with the proposed approach?
- B** Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?



## 6 Delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012-2017

The challenge running through all the proposals in this consultation document is to make real partnership and collaboration the norm in the National Park. Together with a range of partner organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors we have developed some effective partnerships to deliver the first National Park Plan. We need to build on these further:

We think partnership in the National Park should be characterised by:

- Mutual recognition of the strengths and weaknesses of public, private and voluntary sectors and how to combine these to best effect;
- A willingness to lead where you are best placed to lead, and to let go where others are best placed to lead;
- Trust in partners to deliver on behalf of others;
- Focus on the best outcomes for the Park; and above all,
- Commitment to the shared vision.

The final Cairngorms National Park Plan for 2012-2017 will set out a series of programmes, with lead and supporting partners identified. During the consultation we will be discussing what each of our partners will commit to deliver over the next plan period so that the final plan can show clearly who will share responsibility for which programmes.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority will co-ordinate and report on delivery, drawing together the efforts of public, private and voluntary sector partners towards the five-year outcomes.

### Appendix I

Abbreviations for the range of partners mentioned in the 10 outcomes in Section 4 who have the expertise and resources to deliver the packages of work mentioned.

<b>A+DS</b>	Architecture + Design Scotland
<b>ACC</b>	Association of Cairngorms Communities
<b>CBP</b>	Cairngorms Business Partnership
<b>CDAG</b>	Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group
<b>CNPA</b>	Cairngorms National Park Authority
<b>COAT</b>	Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust
<b>CRAGG</b>	Cairngorms Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Group
<b>ESTS</b>	Energy Saving Trust Scotland
<b>FCS</b>	Forestry Commission Scotland
<b>HS</b>	Historic Scotland
<b>HSCHT</b>	Highland Small Communities Housing Trust
<b>JMT</b>	John Muir Trust
<b>LAs</b>	Local Authorities
<b>LBAP</b>	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
<b>LEADER</b>	Cairngorms LEADER
<b>LTS</b>	Learning and Teaching Scotland
<b>NFUS</b>	National Farmers Union Scotland
<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service
<b>NTS</b>	National Trust for Scotland
<b>RCAHMS</b>	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
<b>RSPB</b>	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
<b>SAC</b>	Scottish Agricultural College
<b>SAOS</b>	Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society
<b>SAS</b>	Soil Association Scotland
<b>SEPA</b>	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
<b>SF&amp;D</b>	Scotland Food and Drink
<b>SG</b>	Scottish Government
<b>SGA</b>	Scottish Gamekeepers Association
<b>SEARS</b>	Scotland's Environment and Rural Services
<b>SLE</b>	Scottish Land and Estates
<b>SNH</b>	Scottish Natural Heritage
<b>SSN</b>	Sustainable Scotland Network
<b>STF</b>	Sustainable Tourism Forum
<b>UHI</b>	UHI Millennium Institute
<b>VS</b>	VisitScotland
<b>ZWS</b>	Zero Waste Scotland

## Appendix 2

Consolidated list of questions for  
Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012-2017

### SECTION 2 The Cairngorms National Park (pages 13-15)

#### **Question 1**

What makes the National Park Special to you?

#### **Question 2**

Do you agree with these descriptions of the special qualities?

#### **Question 3**

Are there other special qualities you think should be explicitly identified in the National Park Plan?

### SECTION 3 Vision and Strategic Objectives (pages 16-22)

#### **Question 4**

Do you think the long-term outcomes should be updated and condensed? If so, how?

### SECTION 4 What should our focus be for 2012-2017 (pages 23-56)

#### **Question 5**

Do you agree the set of 10 outcomes provides the right focus for the next five years? If not, what else is more important?

#### **Question 6**

Which are the most important outcomes to you?

For each of the 10, five-year outcomes for the Park (pages 26-56):

#### **Questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16**

- A** Do you agree that the five-year outcome is an appropriate one for this National Park Plan to 2017?
- B** Do you agree that the packages of work identified for this five-year outcome would deliver it?
- C** Are there any better packages of work that would deliver the outcome?
- D** What can you/your organisation do to deliver the outcome? eg provide leadership and co-ordination, provide skills and advice, provide money.

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- E** Do you agree with the indicators and targets suggested for this outcome?
- F** Can you tell us about better indicators or more appropriate targets?
- G** Can you provide data for better indicators?

### SECTION 5 Managing competing demands on the land - Land use strategy (pages 57-82)

#### **Question 17**

Do you agree with the key principle on page 58?

#### **Question 18**

If not, why?

#### **Question 19**

Do you agree with the opportunities and threats identified, if not why?

#### **Question 20**

What are the particular opportunities and threats that you think the Plan should address between 2012-2017?

For each of the eight policy directions (pages 67-82):

#### **Questions 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28**

- A** Do you agree with the proposed approach?
- B** Would you suggest a different or additional policy approach?

## Appendix 3

### Glossary

<b>Arctic-alpine habitat</b>	Vegetation communities characteristic of high mountain environments.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The variety of all living organisms.
<b>Biomass</b>	Material derived from plant or animal matter including agricultural and forestry residues that can be used for fuel.
<b>Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas</b>	A charter developed by the Europarc Federation of Protected Areas to recognise and encourage the sustainable management of tourism.
<b>Community Planning</b>	A process which helps public bodies work with communities to plan and deliver better services.
<b>Core Paths</b>	Those routes seen to be the main routes which are needed to provide people with reasonable access throughout their area.
<b>Crofting</b>	A system of land tenure currently regulated by the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993.
<b>Ecosystem</b>	The system of living things (plants, animals, micro-organisms), the environment they live in, and the ways they interact together.
<b>European Landscape Convention</b>	The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is a Council of Europe initiative that highlights the importance of all landscapes and encourages more attention to their care and planning. The UK signed up to the convention in 2006, and it now provides a framework for our work for Scotland's landscapes.
<b>Geodiversity</b>	The natural diversity of geological, landform and soil features and processes.
<b>Habitat network</b>	The interconnected pattern of habitats.
<b>IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature)</b>	The IUCN brings together 900 states, government agencies and other organisations in a partnership to promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
<b>Landscape Charter Assessments</b>	A process designed to bring a consistent approach to describing and characterising landscapes.

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### **LEADER and Cairngorms Local Action Group (LAG)**

LEADER is a rural development fund established by the European Commission and run by the Scottish Government. Its overall aim is “to increase the capacity of local rural communities and business networks to build human capital, innovate and co-operate in order to tackle local development objectives”. The Cairngorms Local Action Group runs a partnership programme in the Cairngorms area on the themes of Revitalising Communities and Progressive Rural Economies.

### **Local Plan**

A plan that provides the policy and locational framework for development in the area, forming part of the statutory planning framework.

### **Montane**

Areas of high ground above the natural tree-line.

### **National Ecosystems Assessment (NEA)**

The UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA) is the first analysis of the UK’s natural environment in terms of the benefits it provides to society and continuing economic prosperity.

### **National Land Use Strategy**

Scotland’s National Land Use Strategy is a framework for getting the best from Scotland’s land resources.

### **National Nature Reserve**

A suite of sites containing examples of some of the most important natural and semi-natural ecosystems in the UK. They are managed to conserve their habitats or provide opportunities for scientific study.

### **National Planning Framework**

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a strategy for the long-term development of Scotland’s towns, cities and countryside.

### **Priority Species**

Species that are qualifying criteria of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas; listed in Annex I, II, IV or V of the EC Habitats Directive; listed in Schedules 1, 5 or 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; or listed in the UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

### **Public benefits**

The benefits enjoyed by the public and the nation that result from land management or business practices.

<b>Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP)</b>	The SRDP is a programme of economic, environmental and social measures that uses European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development funding plus Scottish Government match funding. The programme is designed to support rural Scotland from 2007 to 2013.
<b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)</b>	A national suite of nature conservation sites protected as examples of the UK's flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features.
<b>Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)</b>	Part of the Natura 2000 network, SACs are protected areas representative of the range of habitats and (non-bird) species of the European Union.
<b>Special Protection Areas (SPA)</b>	Part of the Natura 2000 network, SPAs are protected areas that are important habitats for rare and migratory birds in the European Union.
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</b>	A process to ensure that the significant environmental effects of plans, policies and programmes are identified, assessed, consulted on, mitigated and monitored.
<b>Sustainable</b>	A way of living and working which uses and manages environmental, social and economic resources in such a way that future generations will also be able to enjoy them.

## Appendix 4 Community Visions

### YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

#### Living in the Angus Glens

##### Statement

The Angus area of the Cairngorms National Park covers the isolated upper parts of the Angus Glens. While the 'Angus Glens' are a distinct community, have a thriving website and a sense of cohesion, the Park boundary cuts this identified area in half. Only 50 people live in the CNP area, but while the responses in this research include comments about the CNP boundaries or feel it does not affect them, many people in the Glens feel ownership of the Park and want to engage with it. Some suggestions for this include strengthening links with Angus Council and relevant community councils.

Respondents value their landscape and its vistas of high hills, glens and forests both as a special feature of life here and as a resource for tourism, creative employment, and active forestry and estate activities. People want the landscape to remain open to local people, farmers and leisure users and some worry that not all local estates are willing to work with communities to achieve this.

People value traditional building styles and their community buildings such as the Retreat at Glen Esk. However, affordable housing for people living and working in the Glens is in short supply and is needed to bring people in/retain young people to support community groups and local employment and business initiatives. New homes should be energy efficient so as to be affordable. Local

services, infrastructure and facilities are needed to support life in the Glens, with the local schools and community buildings seen as key centres of community life.

The Angus Glens have forward-looking community groups working to maximise the use of broadband, websites and mobile phone signal improvements to connect and market this rural community. The improved connectivity could be used "to allow people to work, study and receive health care" in the Glens. Opportunities for employment such as training in rural skills, development of existing businesses and creation of innovative new ones would all benefit, as could community involvement.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### **Living in Aviemore and vicinity**

#### **Statement**

Aviemore is recognised internationally as a ski resort which now offers an increasingly large number and variety of sports and activities. Open for 52 weeks of the year, it is a village for all seasons with a year round programme of festivals and events. It has a strong record of conservation in terms of the care for the countryside and indeed has made a business out of conservation. Aviemore plays a vital part in the Scottish tourist industry and is the economic driver for the National Park.

The residents feel strongly that for a community of around 5000 people, Aviemore and Vicinity punches well above its weight, attracting more than a million visitors per year. Aviemore itself has come a long way since its beginnings as a railway junction in the 19th century and with the redevelopment of the resort over the last decade especially, it has seen residential and visitor numbers rising considerably with growth in both tourism and conservation activity.

The area is easily accessible by air, rail and road and due to the wide choice of accommodation provision, it plays host to an increasing number of international and high status conferences and events throughout the year.

Residents feel that there is a lack of appreciation by public agencies of the economic growth rate of the area and that an urgent review of the community infrastructure in the way of services,

amenities and public facilities is now required, as it is struggling to keep pace.

Aviemore and Vicinity needs to continue to develop its tourist industry whilst recognising and understanding the requirements, wants and expectations of its visitors and residents. The Aviemore brand needs to be safeguarded and this requires recognition by public agencies. The community too must remain ambitious concerning the development of future projects. These new developments have been identified as a state of the art indoor sports centre, the new community primary school, the riverside park, a new Tesco and the An Camas Mòr housing development together with a fully integrated transport system and responsible open access on Cairngorm mountain.

A resolute effort is required to improve the look of the village, particularly by putting 'nature' back into its existing and new housing developments, through the use of green screening and planting as well as the more intelligent positioning of street lighting.

The above developments and environmental enhancements will significantly improve the quality of life for residents and enhance the experience for visitors to the area. These factors are inextricably bound together and future employment, with increased value placed on service industry jobs will particularly encourage Aviemore's young people to make a life in the area as lifestyle and opportunities continue to improve.

YOUR COMMUNITY ... YOUR PLAN  
Living in Ballater

**Statement**

Ballater and Crathie Community Council undertook a consultation with their communities and people living in surrounding areas in September 2012. The consultation received a high number of responses and many residents took the opportunity to elaborate on the questions asked, providing the Community Council with a valuable insight into the views of local people about living in their communities and their hopes for the future.

The Ballater and Crathie communities are proud of their community spirit, their quality of life and their exceptional, unspoilt environment. The communities want to ensure that the same advantages they enjoy are passed on to future generations.

To make sure this happens, quality and affordable housing to meet local needs will be supported. This should be done using existing real estate and redevelopment where possible (rather than new open market house building), to avoid harm to the visual and natural environment.

New, varied and sustainable employment opportunities for all ages will be created, primarily the development of small business and tourism related employment, avoiding over development which could undermine the attraction of the area to visitors.

Young people must be encouraged and given the help they need to take a more active part in their local community and local decision making; improvements to learning, leisure and employment opportunities must be provided with their involvement.

Ballater and Crathie local businesses will be supported to continue to provide quality services to residents and visitors. At the same time careful consideration must be given to the needs of local people for competitive prices and wider choice. This tension will be actively managed.

Road safety and delayed access to emergency medical treatment require attention and improvement through dialogue with relevant agencies.

The relationships between the communities and the organisations which serve them, such as Cairngorms National Park Authority, Aberdeenshire Council and Ballater and Crathie Community Council will be strengthened to ensure the views of the communities are prioritised, their hopes for the future are realised, and their unique identities are preserved.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### Living in Blair Atholl

#### Statement

Blair Atholl incorporating Struan, Calvine and Bruar is unique in the National Park as here the countryside, economy and community are greatly influenced by Blair Castle and its related activities. This ancient seat of the Dukes and Earls of Atholl with its private army, is probably one of the best known of the Scottish castles and the magnificent building is an iconic centrepiece in the landscape. The characterful village of Blair Atholl sits in a traditional rural setting where hill farming is an ongoing occupation and this is echoed in its visitor attractions and architecture. The proximity of the acclaimed House of Bruar retail outlet, provides the area with a second major employer as well as an additional draw for tourists who are the cornerstone of the community's economy.

The River Garry flows through the heart of the area, linking the communities together and it is clear that this area has a rich military history, much of it central to Scotland's history. The community is keen to maintain its traditional character, evident in the look and layout of the main street, the village hall, the working mill and the Atholl Arms Hotel.

Blair Atholl residents and in particular those involved in tourist sector businesses, also recognise the need however for ongoing growth in housing, job opportunities for younger people and the strengthening of the trade sector involving service and tourist industries. These needs present a particular challenge due to the

bounding nature of the local geography (River Tilt), the conservation status the whole village enjoys and the bounding nature of the Atholl Estate walls. The A9, Inverness to Perth railway line and the flood plain of the River Garry also restrict the availability of land for development.

Residents describe themselves as self reliant with a strong sense of community and a 'do it yourself' attitude, in no small part due to their feeling of being distant from other settlement.

To continue to prosper, the estate recognises that it needs to diversify and strengthen its commercial activity as land based employment undergoes change over the next 10-15 years. Local business people are eager to promote Blair Atholl through the development of a gateway centre to the National Park which they feel will increase its tourism potential significantly and they seek outside support to enable them to realise this.

In looking to the future, the residents wish to enjoy a balanced community life with an adequate number of families and facilities retained in the village. They would hope that their brand of tourism meets the needs and expectations of a competitive market, keeping the local economy buoyant and well maintained. This together with a continued strong connection with the land will in turn ensure that Blair Atholl continues to thrive as a viable community.

### YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

#### Living in Boat of Garten

##### Statement

Boat of Garten takes its name from the former ferry over the river Spey and is usually referred to as 'the Boat' by locals. It is also well known as 'the Osprey Village' due to the nearby RSPB Osprey Centre and the fact that these amazing birds can be spotted flying over the village regularly during the summer months.

Boat of Garten came into being with the arrival of the Highland Railway in the 19th century and still boasts a busy station with the Strathspey Steam Railway attracting large numbers of tourists throughout the year. Although the village is small in size, it is lucky to have a good range of facilities in its two shops, post office, fabulous restaurant, Victorian hotel, James Braid designed golf course, Milton Loch, primary school, church, newly built community hall with an excellent reputation throughout the area, large central village green, community garden, bike hire shop as well as the RSPB Osprey Centre and a sawmill on the edge of the village which employs a significant number of local people. As well as by farmland, the community is surrounded by heather moorland and stunning pine forests that house a wide variety of wildlife including capercaillie. There are lots of routes (signed and unsigned) for walking and cycling around Boat and on to neighbouring villages, all of which show how important tourism is for the wellbeing of this small community.

The residents of Boat are very active which is borne out by the large number of community groups and organisations that exist within the village, covering a wide range of activities from bowling to badminton, Showboaters and Virtually Famous (youth) drama groups, Mum & Tots to the weekly lunch club, all of which take place in the well used new community hall and are attended by all ages within the village.

Given this level of activity, the main concern therefore to residents is twofold - any potential loss of tourist business in the village and the inability to encourage young people and families in particular to stay and keep the village thriving.

Locals are very aware of how fortunate they are to have such facilities but equally understand how fragile this situation is, especially in the face of economic downturn. They would like to see business expand even further with the opportunity for small units to be available to encourage local crafts people and entrepreneurs - the old public hall has been suggested as one possible site for this. The maintenance of the railway station and its square as a means of encouraging visitors to leave the train and explore what the village has to offer is seen also as a great opportunity for Boat to retain its tourist activity.

YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

**Living in Braemar**

**Statement**

Braemar is a tight knit and vibrant community, of around 500 residents, that serves a wide area with small outlying settlements and a huge tract of wild and beautiful landscape that forms the heart of the Cairngorms National Park area. The village itself is steeped in tradition, with a history reaching back into the mists of time – from the ancient King of Scotland Malcolm Canmore who built his Hunting Lodge within the curtilage of the village and provided the first bridge across the Cluny, to the raising of the standard for the 1715 Jacobite rising. It has been a thriving community for centuries and people are proud of their heritage and environment.

The desire within this community is to maintain itself as a vibrant viable community, into the future, which maintains its heritage within the context of the modern world.

The local economy relies almost entirely on tourism in its many forms and therefore visitors, and the servicing thereof, are the lifeblood of the community.

In order to support this vision and ensure the future of the community it will be imperative to address a range of interdependent factors. Critical elements identified include; housing for local people, support for local businesses, communications, and maintenance of local services. These issues, and their impact on the future, need to be understood by the statutory agencies (the CNPA, Aberdeenshire Council,

Secondly the fabric of the community in its people, is seen to be fragile if young people and families are not able to settle here due to lack of appropriate sized housing in an affordable price bracket. The 'success' of the village in recent years has led to many houses being taken up as 2nd homes with the resulting loss to the upcoming community members to buy their own places. This in turn has already started to affect the social aspects of life here as well as threatening the loss of the primary school. As a consequence, there is a strong feeling in the village that such housing development is an absolute priority and would therefore be welcomed for Boat of Garten if all of the above positive aspects are still to be in place by the end of the next National Park Plan.

the NHS and others) and addressed by working closely with the community. This will require a continuing dialogue and joint working to find, in some cases, new ways of delivering existing services to ensure sustainability. Indeed, it is clear that the sustainable economic and social development of communities in the Park is essential to achievement of its other statutory aims.

Housing for people to be able to live and work in the community is paramount to sustainability. This needs to be a mix of improved rented sector availability and more houses for sale that are genuinely affordable to attract and retain people working in the services of the village and the surrounding areas.

Communications are vital, as for all remote communities. Telecommunications, especially broadband, transport, fuel costs and even roads management (snow clearing) will need to be addressed and developed. All these not only support tourism, but allow employment to be developed, spread the local economic base and provide more opportunities to attract and retain local talent, families and young people.

Overall, a co-ordinated and community focussed approach to planning needs to be further developed; with the agencies listening to, and working with the community and supporting community groups to ensure a positive future for Braemar.

### YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

#### Living in Carr-Bridge

##### Statement

Carr-Bridge is situated at the north-west entrance to the Cairngorms National Park, and has several defining landmarks and events that make it a special place for residents and visitors alike. As the first of the Scottish ski villages, the history of this small but lively community dates back over many hundreds of years with its past reflected in the arches of its ancient packhorse bridge - the oldest stone bridge in the Highlands. It is home to a number of activities enjoyed by both tourists and locals, such as pony trekking, golf, bowling, cycling and walking but most notably, Carr-Bridge is also the location for two international annual competitions: The Golden Spurtle™ World Porridge Making Championships and Carve Carr-Bridge, the Scottish Open Chainsaw Carving Competition. Both of these prestigious events are driven by extremely active and dedicated members of Carr-Bridge community organisations, and the numbers who flock to watch these events annually from all over the area not to mention the world, serve to show what energetic and committed residents can be found in this small traditional highland village.

Another attraction which has helped to put Carr-Bridge on the map is the highly acclaimed Landmark Forest Adventure Theme Park with its wild water slides, rollercoaster, steam powered saw mill and tree top trail set in an ancient pine forest. The fact that Carr-Bridge is also known for both its traditional and contemporary Celtic music and song, serves to underline that this is a very vibrant and outward looking community,

who take pride in their achievements and also value their local facilities such as the Carr-Bridge Hotel, the local shop and garage, village pub and the primary school which are all well supported by locals.

Residents are keen to hold on to the community's strong identity which they feel could be at risk if the village grew much larger through the granting of inappropriate levels of housing development. Good neighbours and healthy businesses are recognised as essential for Carr-Bridge to continue to prosper but it must be balanced very carefully against the feel of becoming 'suburban' where the community doesn't know itself any more, so natural and organic growth is seen as the way forward here. Concern has been raised that Carr-Bridge could easily become a 'natural old folks home' in the future, as the population will predominantly be made up of older people, so steps must be taken to support the younger generation to remain in the village.

Young people are at the heart of their concerns and play a big role in the future of the community. Residents recognise there are limited opportunities for its younger generation, primarily due to the limited employment options and affordable housing in the area. They have highlighted a wish to support growth in the number of local enterprises through provision of small business units, improve the current communication systems (more efficient broadband and improved and integrated transport network) and address the

serious housing/2nd home situation that currently makes it virtually impossible for young people to buy or rent their own homes. If Carr-Bridge is to encourage its young people to remain in or return to the village, more housing will need to be built. However, residents are looking for sympathetic design on a small scale, with specifically no residential buildings taken above tree height - local housing for local people. They have also identified a need for increased and improved access to leisure and sports amenities within the village which will also enhance the quality of life for residents.

By addressing the displacement of young people, it is hoped Carr-Bridge will not change too much but instead will see a younger generation coming through to take over the community's successes.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### Living in Cromdale and Advie

#### Statement

The village of Cromdale and the hamlet of Advie are located just over five miles apart in the north of Badenoch & Strathspey between Grantown-on-Spey and Aberlour. Being once part of Inverness-shire then Morayshire, there is a long history of alliance with both the Highland and Grampian regions, but the villages are now served by the Highland Council with Cromdale situated within the Cairngorms National Park boundary and Advie lying just outside it [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/County\\_of\\_Moray](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/County_of_Moray).

Linked by one Community Council, Cromdale spans the A95 road where it crosses the Cromdale Burn with Advie to the north east. The area is known historically for the Battle of Cromdale, which took place at the Haugh of Cromdale about two miles east of the village in 1690 - a piece of history that has left a legacy up to the present day in attracting visitors to the area. To the south of Cromdale is the Balmenach Distillery and both Cromdale and Advie have their own well maintained traditional village halls which play host to a variety of clubs and well supported community events throughout the year.

Despite the small population, there is currently a strong network of locals who work hard to keep both of the villages socially active and attractive places, both to live in and welcome their visitors

to. This sense of pride in the community is evident during the summer and winter seasons, with their planted barrels of flowers and Christmas lights making both Cromdale and Advie look inviting. The two halls are undoubtedly the main assets that the villages have in keeping the community together, so the upkeep and maintenance of them is high on the residents' agenda. The Speyside Way passes through the village and the Haugh Hotel situated in the middle of Cromdale is an opportunity for visitors to linger and explore the area further.

The residents consider that Cromdale and Advie are both quite fragile communities in terms of their social cohesion and fear that a future lack of involvement or interest by newer or younger members of the community, would lead to a loss of activity and slow decline in the quality of life here. People are now more mobile and are already looking to Grantown and further afield for their needs. This combined with a lack of availability of local village housing that the younger generation coming up can afford, means that although residents would not like to see too much change in Cromdale and Advie, they do want the area to progress in a positive direction and affordable housing for local young people to encourage and support them to stay in the area is top of their list of priorities.

### YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

#### **Living in Dalwhinnie**

They would also like to see new business opportunities established, attracting people to come and trade or work from home, with improvements in communication links, better integrated public transport, more activities that will attract visitors to the area eg a camp site on the Speyside Way and on the A95, create an opportunity for a stop-off/rest place for lorries. Sheltered housing for older residents who do not wish to move away from the villages and a local shop are also among the facilities which would enable these communities to continue to keep their sense of identity as special places.

#### **Statement**

Dalwhinnie is a small village situated at the southern end of Badenoch, at an altitude of 351m, near the foot of Ben Alder. It lies in a glen with the Monadhliath Mountains on one side and the Forest of Atholl, the Cairngorms and the Grampians on the other. Its wide, open wilderness provides a healthy environment that residents value highly and also encourages many visitors to return to the area year after year. Dalwhinnie is recognised as one of the coldest villages in the UK, having an average annual temperature of 6.5°C, which makes it ideally suited to winter walking and mountaineering. This special natural environment also allows for a wide variety of other recreational activities such as mountain biking, fishing and white water kayaking which serve to attract the many tourists that pass through the village.

Distinguished as having the highest working distillery in Scotland and the only one in the Cairngorms National Park, Dalwhinnie is steeped in a rich history created over many generations. The population of this settlement is small, yet actively committed to community life, maintaining a strong sense of independence partly owing to their 'bracing' geographic location.

Dalwhinnie enjoys close links with the surrounding estates who provide a mainstay of employment for the area and the estates' sustainable approach

to managing the surrounding landscape is highly regarded by the local population. The primary school plays a strong and vitally cohesive role in community life, although its declining school roll is a source of much concern. Equally residents are aware that their local amenities are limited and vulnerable and in response to these particular issues, Dalwhinnie would like to see new housing initiatives introduced, which will allow young families to move into and remain in the area long term. Better transport links to other communities both north and south of the village, are seen as additionally necessary to improve Dalwhinnie's chances of remaining a viable 'lived in' community, providing work and leisure opportunities to help it thrive as a location of choice.

New initiatives are continually being taken forward by committed community members, such as the provision of village interpretative plans, the publication of books such as 'Dalwhinnie Past and Present' and the creation of nature walks and trails. These are just some of the ways in which the residents themselves feel they can help to support the fragile tourist trade and consequently the ongoing future wellbeing of the village.

### YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

#### Living in Dulnain Bridge

##### Statement

Dulnain Bridge and vicinity is a friendly, quiet village situated to the west of Grantown-on-Spey and north of the busy A95. Although small in population it has a post office, shop, garage, well used village hall and particularly well equipped play park. Proud of their heritage, the crofting community stretches just over a mile to the south terminating at the famous Speyside Heather Centre. Curr Wood on the south and east of the village has the country's largest population of Twinflower known by the botanical name of *linnea borealis* which shares the forest floor with a tiny orchid called Creeping Ladies Tresses.

Dulnain Bridge and vicinity with a population of just less than 500 has a strong sense of community, where people really know and support each other in their day to day lives. Filled with local characters and familiar faces, Dulnain Bridge is proudly known by residents as having a real 'do it ourselves' attitude to community living.

The village currently contains buildings of diverse design, which blend well into the surrounding landscape. Residents are keen to ensure that any future development evolves sympathetically, so allowing for the growth necessary to sustain the village whilst guarding against intrusive or extreme architecture.

Residents appreciate the visitor attractions the community boasts, particularly the unique glaciated rocks known as 'Roches Moutonnes' and the wide selection of restored crofting machinery which is displayed at the northern end of the village. Access to the nearby forest, open spaces and the quiet pace of life partly due to the limited traffic volume and pollution are greatly valued and considered important to retain. Whilst residents appreciate the value of their community assets they are aware of the lack of public facilities in the village. There are no public toilets and residents realise the absolute necessity to address this issue.

Notably within Dulnain Bridge and vicinity, crofting continues as a distinct way of life for a number of people. Residents are proud of this heritage and would like to see this traditional way of life preserved in an increasingly changing time in agriculture. Complementing this unique way of life, residents in Dulnain Bridge and vicinity have enjoyed the creation of allotments in Skye of Curr. This successful initiative has approximately 20 allotment spaces and sees people travel from throughout the valley to plant and harvest their own fruit and vegetables. The village hall also boasts success indicated by the number and variety of community groups using it throughout the year. Residents are aware the hall is in need of some refurbishment which is a priority for the sustainability of this pivotal resource in the community.

Whilst Dulnain Bridge would like to keep hold of its safe 'country feel' by not changing greatly in the coming years, residents recognise they would benefit from having better links with other communities such as creating a permanent cycle path to local villages.

It is recognised that young people, especially of school age need to be given the opportunity to travel safely to and from other nearby communities to visit friends, cycle to school and to access local amenities. The creation of a new cycle path to Granttown would provide a safe route for Dulnain's youth, subsequently enhancing their quality of life and encouraging independence and fostering a sense of belonging. Residents would also value this link for their overall health and personal wellbeing.

### YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

#### Living in Glenlivet

##### Statement

Glenlivet is a scattered, traditional, rural community providing 'a low level introduction to the Cairngorms' with community halls and a thriving community association. An e-mail bulletin 'Thistledown' keeps residents informed and in touch with one another. A major community event is the Glenlivet Tea in the Park during August. There are a variety of other community groups and community spirit is strong and recognised.

Glenlivet residents value their traditional community, its beautiful scenery and wildlife, its history and culture and its remote feel: "Despite its scattered nature there is a real sense of belonging to a community". They realise the challenges of maintaining this lifestyle and way of life into the future: keeping young people in the glen, accessing public services and the challenges of dealing with winter weather. Some mentioned the employment possibilities of home working and rural skills, but are concerned about how poor transport links and increased mechanisation of traditional industries like farming and distilling may impact.

While there is a feeling of wanting to be left to get on with life and self-sufficiency within the community, respondents want support to maintain and improve services and infrastructure. There will be an increasing need for dialogue

between agencies and Glenlivet after the proposed local authority cuts to services (announced two weeks after this consultation). Glenlivet doctor's surgery/health services, library services and school are greatly valued, as is the local shop at Tomnavoulin (people would like it to be even bigger). The Dial-a-bus service needs improving as do broadband services and mobile phone signals.

Transport links and services, road maintenance and snow clearing are vital. As well as delivery of services, employment and tourism opportunities, road infrastructure and bus services connect Glenlivet with the rest of Moray. A lack of links into the Cairngorms National Park area make residents here feel more isolated from the National Park. Reliance on personal transport is also threatened by rising petrol costs, and some respondents suggest a rural fuel subsidy.

YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

**Living in Glenshee**

**Statement**

Glenshee is situated in a remote and expansive landscape, yet it is still very accessible to other regions of Scotland. Its community is proud of its strategic location at one of the southern entrances to the Cairngorms National Park, forming as it does a gateway to the Highlands, Royal Deeside, the largest ski area in the UK and the Grampian and Cairngorm mountain ranges. The dwellings are largely scattered along the Glen, and community gatherings are often centred on the Spittal of Glenshee Hotel, which provides a much needed focal point.

Owing to Glenshee's remoteness, residents are acutely aware of the fragility of their local economy and the consequent need to improve communication infrastructures such as transport and broadband internet access. The community's main economy is based around tourism and therefore residents fully appreciate the importance of providing better facilities, information and opportunities to encourage visitors to stay and enjoy the beauty that Glenshee offers. If the area is to thrive and continue to welcome visitors, there is a recognisable need for the working estates in particular, to support any local and tourism developments that may take place in the coming years, particularly with regard to any small-scale housing development.

The Glenshee community is aware of the potential positive and negative effects of change, and the conflict that could arise from this. An ageing population, combined with limited employment and housing opportunities for young people in the area, are real issues that are likely to become more acute if Glenshee is to thrive, prosper and grow in the years to come.

Despite not having a central focal hub, Glenshee has a strongly-felt sense of community, commitment and enthusiasm permeating through it. The brooding, remote landscape steeped in history, makes this a special place to its residents, which they are eager to attract visitors into, by having an impressive and welcoming presence at the entrance to the National Park.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### Living in Grantown-on-Spey

#### Statement

Grantown-on-Spey was designed as a planned town with a distinctive layout, resulting in a wide, central square with leafy avenues leading off it and a traditional Victorian feel to the architecture of the high street and the main roads and houses surrounding it. The town lies on the River Spey and is approached in all directions by scenic woodland roads, which residents feel add to the impression of entering a special place. It has a strong association for 'GRANTS' from all over the world, who often visit to investigate their family links with the area.

The flat, easily accessed high street is unusual in that it contains many small individual shops selling a wide range of goods, which visitors and locals appreciate. The town is considered by residents to be a good place in which to bring up a family, as it has a good primary and secondary school, is clean and well kept with a strong sense of civic pride. Its busy hotels, sports centre with swimming pool, cottage hospital, care home, dental suite and health centre, museum with its bell tower, Strathspey Thistle football club and well run caravan park are just some of the many facilities which the community enjoys. The community-owned Anagach Woods which come right into the residential area of the town provide a wonderful resource for recreation and conservation as does the Spey with its opportunities for fishing and wildlife watching.

Grantown has three industrial estates which are full of small and medium businesses providing

a much needed source of employment for the local population. There is a good mix of business and community in the town, creating a positive ambience and resulting in a large number of active local organisations which support a wide range of interests and age groups, including notably many younger members.

Being a town with a relatively large population, Grantown residents are aware that a thriving high street is the key to its future prosperity and its ability to take advantage of the number of visitors to nearby Aviemore, by drawing them on to visit Grantown and its tourist facilities as well. The successful extension of the Strathspey Steam Railway from Broomhill to Grantown-on-Spey is seen as playing an essential part as it too will fulfil a vital role in attracting visitors and providing locals with a further transport link so hopefully enabling more people to live in Grantown and access job opportunities in other parts of the area such as Aviemore. The factor causing the greatest concern however is the continuing rise in the number of empty shops and the potential for the resulting decline in the footfall on the high street. The need for a robust marketing plan is considered to be crucial by the Business Association, to reinforce the message regarding Grantown's special character – the relaunch of the town's major retail outlet in the spring of 2011 is seen as a vital component in this.

The other serious threat to the town's future wellbeing is if Grantown's young people move

YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

**Living in Killiecrankie**

**Statement**

Killiecrankie is a small village in Highland Perthshire lying on the River Garry at the Pass of Killiecrankie and marking the southernmost entrance to the Cairngorms National Park. It is well known for several reasons: the famous Battle of Killiecrankie fought at the northern end of the village during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1689; for its historical connections with Robert the Bruce and Mary Queen of Scots; as well as for its natural beauty and breathtaking landscape.

The Pass of Killiecrankie which is dominated by the Garry and ancient mixed woodland, is owned and managed by the National Trust for Scotland and has one of the best loved views in Perthshire, looking northwards through the Pass from the Garry Bridge. Surrounded by such beautiful countryside which supports an abundance of wildlife, Killiecrankie attracts visitors throughout the year for walking, cycling and horse riding, but particularly in autumn when the hillsides are ablaze with spectacular colour.

Killiecrankie residents place great value on the tremendous community spirit within their village, with annual events such as Burns Night and Hogmanay celebrations well attended by locals and people from the surrounding vicinity. These events are held in their well used village hall that is integral to the community way of life and a focal point for a wide variety of activities.

away through reduced work and housing prospects. Whereas the town is unwilling to accept a large-scale housing development, the residents do feel that a compromise needs to be reached, so that youngsters are not leaving because they can't get accommodation. This would result in a detrimental imbalance in the population, turning Grantown into a 'retirement town', with a loss of vitality of young people in schools and community organisations. A low impact, small-scale mix of accommodation is therefore called for.

Grantown residents are hopeful that the next 10 to 15 years will see a town that continues to be busy, safe and confident in its ability to provide a special place for locals and visitors. It will have retained its attractive appearance, with all of its current assets intact, well maintained and supporting the community. It is hoped that during this period, there will be a new community centre built, more top quality hotels and restaurants established, full schools with a balanced population, lots of successful businesses and that Grantown will still be recognised as a wildlife capital.

The unique beauty of the area and the increasing numbers of visitors that it attracts potentially comes with a price however. Residents are particularly concerned about the continuing rise in wild camping in the area and the impact it has on the environment and would like to see this issue better managed. Similarly whilst welcoming new tourist developments and activities such as bungee jumping (Highland Fling) and other events, they are aware that such introductions need to be managed carefully, so as not to create an imbalance in the locals' interests. There is a well understood need for maintaining a vital and thriving tourist trade, but this needs to be balanced with local housing being available not only for the valued holiday letting businesses but for young people and families who wish to stay and work in the area. With this in mind, any opportunity for future housing developments must be targeted for residential use primarily, sympathetic in design, to redress the imbalance of a small but significant 2nd home population that currently exists.

The inevitable continuing rise in oil prices will underline the requirement for the introduction of a local infrastructure that supports energy efficient sources as well as leading to the pressing need for a properly integrated transport system for both locals and visitors to access the area satisfactorily whilst reducing the carbon footprint. The NTS Visitor Centre to the south of the village is a valuable resource to the community but is not easily accessed from the village. A link

to the Visitor Centre through provision of better signage and installation of an off-road path is therefore also a high priority for the community.

Finally, the community hopes to gain support for the building and promotion of an indoor equestrian centre, in particular to help develop their vaulting training for local youngsters. They have achieved notable success in this field to date, despite having to travel significant distances to practice and compete. For this small community this is a big wish but one they are determined to pursue.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### **Living in Kincaig and vicinity**

#### **Statement**

The community of Kincaig is located approximately halfway between Aviemore and Kingussie and, as well as the village itself, the outlying hamlets of Drumguish, Insh, Lynchat, Lynwilg, Alvie, Feshiebridge and Dalnavert are also sited within the community council area.

In spite of this geographical spread, a strong connection exists between all of these settlements and Kincaig village. Although residents of the outlying areas often look to their larger neighbours, Aviemore and Kingussie for amenities and services, they remain connected with the village due to the strong bonds with the land and the presence of the local primary school, shop, church, village hall and pub which play a pivotal role in the social cohesion of this scattered community.

Working the land is still a major way of life and source of employment in this part of the National Park and therefore needs to be supported, although tourism is the major driver in the local economy. Kincaig's location lends itself very well to drawing visitors to the area. For a small sized community, it offers high-end tourist attractions, specifically the Highland Wildlife Park and Loch Insh Watersports which bring in visitors all year round. Residents acknowledge that the magnificent views in addition to the numerous and varied recreational and sporting opportunities,

are an important reason why people come to visit and stay here and therefore these too must be protected.

For the future, 'connections' are regarded as the essential key to the continued prosperity of this community: through social cohesion (retained amenities, appropriate scale and affordability of housing in keeping with local needs and character), excellent communications (broadband) and an effective, well maintained transport system (bus, rail and road).

The livelihood of many local people is dependent on visitors who support the local economy and the employment opportunities which are created through the service industry. However this area also attracts a lot of 2nd home owners whose properties are often left lying empty for a good proportion of the year and which it is felt make only a limited contribution to village life or the area but has the undesirable consequence of helping to raise house prices beyond the reach of local people. Although tourism is vital, diversification of the local economy is now considered essential, with farming, forestry, renewables such as a wind farm and local home working suggested as examples of furthering possible enterprise.

Whilst accepting that this will bring change, residents would like such developments to be organic in their growth, with planned housing still allowing Kincaig village in particular to retain its

rural feel with design in keeping with the area's aesthetic appearance and small housing developments which do not impact on the views, or dominate the traditional heart of the village which they are determined to preserve for the future.

Regarding the 'Vicinity' element, the Park Plan needs to give greater attention to the importance of the land-based industries, in particular seeking to protect the limited arable (ploughable) areas from development as these will be needed for food production in the not too distant future.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### Living in Kingussie

#### Statement

The oldest settlement in Badenoch, Kingussie is a traditional Highland town situated by the River Spey, 3 miles north of Newtonmore and 15 miles south of Aviemore. Located across the river, is the iconic Ruthven Barracks, a significant landmark as you approach the town. Served well by public transport, Kingussie is a popular destination for visitors who find it a friendly, attractive, well kept town with a welcoming atmosphere and thriving High Street set in an unbeatable and unspoilt mountain landscape and adjacent to the internationally recognised Insh Marshes National Nature reserve renowned for its special wildlife.

Kingussie has a number of important assets that make it special: a very successful shinty team; St Vincent's community hospital; Am Fasgadh site; the Iona Art Gallery (the only public art gallery in the Cairngorms National Park and now run by a community based art society); the Court House; several independently owned shops on the high street as well as a mainline railway station.

The unique backbone to Kingussie is its shinty team, which is vitally important to the social fabric of the town, its achievement being well known throughout the strath and beyond. Proudly valued by the community is St Vincent's Hospital – an important facility providing care for the elderly throughout the strath, which needs to be maintained and enhanced as the average age of the area's population increases.

YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

**Living in Laggan**

**Statement**

Laggan lies in the most western part of the Cairngorms National Park, surrounded by the Monadhliath and Grampian mountain ranges. It is notably the second largest parish in Scotland with nearly the smallest population, yet it welcomes over 30,000 visitors a year. The community enjoys the legacy of the hit BBC drama series 'Monarch of the Glen' much of which was filmed in and around the village and this together with Wolftrax - the all year round, 18km mountain bike trail, the Laggan Community Forest, the Corrieyairack Pass and a rich cultural heritage going right back to Pictish times, makes you realise why this is such a popular place to visit.

Laggan has a long history and a recognised reputation for community activism. Over the years, dynamic and forward looking residents have formed groundbreaking community organisations which have resulted in the community ownership of a number of local assets: 5 community houses for local residents; the village hall; and one of the first Community Forests in Scotland. The village also has its own village store, primary school, active church, resource centre and doctor's surgery and nothing seems too big for this aspirational community to take on.

Laggan has bred many generations of farming/crofting families and now is home to others who have moved into the area wishing to make it their way of life too, resulting in a significant increase in the population over the last decade. This mix is regarded as an important asset to the community,

Residents appreciate the way the town has not changed significantly over time and would like to protect its physical appearance and atmosphere. Kingussie is an attractive destination for visitors that provides high quality hotels, B&B and guest houses, although there are a limited number of visitor attractions that currently remain to keep tourists in the town.

However aspirations are high and the proposed community buyout of the Am Fasgadh site for tourist development is an ambitious and exciting project that will meet this need, create space for local artisans, generate local employment, and provide an archive of genealogy. This significant project will potentially transform the community, provide visitors with a 'high end' experience and create an artistic hub at the southern end of the strath. In order to increase tourism numbers, this is a real opportunity to be harnessed and one that residents are ready to embrace.

Whilst this initiative is very exciting, residents are however increasingly disturbed and frustrated about what they perceive as the allowing of 'over development' particularly with regard to the impact a proposed new housing development will have on the community. Of particular concern are the issues around inadequate infrastructure provision, limited employment opportunities and a population increase which will have an irreversible effect on the physical appearance and sense of this traditional Highland town that provides the core appeal to locals and visitors alike.

as it combines the rich knowledge of a crofting and farming tradition together with a wealth of new ideas and energy, creating a community which is greatly strengthened by these qualities.

Consequently any significant reversal of this trend with people moving away, would impact severely on the ability of the community organisations to pursue their desired aims with the energy and success they have had up to now. It could lead to a one-teacher or even closure of the primary school, doctors surgery, village stores and create a community that is no longer able to attract inward investment. Laggan is a very nice place to live, but residents are aware that they are on the edge of many boundaries, such as the National Park and public service agencies, and even over the edge in the case of public transport. An appreciation of this by decision-makers is vital to the future wellbeing of the community.

The landscape and way of life in Laggan has not changed much over time, and although the community doesn't want to see any dramatic change in the landscape, they are acutely aware they have some responsibility for the future social and economic development of the area. Local businesses feel there are a number of constraints currently preventing them from being able to expand, and these issues must be urgently addressed. Trunk road restrictions, planning legislation and affordable accommodation for seasonal employees amongst others are some examples of where future challenges lie.

A strong broadband connection, all year round tourist trade, an appropriate public transport system, the maximisation of benefits from community assets (eg its forest; tourism) and a variety of profitable businesses including farming and community businesses, are seen as the important priorities to ensure the future livelihoods of Laggan residents. This it is hoped, will encourage the community's young people to stay or return to the area, where they have a reasonable prospect of getting a job and somewhere affordable to live, maybe in housing that is sympathetic and innovative to match Laggan's outlook.

YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

**Living in Nethy Bridge**

**Statement**

Situated in the heart of Strathspey, the village of Nethy Bridge often affectionately referred to simply as “Nethy” has been a holiday destination since Victorian times, yet it remains unspoilt with the majority of its buildings hidden away in quiet locations next to the ancient Caledonian pine forest of Abernethy. Set against the backdrop of the Cairngorm mountains and hundreds of acres of Abernethy Forest (RSPB owned), the village spans the lower reaches of the River Nethy.

Nethy Bridge also known as the ‘Forest Village’ has many historical landmarks and qualities making it an attractive place for residents and visitors. Abernethy Old Kirk, Castle Roy, four Thomas Telford bridges and industrial archaeology sites, all complement the farming landscape, iconic wildlife, Speyside Way and stunning forest environment. In addition the village has a shop and post office, busy community centre, primary school, Abernethy Outdoor Centre, an active parish Church (Church of Scotland), local butcher and a ranger service (Explore Abernethy), in addition to the river Nethy which is easily accessed via the community created riverside walks.

A great asset to the surrounding area is the iconic wildlife in the area, namely the Ospreys at Loch Garten. These birds of prey have been a magnet for attracting wildlife tourism for decades. With this in mind, Nethy Bridge residents would like to explore ways of creating greater communication and consultation links with the RSPB as there are several mutual benefits to be gained from an enhanced relationship.

At the heart of the village is a resourceful community who are committed to improving the quality of life and opportunities for the current and future generations of Nethy residents. This is reflected in the number and variety of community groups that exist, which look to work together and are well supported. The community’s website (Nethybridge.com) and quarterly newsletter (The Nethy) help to keep residents informed of events, activities and village news, whilst also encouraging visitors to stay. The Abernethy Games are a good example of this community’s successful co-operation, as the annual event goes from strength to strength attracting thousands of spectators each year from home and abroad.

Nethy Bridge’s concern for the future lies in what it sees as the risk of unsympathetic housing developments in scale and design. Residents are keen for any building development that does occur, to be done using local trade and skills and in keeping with the existing dwellings, scattered within woodland and avoiding the hard landscaping that seems to be packaged in with new development today, eg soft verges not hard edges next to the roadside.

The continuation of traditional businesses such as farming, building and landscaping will hopefully all continue to provide employment opportunities for the younger generation, but this can’t happen if there is an accommodation shortage due to

lack of access to land for building, low wages, high cost of living and an affordable housing shortage due to the current level of 2nd homes being taken up in the community. The ability to expand small business opportunities to support local tradesmen is also one of the key factors that will determine the future sustainability of the village.

Nethy Bridge Community Development Company are hopeful that within the next decade, they will have realised their ambition of getting a successful wind energy scheme going in the community, supporting local amenities including the community centre.

Residents would not like Nethy Bridge to be very different from the peaceful yet attractive, socially active village it currently is. It is hoped that in future, people will still enjoy fishing on the Spey, the forest area will be well managed, it may be darker due to less street lighting, the stunning views will still be appreciated and it may even have a tea room for all to enjoy.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### Living in Newtonmore

#### Statement

Newtonmore, situated above the flood plain of the River Spey, is at the heart of the Scottish Highlands set against the backdrop of the Monadhliath Mountains. Larch, pine, birch and alder woodlands, which are a feature of this rural environment, provide a glorious tapestry of colour during the autumn. The area is one of the last strongholds of the native red squirrel and is home to the elusive Scottish wildcat. The Newtonmore Wildcat Centre, on the main street, provides a fund of information on local outdoor activities.

Lying close to its neighbour Kingussie, with whom it enjoys a fierce rivalry on the shinty pitch, Newtonmore and surrounding area is popular with outdoor and field sports enthusiasts. With easy access to hills and rivers, the area is perfect for walkers, climbers, ornithologists, cyclists, anglers and pony-trekking. Outdoor highlights include the "Wildcat Trail" which is a 10km orbital walk around the edge of the village, taking in the River Spey and its tributary the Calder and local archaeological sites. In addition, nearby 'Munros', the Calder Falls, the scenic 18 hole Newtonmore golf course, fishing on the Spey and beautiful Glen Banchor provide something for everyone.

Popular attractions in Newtonmore are the highly acclaimed Highland Folk Museum, the Wildcat Experience, Waltzing Waters Light and Water Theatre and, for those hunting their Highland ancestry, the Clan MacPherson Museum. Numerous locations in and around Newtonmore

were part of the fictional 'Glenbogle' which featured in the hit BBC TV series Monarch of the Glen. Visitors to Newtonmore continue to find delight in spotting sites made familiar by the series.

A healthy tourist trade is a major source of employment for the village and the community works hard to promote this aspect of village life. Residents, the Newtonmore & Vicinity Community Council and the Newtonmore Business Association are united in their recognition that over development of the built environment or further losses of amenities and services, will impact negatively on the community's ability to encourage visitors to remain in the village for an extended period of time. All share deep concerns that the current unspoilt nature of the place, with its balance of tourism and traditional working environment, is at risk.

There is anxiety, too, over the continued movement of young people away from the area and the trend towards an ageing population. This drift of younger people from the area stems from limited employment opportunities and an inability to access local housing because of high cost, lack of rental properties and increasing numbers of second homes. Keeping young people in Newtonmore is regarded as a priority, as they are vital to the sustainability of the quality of community life that characterises this traditional village. Retention of the individual character and appeal of Newtonmore will depend on

appropriate housing development. Sensitive location of small groupings of mixed size dwellings and less insistence on a standard 1.5 storey house are essential. The proposed 'estate' type block developments are out of character and will, ultimately, undermine the attractiveness and appeal of Newtonmore.

The residents are clear in their determination to retain and enhance the features that make Newtonmore distinct. Important amongst these are:

- Development and expansion of the award winning Folk Museum
- Refurbishment of the village hall with its fine façade
- Protection of native wildlife
- Creation of opportunities for small businesses to thrive, including streamlining of strong communication links
- Continuation and promotion of the Newtonmore Games
- Reinforcement of the sense of strong community spirit

### YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

#### Living in Strathdon

##### Statement

The area of Upper Donside within the National Park includes all the small communities of Strathdon up to Corgarff and the Lecht. The total population is around 500 and widely dispersed over more than 15 miles of Donside plus adjoining small glens.

The River Don and the cultural influence of the Lonach heritage are common links between these mainly agricultural settlements and glens where people value the rural way of life, natural beauty and abundance of wildlife and rare species. Farming, sporting estates and increasingly small businesses, including tourism, play an important part economically. The remoteness and dispersal of residences has created self-reliance but also a dependency on transport, energy supplies, communication, and the services that are available. Apart from that, the friendly and supportive social network plays an important part, especially when dealing with problems.

Financial cuts that affect services and community groups would seriously threaten the welfare and wellbeing of people here. The increasing cost of fuel, energy and therefore, transport and heating, is hitting people here harder than in more populated areas. A shortage of houses to rent or buy and a lack of services and jobs can cause younger people to move away and elderly locals to become increasingly isolated. Without a more focused approach or plan, tourism in Upper Donside will remain underdeveloped compared to Speyside and Royal Deeside.

In an ideal future, Upper Donside will still have the rural, unspoilt, unpolluted, crime-free character that it has today but estates, residents, farmers, businesses, services and community groups will work more closely together to share resources and find creative ways to exploit the area's natural resources and beauty, and enable it to remain a great place to live.

This will involve an overall improvement with regard to housing, employment, community and recreational activities, outdoor access and creative solutions to transport needs. Success will mean even better relations between all parties involved, and strengthen the social fabric and willingness to co-ordinate and enable new initiatives.

Better broadband available throughout all the glens would have a huge positive effect for: business opportunities for even the remotest locations, the ability to work from home, facilitating easier and quicker ways of working together in general, providing more information, access to online resources and enabling distance-learning, preventing social isolation of vulnerable groups and promoting the area much more effectively as a tourist destination.

## YOUR COMMUNITY ...YOUR PLAN

### Living in Tomintoul

#### Statement

Tomintoul village sees itself as the gateway to the Cairngorms in the North, but can also feel isolated – ‘out on a limb’ - both from the Aviemore corridor (Cairngorms National Park) and Elgin (The Moray Council area). Tomintoul itself is a centre for outlying settlements the Braes of Glenlivet, Tomnavoulin, Chapelton of Glenlivet and other isolated settlements, though these areas also look to Grantown, Elgin and other Speyside towns for services and facilities. It has a good sense of community, with lively community groups.

Tomintoul values its beautiful scenery and wildlife and sees this as a privilege for people living here, but also as an asset for tourism. However, people are worried about the threats to tourism from unoccupied or derelict buildings in the village. Particularly, a closed hotel and some shop closures raise concerns about accommodation and facilities to offer tourists. Two weeks after this consultation, the Moray Council budget proposals included plans to close some services including Tomintoul Museum and Tourist Information Centre which had a footfall of 12,000 this year which would reduce the incentive for tourists to stop in Tomintoul even further. New facilities using existing buildings such as a gym/ leisure facilities and a campsite are among suggested solutions, as well as making the most of assets such as local walks.

Isolation and distance from main centres concerns people in Tomintoul. Rising fuel costs

and drive times to shops and facilities like swimming pools and training facilities for young people, plus limited employment opportunities could mean an increase in the ageing of the population. There are concerns about the affordability of housing for young people and families and a desire to see the council points system for housing allocation including a method for targeting local people. New affordable housing could utilise derelict buildings and/or be in keeping with traditional styles.

Tomintoul greatly values the services it currently has itself. The doctor's surgery, library, primary school, emergency services, Dial-a-bus, village shop and museum are all mentioned in the consultation. The proposed council cuts could impact very heavily on these services. 78% of people consulted about the effects of public service cuts thought that these would be ‘severe’ in Tomintoul, and there is great concern in the village about the effects that closure of the library, museum and car share scheme would have on the village. The many comments about the minimal bus services available must raise concerns about how local people could get to hospital appointments, and how children and locals unable to drive or with limited access to a car could access library services etc. Some expressed a wish for the community to work with agencies such as the Crown Estate, Moray Council and the Park to improve things in Tomintoul in the future.







For a large print version of this publication, please contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority at the Grantown-on-Spey office address below or telephone 01479 873535.

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