



Braemar Community Action Plan

February 2017



Braemar School c. 1896



Castleton Terrace c. 1880



Corriefergie Curlers c. 1890s



Hunting and Fishing Parties c. 1880

Welcome Back!

This document brings together an update on a wide range of actions and projects, which the Braemar community believes are achievable and would deliver short and/or long-term benefits for the village. It builds on (and replaces) the original CAP document of 2013.

Following a further consultation programme, all the proposed actions and projects are grouped under five themes:

- *Visitor Experience*
- *Active Braemar*
- *Youth and Learning*
- *Community Capability*
- *Housing and Economic Development*

Braemar In Context

Braemar lies at the heart of the Cairngorms National Park in the highest and wildest landscape in the UK. Surrounded by mountains, heather moorland, pine and birchwood, the village spans the rocky gorge of the Clunie Water.

For generations, the scenery and mountain air have attracted visitors who come to enjoy walking, climbing, wildlife-watching, cycling, hang-gliding, canoeing, fishing, stalking, golf and skiing.

Within close proximity to over a quarter of Scotland's Munros, the area has been the inspiration for a number of writers, artists and photographers, and many visitors will return again and again.

A cohesive and supportive community of around 450 inhabitants, the village is known around the world for the annual Braemar Gathering. The event attracts around 15,000 people on the first Saturday in September each year and has the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen.

Braemar is on the tourist route from Perth to Aberdeen, which climbs over the Cairnwell Pass, the highest through-road in the country, (now dubbed the 'Snow Road') and follows the River Dee along its picturesque valley. Surrounded by unspoilt and unpopulated countryside, it is nevertheless within an hour and a half's drive from three major cities: Perth, Dundee and Aberdeen.

Almost all of Braemar is now designated as a conservation area. The village is compact, with a mix of grand Victorian houses, modest cottages, narrow roads and lanes, retaining a unique character. The village, treasured by many, has so much going for it and is ideally placed to work with others to seek funding for a host of projects to secure a prosperous future.

Braemar In The Past

The geology of the area – a series of granite intrusions, metamorphosed sedimentary sequences and glacial erosion – have defined the way the land has weathered, what is now mountainous upland and where the rivers meander.

Braemar (which was originally two villages) built up at a bridging point of the Clunie. Braemar has been strategically important since early times. Hill passes – from the north, south, east and west – converge where the modern village now stands at the intersection of the Clunie and Dee.

The earliest settlement is believed to have been near the raised mound where Braemar Castle is now situated. The first church dedicated to Saint Andrew in Scotland was built here and the area came to be known as St Andrews or Doldencha. Fine hunting first brought royal patronage. In the 10th century, King

Kenneth MacAlpin enjoyed sport here. The rocky hill which forms the backdrop to the village bears his name: Kenneth's Crag or Creag Choinnich. In the 11th century, King Malcolm Canmore built a hunting lodge on the banks of the Clunie and is credited with being the first to use a competitive hill race to find his fittest, strongest and fastest messengers, a tradition which lives on in the annual Braemar Gathering.

Kindrochit Castle is known to have been in regular use by Scottish kings until the 16th century. Around the castle grew the village of Castleton on Invercauld Estate which, along with Auchendryne (field of the thorns) on Mar Estate, forms the modern Braemar. Invercauld and Mar estates continued to play influential roles in Braemar's history, investment and evolution over hundreds of years.

By the 17th century Kindrochit was ruinous and a new Castle of Mar was built by the Earl of Mar, near the site of the original St Andrews Church. In 1715, the Earl of Mar gave the village a lasting place in the history of Scotland when he raised the standard to start the 1715 Jacobite uprising.

Up until the 19th century, Gaelic was the language spoken by the inhabitants of Braemar, evidenced by local place names. The arrival of Queen Victoria on Deeside in 1848 brought an influx of English visitors, as well as stalking and grouse shooting guests, and created the new industry of tourism for the village. The Gaelic language was laid aside and Braemar embraced new opportunities. Hotels and businesses, designed to serve the new wave of visitors, sprang up and the village, as we know it today, began.

Braemar Today

Today Braemar is a vibrant community with a raft of different projects under way. The economy of the village is heavily dependent on tourism. Helping to keep visitors informed about all the activities available, the Visitor Information Centre provides a year-round service. Now there is a real desire to extend further both summer and winter seasons by creating additional attractions to bring more visitors to Braemar, persuading them to stay longer and establishing a more robust economy.

Braemar continues to be an internationally renowned area for shooting, fishing and stalking, with sporting visitors to Invercauld, Mar and Mar Lodge estates injecting valuable income into the local economy. The stunning natural environment also attracts hundreds of thousands each year to the village and surrounding area, generating significant income through tourism.

Braemar already has much to attract visitors as well as new residents. Although the population of around 450 is small, the school roll is rising and new houses are being built. Children are well served by the Primary School, with a head teacher and a staff of three. For secondary education, youngsters attend Aboyne Academy (27 miles away).

A resident doctor is on call 24 hours a day and there is a sheltered housing complex with 12 residents. An emergency service is provided by a team of First Responders, all locally retained members of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. A highly experienced volunteer Mountain Rescue Team, which operates in partnership with Police Scotland, also has a training base in the village.



Braemar Gathering



Braemar Castle



Red Squirrel



Mar Lodge



Menzies Butchers



Gordon's Tearoom



Braemar Mountain Sports



The Speciality Shop and Antique Shop

The community and visitors are well served by local services and shops with a garage and service station, pharmacist and newsagent, high class butcher, Co-operative store, art gallery, sporran maker, mountain sports shop, several cafes and around seven other shops offering a wide range of gifts, food and clothing. There is also an 18-hole golf course, reputed to be the highest in Scotland, and the UK's largest skiing area, Glenshee Ski Centre, is just 10 miles away.

A large coaching hotel provides accommodation for around 200. There are also three smaller private hotels, five guest houses, around six B&Bs, two bunkhouses and the Youth Hostel, as well as over a dozen self-catering properties. There is a caravan site with accommodation for 100 caravans and 30 tents. Nearby, too, is the National Trust for Scotland's Mar Lodge, which operates as self-catering accommodation and as a popular wedding venue.

Development is under way of the central Fife Arms hotel. The plans are to establish this as a 5-star hotel and spa in the village, opening in 2018.

Three churches operate in the village: Church of Scotland, St Andrew's Roman Catholic Church and an Episcopalian congregation at Mar Lodge. Each has an active following, welcoming many visitors, especially in the summer months.

There is a choice of eating establishments offering a range of services from coffee shops and casual bar meals to restaurants, serving locally-sourced quality meals. There is also a take-away providing fish and chips.

A variety of clubs and societies operate in the village. There is a long-established WRI, a Scout group, bowling club, local newspaper group, country dance group, book groups, local history group, choir, traditional music group, lunch club, knitting group, pantomime group, yoga, keep fit and walking groups as well as fiddle, bagpipe and highland dancing classes.

St Margaret's and the Village Hall are venues for a number of both local and visiting musical groups and events. The Castleton Hall offers bookable facilities including snooker, as well as hosting popular Beaver, Cub Scouts and a Youth Club. Explorer Scouts meet at a separate hall, The Shielling.

There is an active Community Council, a tourism group and Braemar Community Ltd (BCL), a charity set up to help deliver projects. Since 2007, BCL has operated Braemar Castle as a visitor attraction on behalf of the community on a 50-year improving lease from Invercauld Estate.

The recently formed Braemar Hydro Limited has built and manages the micro-hydroelectric scheme at Corriemulzie on Mar Estate delivering up to 100 kWh daily into the grid.

Annual Events

Annual events are an important element in the life of Braemar, with the Junior Highland Games attracting crowds of over 1,000 and the Braemar Gathering in excess of 15,000. To capitalise on the popularity of highland gatherings, Braemar Royal Highland Society is now looking at building a Highland Games Discovery Centre for the village to help turn Braemar into a "must see" tourist destination. The Jacobite Day at Braemar Castle

accounts for over 700, supporting the case for a dedicated Visitor Centre.

The annual TGO Challenge and the Balmoral Road and Cycle Races, as well as the Creative Arts Festival (in October), and the new Mountain Festival (March) will also help to bring visitors to the village.

Significant Changes Since The First Community Action Plan

Our first plan was drafted in late 2012 and published in 2013. Since then a lot has moved on in Braemar. For its population size it 'punches above its weight' and many extraordinary CAP projects have been completed or progressed, largely led by local volunteers with help from Aberdeenshire Council, the Marr Partnership, the Estates and the CNPA.

The winning formula seems to be (not surprisingly) a great idea, an enthusiastic team with an energetic lead or leaders, and a lot of hard work, particularly to access funding. The following projects have been completed:

- Springfield Housing Development: fully subscribed
- Braemar Hydro: now generating
- Bus Transport routes enhanced
- Braemar Castle roof repaired
- St Margaret's becoming established as an Arts Venue (and a bit warmer)
- The Cooperative store has been re-fitted and expanded its offer
- Recycling bins and pick-up process has been improved
- Braemar Village Hall roof repaired and a new heating boiler installed
- Deeside Knitwits formed and strengthening as a community art group
- Creative Arts Festival held five times and supported by for a sixth
- Braemar Pipers and Youth Club formed and growing
- Pilates and ski fit classes are now

on offer

- A new Playpark has been designed, all funds raised and is being constructed this winter.
- BCC Facebook page developed and has improved Community connectivity
- Kindrochit Castle Restored and is now used for education purposes
- Maps and signage has been developed for the village

Work has also started on these significant village projects:

- The Fife Arms Hotel redevelopment: due to open 2018
- Strachan's is under restoration and available for a possible conversion into a Village Pub
- Community Gardens: turf lifted and dug over for spring planting at St Andrew's site
- Care in the Community: funding is pledged and models under review

Not bad for a community of only 450. Well done! However, although much has been achieved there remains energy for much more.

Top three ideas commonly quoted by residents as 'missing' are:

- A central village pub (The Moorfield and the Invercauld are open though!)
- Further Affordable Housing (Planning is in progress on a Central Village development although access issues remain – other sites may become available)
- Deeside Way connecting paths (CNPA are aligned so we have some positive news there too)

Community Action Planning

The purpose of community action planning for Braemar is:

- to enable local people to say what they want for Braemar
- to encourage everyone to think about what they value and want to protect
- to build on existing good work,



Highland Games Pavilion



Deeside Knitwits



St. Margaret's Episcopal Church c. 1880



St Margaret's Today



Autumn Mists



Santa Run



Snow Sports



Castleton Terrace c. 1871

- by publicising ongoing projects.
- to evidence community needs to generate support from funding bodies
- to prepare a plan (this document) for the needs and aspirations over the next 3-4 years
- to engender collaboration amongst the projects and villagers
- to have written record of the plan as of early 2017, to reference on funding and approval submissions

The Community Council has owned the process of 'refreshing the original 2012 plan'. We are the first community (of 20 in the National Park) to update their CAP!

Each individual Project Leader has made their previous plans current and submitted some new ones for 2017-2020.

Community input has been sought in one-to-one discussions, via the Invercauld Survey and open days, and via a CAP Refresh open evening in September (attended by c. 80 residents).

All of these methods have tended to confirm the previous (2012) surveys on Braemar's overall direction, with some variances in pace and detail. In practice, the pace and prioritising of most projects is a combination of available resources (human energy!) and funds and occasionally external approvals processes.

There are some alternative views on the development priorities in the village but generally there is much alignment and willingness to share and support each others' projects, avoiding overlap.

The community believes that the quality of life for the folk who live

here and the visitor experience is improved if we can balance a local economy that addresses the Heritage, the Arts, the Outdoors and above all a strong community.

As well as the Project Leads and Community Council, support for community action planning was provided by the CNPA, Aberdeenshire Council, the Invercauld Estate and the Marr Area Partnership. Final approval of the 2017 CAP was from the Community Council in February.

Summary

This 'refreshed' Braemar CAP 2017 has been drafted on these five themes:

- 1. Visitor Experience**
- 2. Active Braemar**
- 3. Youth and Learning**
- 4. Community Capability**
- 5. Housing and Economic Development**

These fit with the CNPA's priorities for the National Park: conserving a special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced, attracting people to enjoy the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences, and maintaining a sustainable economy that supports thriving businesses and communities.

Theme 1: Visitor Experience

A key objective for Braemar should be to develop a clear, overarching strategy for visitor management. Ideally, this should include the development of a brand identity to position and differentiate the village's unique selling propositions. The Braemar Tourism Group (BTG) looks after this collection of projects.

New ways are needed to persuade people to stop in the village, spend money and stay here overnight. It is known that around 100,000 visitors a year stop at the Linn of Dee car park. Over 30,000 visited the Castle but neither figure translates into this many spending visitors in the village.

Improvements have been made to the appearance of the village in terms of signage, visitor facilities, customer service training, litter reduction, landscaping and hanging baskets. These will be sustained!

More co-ordination of destination marketing initiatives both within the village and also with other nearby attractions such as Glenshee ski centre and mountain biking. Co-ordinated marketing of Braemar, as well as cross-selling of its existing experiences and activities, are seen as vital. More visitor accommodation is also required; to encourage more tourists to extend their stay in the area.

In terms of specific attractions we have four major projects under way in Braemar. Plans are in place to maintain and improve the **Braemar Castle**, develop a **Performing Arts Centre** at St Margaret's, build a **Highland Games Heritage Centre** and construct a 5-star Hotel and Spa at the **Five Arms**.

There are also calls for a significant refurbishment of the **Village Hall**, a vital community asset.

Theme 2: Active Braemar

One of our biggest draws is the natural setting of the village and the sports and recreational options that offers. There are many projects progressing under the Braemar Outdoor Group. New paths, trails, cycle routes and even bridges are all here.

Outdoors there is a need for quality improvements and link paths. Much progress has already been achieved by Braemar Outdoor Group (BOG) and Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT) and local competence in path maintenance is improving! Yet there are opportunities to push ahead with the Dee footbridge and completion of the **Deeside Way** connecting Braemar with Ballater and Lower Deeside.

A **Nature Trail** around the village is planned for this year (2017) and is currently partially funded.

A new project has kicked off to build two **Tennis Courts**. The Braemar Tennis Club now exists and 40 members are now looking for funds and plans to construct a court!

The first **Braemar Mountain Festival** will also be held in March 2017 and it is hoped will become an annual event.

Theme 3: Youth and Learning

One of the great successes of the previous CAP is the establishment and fund-raising for the new **Play-park**. This is set to open in 2017 and represents a massive effort by a few people in the village and some generous grant support from Aberdeenshire Council and Cairngorms Leader.

The previous lack of activities for teenagers in the village has been addressed in part. The Scouts are very active, across all age groups;



Jacobites!



The Blaeberrys



Braemar Pipers



Castle Events



Stags



Hunting Party c. 1880



Queen's Drive Heather



Braemar Curling c. 1890

increasingly classes for traditional music are offered and the Youth Club has been re-established.

The Annual (October – and now in its sixth year) Braemar Creative Arts Festival provides learning opportunities for locals and visitors alike and has inspired choirs, traditional music groups and ukulele classes as well as wood carving and fine art.

Theme 4: Community Capability

A great strength as demonstrated in 2016 during Storm Frank is that many villagers help each other and take an active role in one or more community groups. They are also increasingly connected online. (We must remember that not everyone communicates this way though!).

Community groups work well together – we should keep talking, coordinating and sharing through the local newspaper (The Buzzard), via the Community Council and BCL networks and the various online methods. The appointment of both a new **Castle Manager** and an **Events Manager** at St. Margaret's, brings an opportunity to coordinate events even better in the village and ensure that these are timetabled sensitively, involving other venues like the Village Hall and the planned Highland Games Heritage Centre, when developed.

An online **Braemar TV** service has just launched and we hope that this will regularly update the community on progress of the CAP Projects listed below.

A key and recently identified community need (possibly up there with the shortage of affordable homes) is the requirement for social care.

Additional services might be needed to help residents remain at home, especially for the elderly. Such services could include local care worker networks as seen in other Highland villages.

The lack of a locally-based ambulance concerns many. Similarly, the distance needed to travel for dentist or chiropodist appointments causes difficulties for some.

There remains considerable support for the local GP, who provides a 24/7 service, and the Citizens' Advice service at the local surgery.

The **Braemar Hydro** scheme is seen as a huge success both in terms of its fundraising and its community involvement but particularly the project delivery and early operational track record. It is hoped that its shareholders will yield some funds annually to help support these community projects, via the BCL.

Public Transport is a cause for dissatisfaction, given the remote location of Braemar. Residents are keen to maintain a reliable service to Aberdeen as well greater connectivity to Blairgowrie/Perth and a summer route to Aviemore.

Theme 5: Housing and Economic Development

The Housing Survey (2014) revealed a tension with nearly every respondent calling for more affordable housing (to buy or rent), with many of these also saying that they cherish Braemar's small size and conservation status. A new Local Development Plan is being developed by CNPA, outlining areas for development, although details on allocation policy have yet to be addressed. The Invercauld Estate are also reviewing their options for land use.

Lack of affordable housing and, specifically, lack of accommodation for seasonal employees is a hindrance to business. This demand is predicted to rise as the Fife Arms Hotel will require staff and as both young and older local people look increasingly for small (1-2 bedroom) homes.

Some housing plans have been approved for the village but at the time of writing it is unclear if the developer will go ahead with these projects.

Post Storm Frank (30.12.2015) there is a recognised need for a better Resilience Plan (not just to mitigate further flood risk). A group is being established to look at other local resilience plans and identify what equipment and processes we might require. We are well served with first responder, Mountain Rescue, Doctor, Police and Fire Services, all based locally. But, for example, having a temporary refuge/some communal survival kit and better emergency communications would prepare us better.

Braemar Projects

The listings in the tables below outline the aspirations of the various project groups that are active in Braemar. The intent is that the project groups will progress feasibility, approval and funding applications with support from the Local Councillors, the Community Council and in many cases with help from Braemar Community Limited. Note: some other charitable Trusts and separate legal entities now also exist to manage the larger projects.

Next Steps for the Community Plan

The CAP Refresh work is now complete. The next task is tracking progress against each of the projects, seeing if there is any

help required and keeping the Community Council updated. While nobody should expect that all the concerns and ideas raised through the consultations can be addressed, the Braemar Community Action Plan 2017 is based on what is believed to be achievable.

The tables on the following pages provide a guide to what it is intended to deliver over the short and long term, with timings varying between projects. As projects are developed, priorities will necessarily change. Braemar's Community Action Plan will need to keep pace and, as such, should be kept under (perhaps annual?) review. The BCC will aim to keep the community informed of developments.

A number of other project ideas emerged during the consultation process, which currently are not included in the community action plan remit. For completeness, however, they are captured in a separate table. As the village has shown several times, nothing is impossible. All these options lack is energetic leadership!

Finally, a big THANK YOU to all of you who attended public meeting or took part in other consultations, those who are the Project Leaders and 'folk that make things happen' and to the organisations who lent their expertise or funding. Many thanks also to all those who have contributed photographs and allowed them to appear in the Plan.

Our Community Action Plan 2017 represents a great opportunity to look ahead with excitement and confidence!



Playground Renovations



Community Garden Turf Lifting



Braemar Micro Hydro Scheme



Indoor Bowlers

- Actions, Partners & Timescales -

Key to Organisations and Partners		
Item	Abbreviation used	Organisation
	AC	Aberdeenshire Council
	BBC	Braemar Bowling Club
	BCAF	Braemar Creative Arts Festival
	BCC	Braemar Community Council
	BCG	Braemar Community Gardeners
	BCL	Braemar Community Limited
	BHG	Braemar History Group
	BMR	Braemar Mountain Rescue
	BRHS	Braemar Royal Highland Society
	BTG	Braemar Tourist Group
	BVH	Braemar Village Hall
	CHA	Castleton Hall Association
	CNPA	Cairngorms National Park Authority
	COAT	Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust
	HH	Highland Hospitality
	HS	Historic Scotland
	IE	Invercauld Estate
	MAP	Marr Area Partnership
	ME	Mar Estate
	MLE	Mar Lodge Estate
	NTS	National Trust for Scotland
	RDP	Royal Deeside Partnership
	SAIS	Scottish Avalanche Information Service
	SE	Scottish Enterprise
	SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
	SFRS	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
	SG	Scottish Government
	SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
	VS	Visit Scotland

THEME 1 VISITOR EXPERIENCE						
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN	LONGER TERM PLAN
1.	Braemar Visitor Strategy	To develop and promote an agreed plan to attract and meet the expectations of visitors to the Braemar area, satisfying the needs of those passing through as well as those choosing to stay overnight or longer.	Lead – BTG Partners – BCL, BCC, BRHS, CNPA, CBP, NTS, AC, VS, RDCDMO, SYHA, retail, hotels, estates.	Establish the remit for an inclusive steering group. Commission a study and define a work plan which avoids duplication and complements existing wider regional and national tourism strategies.	Branding. Visitor promotion. Signage and interpretation. Coordinate, advertise, enhance and promote visitor services.	tba
2.	Braemar Castle	To conserve, improve and develop Braemar Castle as a must-see visitor attraction, to strengthen learning opportunities and community and business partnerships, to maximise economic benefit for the community.	BCL Historic Environment Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council, CNP, Cairngorm Leader, Visit Scotland, Visit Aberdeenshire. Braemar Castle has a strong relationship with other community projects, groups and businesses.	Recognised as a quality visitor attraction, visitor numbers tripled since 2007, 1 full-time staff and 3-4 seasonal staff employed. Volunteers continue to be vital. Repairs to roof completed. Funding Applications for Project Manager role completed. Currently have a team of approximately 50 volunteers supporting the Castle ranging from general maintenance to ongoing guiding.	Appoint Project Manager to deliver detailed proposals and submit funding applications for major repairs to harling, staff accomm and internal conservation works. Appoint consultants to undertake a Visitor Experience Study to include recommendations for improvements to the visitor experience at the Castle, the grounds, feasibility of a visitor centre, and improved car parking and access Retain existing volunteers and recruit new ones for specific opportunities. Project Manager to identify opportunities to develop volunteering and specialist skills transfer Partners to input into the Visitor Experience Study	Source funding and carry out harling repairs, to undertake internal conservation works, to repair staff accommodation and to implement the findings of the visitor experience. Learning and specialist skills transfer opportunities to be delivered as part of major works planned for the castle. As part of project delivery of major works and visitor experience study recommendations seek to develop new and strengthen existing partnerships and to create linkages between other community projects and groups.
3.	Energy Efficiency	To improve energy efficiency, reduce heating bills by exploring schemes such as The Green Deal, and make information and assistance available to local residents and businesses.	BCC, AC, SG, energy providers, the community.	Assess relevant schemes and integrate their promotion. Investigate discounted community purchasing of energy.	Investigate District Heating schemes, powered by, for example, local woodchips, wood pellets or ground-source heat pumps.	tba
4.	Kindrochit Castle	To raise the profile of both Kindrochit Castle structures, explaining their historical significance.	BHG, AC, HS, CNPA	Walls stabilised, improved access (including disabled access), feature lighting installed and interpretive material with directional signage in the village	Continuing use as a cultural learning site.	Establish a maintenance programme for the future, in collaboration with AC and community volunteers.
5.	Highland Games Heritage Centre	To explore the opportunity to harness the Braemar Gathering's international reputation, creating a year-round attraction.	BRHS Scottish Tartan Authority BCC	Archiving of the Society's collection of photos and papers is under way. Grant Funding applied from Leader. Architect's Plans shared with community for new development (on the site of Broombank/Games Park NE corner). These plans have been submitted to CNPA and the AC for pre-planning consultation.	Final plans due to be submitted this quarter.	Planned opening summer 2018.

THEME 1 VISITOR EXPERIENCE					
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN
6.	St Margaret's Project	The aim is to restore the St Margaret's Church building and develop it as a hub for arts, culture and heritage-related activities, enhancing Braemar as a tourist destination. The building will provide a focal point where visitors and residents can have the cultural heritage of the area explained and interpreted. St Margaret's will be a centre for high-quality performance and exhibitions, showcasing a wide range of activity.	Lead partners: St Margaret's Trust; Scottish Redundant Churches Trust. <i>Key stakeholders:</i> AC, Braemar Community Ltd, Braemar Local History Group, Aberdeen International Youth Festival, BRHS, CNPA, The Wirth Family Trust, The Fife Arms Hotel, Historic Environment Scotland, Invercauld Estate and the University of Aberdeen.	The St Margaret's Trust has been established as a SCIO with eight trustees representing the local community, education the arts, media and culture. A sum in excess of £270,000 has been raised to support the development of the Project. A wide range of performances and exhibitions has been held including lunchtime recitals, drama, orchestral concerts, choral festivals and photographic exhibitions, many supported by Iwan and Manuela Wirth and the Fife Arms Hotel. A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for stage 1 funding (the Development Phase) was rejected but with advice and encouragement to re-submit. Bids to Cairngorms Leader and to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) for funding are being worked up. Extensive repairs to the roof of the Lightfoot Aisle and the installation of a temporary heating system have been carried out. Various panels of stained glass and the entire west window have been removed, repaired and reinstalled. Post of part-time freelance Arts Administrator/Co-ordinator is currently being advertised.	Appoint and work with Arts Administrator on the development, promotion and delivery of a varied programme of events. Collaborate with Graham Fitkin and Ruth Wall on the development of a mini-festival of contemporary music in July 2017. Collaborate with Steve Rennie on the development of a Photographic Festival. Develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy. Explore additional sources of funding, eg specific trusts. Submit funding bid to HES. Submit improved bid to HLF. Review the work of the Arts Administrator and consider further appointment.
					LONGER TERM PLAN
					Prepare and submit bid to HLF for Stage 2 funding (Delivery Phase).

THEME 2 ACTIVE BRAEMAR						
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN	LONGER TERM PLAN
7.	Deeside Way Braemar to Keiloch	To build a multi-use track from Braemar to the Keiloch to form the first section of the Deeside Way to Ballater.	BOG , BCL, CNPA, COAT, IE, BE, SNH, SE	Funding application submitted by CNPA to SE to develop detailed spec and submit planning application.	CNPA to scope the project in detail, undertake surveys and prepare planning applications.	Building of multi-use track. Work on plans for extension from Keiloch to Ballater.
8.	Braemar Tennis Courts & Club	To build two tennis courts for public and community use on the car park at the Golf Club (near site of the old tennis court) and to form a Braemar Tennis Club.	BOG , BCL, IE, Golf Club, BCC, LTA/Tennis Scotland	Founder Membership 40 gathered to date. Conceptual drawings in place. Golf Club support. Draft Sub- Lease. Draft Constitution. Draft Business Plan. LTA guidance received and support ongoing.	Raise funding ACC / CNPA Planning approvals. Construct two courts and fencing and create additional parking for Golf Club. Formally register Braemar Tennis Club with LTA.	Draft plans for Pavilion renovation.
9.	Braemar Mountain Festival	To organise an annual Mountain Festival to take place on the first weekend in March.	BOG , BCL, CNPA, COAT, BTG, Kendal Mountain Film Festival (associate partnership), Mountaineering Scotland, SAIS, BMR	Programme, Website, Marketing Plan.	Hold first Festival 2 nd – 5 th March 2017.	Make an annual event!
10.	Deeside Footpaths	To develop an interconnected, well maintained network of footpaths around the village, ensuring consistent signage, monitoring, maintenance and promotion.	BOG , BCL, BCC, BTG, CNPA, COAT, IE, ME, NTS, SYHA, BHG	COAT has an ongoing development programme. BOG path maintenance days set up with the assistance of 'the Mountains and the People' project. Path issues reporting mechanism in place.	Regular BOG path maintenance days. Additional path signage working with CNPA.	tba
11.	Nature Trail	To create a self-guided Nature Trail, an all-weather activity for young families and children in the natural pinewoods of Creag Choinnich, close to Braemar village centre.	BOG , BCL, IE, MAP, Paths For All, NTS	Funding in place to date £2,500. Other funding applications in progress. Outline design complete.	Complete detailed designs for interpretative posts, map board and trail map leaflets with input from local Primary School children. Complete funding and approvals. Erect trail.	Maintain trail signage and reprint trail map leaflets as required.
12.	Cycle Trails	To develop and publicise family-friendly cycle trails.	BOG , BCL, IE, ME,	Evaluating potential path Queens Drive to Auchallater.	Create family-friendly cycle trails map leaflet.	tba
13.	Mar Lodge Braemar Link Path	To develop an off-road path from Braemar to Mar Lodge Estate, White Bridge.	BOG , BCL, NTS, ME, CNPA, COAT	Looking at feasibility of restoring original path?		tba

THEME 2 ACTIVE BRAEMAR						
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN	LONGER TERM PLAN
14.	Dee Footbridge	To construct a footbridge over the River Dee and associated paths to connect with the existing network. To improve the range of pedestrian and cycle routes to promote Braemar as a sustainable visitor destination by being a hub for walking and cycling.	BCL, CNPA, IE, ME, NTS, SNH, SEPA, AC, SE, volunteers	Scope the project in detail, undertake surveys and prepare a Planning Application. Comments from interested parties are being collected via a Facebook page. Volunteers will be needed in future to raise awareness.		Completion of the Dee Bridge is likely to take at least two years. Further plans for a connecting path to the east (Kelloch and old Brig o' Dee) along the south of the A93 may be developed.
15.	Glenshee Ski Centre	To explore an integrated approach to visitor management, attracting visitors for Braemar and the Ski Centre and encouraging summer activities.	Glenshee Ski Centre , BTG, BCC	Work with the Glenshee Tourist Association, as well as with the Ski Centre's management.	BCC to build links with the new Glenshee Management.	tba
16.	Braemar Golf Club	To partner with Braemar Golf Club, building visitor numbers through new joint marketing initiatives.	Braemar Golf Club , BTG, BCC	An email campaign by the Golf Club, targeted at the Aberdeenshire business community.	Support investigation by the Golf Club of a new on-site tennis court.	tba
17.	Braemar Bowling Indoor	To ensure that the Bowling Green is maintained and potentially start an Indoor Bowls Club at Castleton Hall.	BBC , the community Castleton Hall, BCL, IE	£1.5k funding has been sourced to help set up an indoor Bowls Club. Need to raise/loan the other £1.5k.	Set up the Indoor Club. Membership to raise funds to match the MAP funding for Indoor Club.	tba
18.	Braemar Bowling Outdoor		BBC	Artificial outdoor surface is likely to need replacing 2-3 years.	Look at purchase options for artificial surface and grants to help support (estimate £8k for new surface?)	tba

THEME 3 YOUTH AND LEARNING						
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN	LONGER TERM PLAN
19.	Youth Club		Braemar Youth Club	Youth club up and running.	Continue to sustain membership	tba
20.	Creative Arts	Annual Festival in October offering diverse arts, crafts and music courses.	BCAF	Now five-year track record.	Secure funding and plan for Oct 2017	tba
21.	Playpark	Design, fundraise and build a new playpark in Braemar.	BCI, BCC, AC, IE, Leader, CNPA	All funds raised and planning approved. Work to clear old park and start the new layout.	Install new park equipment and open park.	Maintain as safe village attraction.
22.	Pipers	Build a local group of chanters/pipers to join larger local band.	BRHS	Chanter and Piping group exists as a feeder to larger local bands.	Sustain the group. Consider adding course into Creative Arts Festival?	tba
23. Primary School	Garden	Restore the garden, raised beds, pond and wild areas so the pupils can include in their lessons.	BCC, School PTA AC	Garden overrun and needs some local resource to help maintain.	Raise manpower and modest funds to get the garden restored for teaching use.	If funds accessible and approvals in place – complete works. Maintain the gardens as a teaching aid.
24. Primary School	School Hall	Redecorate the Hall.	School PTA	Hall needs clearing and decorating.	Raise funds and seek local helpers to decorate hall in 1H 2017 vacation.	Possible fundraise for mobile staging.
25. Primary School	Music Training	Set up Music Groups.	School PTA	Discussion ongoing with visiting music teacher re new musical groups.	Possible fund raising to supply some new instruments: uke/fiddle/whistle? Look for matching in Shire and other grants.	Source and share Samba steel drums with CAF?

THEME 4 COMMUNITY CAPACITY						
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN	LONGER TERM PLAN
26.	Corriemulzie Hydro	To build a community hydro scheme on the Corriemulzie Burn on Mar Estate, with income generated made available for local projects.	BCL, ME, DDDP, AC, CNPA	Design and build programme. Official opening 29 Sept 2016. Operational from 30 May 2016.	Complete commissioning and monitor first year performance.	Generate funds flow back to community (BCL allocation).
27.	Braemar Village Hall	To ensure that both halls are sufficiently kitted-out, maintained, promoted and utilised to serve the community and, as appropriate, visitors.	BVH, the community	Repaired roof and CH boiler. £4k funding is now sourced to repair woodwork and decorate main hall.	Shutdown for main hall and back room decoration Feb 17 Look at feasibility of extension rebuilding storage kitchen and bathroom/toilets.	If funds accessible and approvals in place, complete upgrade, probably in phases.
28.	Castleton Hall	Maintain as a community hall for many clubs and societies (subject to IE approval).	CHA, IE, BCC	Used by many community groups. In need of some renovation.	Consider secondary glazing/stairlift.	IE to decide on new lease?
29.	Recycling Composting, Snow-Clearing and Refuse	To ensure that appropriate recycling, composting, uplift and snowplough facilities are in place to serve local businesses and residents, thereby helping to reduce Braemar's carbon footprint.	AC, the community	Initiate new discussions to review current service and needs.	BCC to review the current provision and any gaps that community should address.	tba
30.	Resilience Plan	To prepare the village for emergency scenarios.	BCC, BMR	Review other Highland Village R-plans. Determine priority equipment and systems that may be required.	Develop a prioritised plan to fund and procure Resilience Kit. Set up a Res Team in village to build a plan.	tba
31.	Emergency Health Care	To explain how the existing services available meet the emergency health care needs of Braemar, and how they are accessed. To improve the EHC if required.	BCC, the local GP	First Responders in the village. Fibrillation in place and training held.	Review plans to sustain the EHC.	tba
32.	Community Care Initiative	To provide care to those requiring it in the Braemar Community by those living within the community.	Community care initiative steering group. BCC, Mar Area Partnership, Aberdeenshire health and social care partnership, Care providers	Support established from the Aberdeenshire health and social care partnership. Similar projects have been approached for advice and ideas. £12k funding has been awarded to find a partner to employ and train carers who will work in Braemar. Interest in working as a carer/volunteer is being gauged through community events.	A project co-ordinator will be employed. A bank of carers and volunteers will be established to provide flexible care and flexible employment opportunities. A suitable base/office location will be identified. Funding for additional care and volunteer activities above and beyond those funded by social care will be identified.	Develop the number of carers and volunteers to enable greater flexibility possible roll-out to areas outwith Braemar. Ensure the quality of care provided is maintained. Enable individuals to become carers/ volunteers by providing childcare. Consider a social partnership approach to employment.

THEME 4 COMMUNITY CAPACITY						
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN	LONGER TERM PLAN
33.	Bus Links to the South	To secure a bus service serving Braemar from the South, opening up new opportunities to bring visitors to the village, as well as serving the needs of Braemar residents.	BCC , AC, CNPA, Nestrans, Stagecoach	Joint meetings to initiate dialogue with all agencies and bus company.	Summer service to Blairgowrie	Possible shuttle link to Linn of Dee.
35.	Coach and Car Parking	To provide a solution to the mid-term loss of the central Coach park and the need for more car parking.	BCC , IE, HH, AC, ME	Temporary arrangements in place whilst the Fife is developed.	Identify new coach and car parking protocols for the village	tba
36.	Community Garden	A community garden to provide a communal growing space, providing fruit and vegetables to the community group working the area. The garden will support social interaction, healthy lifestyle choices and education.	BCG , BCC, MAP, Balmoral	Permission has been granted to use the area next to the community orchard. The level of support and potential commitment within the community is being gauged, via a work party four beds prepared for spring 2017 planting.	Create growing spaces, and compost bins, clear land for fruit bushes. In parallel identify sources of funding for tools and supplies of plants, bushes, seeds. Plant in spring 2017. Establish a committee and structure for sharing work and produce	Further involve groups; engage youth via school, scouts etc. Have a strong body of volunteers and a network of support organisations. Establish independent water supply and funding for additional equipment, shed, cold frames etc.

THEME 5 HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
ITEM	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	KEY PARTNERS	CURRENT STATUS	2017 PLAN	LONGER TERM PLAN
37.	Affordable Housing	Much-needed lower cost small houses or apartments.	BCC Gordon Lands AC, IE	Planning permission currently exists for 11 houses in the centre of the village. Road access issues to resolve.	Pace depends on access issues. Alternative sites for potential development being identified.	Build or find an alternative developer. Or identify new land and alternative source of funding.
38.	Work/ Business Units	Set up a so-called Mens' Shed.	IE, MAP, AC, BCC	Proposal testing interest has been published.	Locate premises in village or nearby.	Identify main purpose/build tooling.
39.	Village Pub	Possible conversion of Strachans in village centre.	IE	Pointing repairs to walls. Planning permission submitted for extension.	Identify a future tenant/investor to equip the interior.	Develop a sustainable bar/leasing model.
40.	Fife Arms	To deliver a 5-star spa hotel by 2018.	HH, BCC, IE	Destruct work well under way.	Reconstruction works.	2018 Open for business.
41.	Mobile Signal, Broadband and Radio Reception	To ensure that the local communications infrastructure delivers the best possible service for business and the community.	BCC, AC, CNPA, SG, the community	Set up meetings with key infrastructure providers to determine what improvements are achievable and how they might be funded?	Deliver improvements to services.	tba
42.	Camping Pods	To provide more accommodation at the camp site.	IE	Popular camp and caravan site at capacity.	Inver Estate to establish new pods.	Possibility create an expanded campsite to the South.

This Braemar booklet is a 2017 'refresh' of one of a series produced by Local Rural Partnerships for a number of communities in Aberdeenshire.

This revision is sponsored by Aberdeenshire Community Planning Group and Braemar Community Council. The aim is to provide community action plans in an easy-to-read, professionally printed format.

This information can now guide the community and Community Planning Partners in drawing up detailed action plans to implement the priority projects, as well as

addressing the other issues which have been identified.

For each priority or issue this will involve agreeing who should be involved, what resources will be needed and target dates for completion.

It is hoped that this process will be driven by representatives of the community with support – moral, technical and financial – from the relevant Partners.

This booklet will have to be regularly reviewed and updated. As some projects are completed, other issues will arise and take their place in future versions of the

Community Action Plan.

It is recommended that this Plan has a maximum life of three years.

Thanks to all the individuals and groups who contributed to the refresh of Braemar's Community Action Plan and to all those who have stepped forward to lead these projects!

For questions about this document or to make suggestions about implementation of the plan, please contact Braemar Community Council.

