

## CNPA / Link meeting

30 May 2012

Link offices, Perth

Present: Ross Finnie, Link President

Deborah Long, Link Chair

David Green, CNPA Convenor

Jane Hope, CNPA CEO

**General:** this was an affable meeting although clear lines in the sand were drawn and understood. Link guided discussion away from specifics relating to an Camus Mor and made it clear that Link had issues with the approach to housing allocation that the park was adopting. These issues were aired, and made clearly from an all Link point of view, but were not resolved. Further discussions on this issue, at a strategic level are required. [AP: These discussions would be useful at a Ross / David level as well as at a TF level.](#) The park were also looking for opportunities to work more closely with Link on a number of areas detailed below. These are probably better allocated to relevant task forces.

CNPA have asked for a partnership approach and Link's contribution to particular areas of work that they would like to roll out through their new Park Plan. The new Plan is due to be approved by the Park board at the end of June 2012. The new Local Development plan draft is due for consultation in 2013. They would appreciate more discussion on the issue of housing before December 2013.

**CNPA strategic direction and philosophy:** discussions explored both Link's views on the role of a national park and CNPA's views. There was an agreed difference of opinion in how the legislation is interpreted: these differences were noted and it was suggested further discussion would be useful. The discussions noted that continued exploration of the strategic direction and the allocation of housing need in the context of balancing the park objectives were the source of the difference. If Link feels that major changes in the legislation are required then CNPA would like to explore that in discussion. However, it was made clear that Link feels the legislation is workable but that the current interpretation of it is inappropriate.

[AP: CNPA will invite Ross to a visit in the summer, possibly linked to a suitable event. This could be explored further there. Detailed discussions however will need to be with the Link TF.](#)

### Seeking opportunities to work together:

1. **Wildlife Partnership:** this is a new initiative from the Park, focussing on species and habitats. It has evolved from the LBAP and is aiming to move beyond council and agency only involvement in biodiversity delivery in the park. There are plans to refresh the LBAP but this did not appear to be linked to the current refresh of the Biodiversity Strategy. We suggested it should be. [AP Wildlife Forum](#)

2. **Getting involved:** the park is looking to increase public involvement in the park through volunteer activities. They are looking to talk to eNGOs with expertise in recruiting and managing volunteers. They realise that resources will be required to achieve this but have no clear plans or objectives. We suggested they should identify what they wished to do and that Link members would then be able to advise. [AP: Wildlife Forum?](#)
3. **Catchment management & the ecosystem approach:** for the 3 river systems, they have a variety of approaches at different stages of delivery. [AP: Freshwater TF?](#)  
The Dee has a catchment management plan with 17 partners in place to deliver it, guided by a project officer. Work on this is going well but the next step will be to demonstrate the economic value of this approach.  
Spey has a management plan and an officer in place. After a hiatus without an officer, momentum may now be gained.  
Don: no plan or officer in place.  
CNPA were unable to say whether the proposals contained in the Government's consultation document "Scotland The Hydro Nation" affected the park area or any of its catchments
4. **Planning:** CNPA were candid that the current approach of call in has severe drawbacks. Communications with planning customers need to be clearer and pre application advice needs to involve the national park. Currently it only comes from councils. CNPA have been working with the councils to enable the park to be the main planning authority but are making no progress. Ideally the park would have full planning power but they can't ask for it (for some reason). They are therefore relying on the councils agreeing it, however wildly unlikely that is. They would also appreciate support for a higher quality standards being required for developments within the park. Current guidance does not currently require higher standards within a national park. It would be helpful if NPF were more helpful with more guidance on higher standards required in both parks. [AP: Planning TF](#)
5. **Year of Natural Scotland:** the park is planning to combine events for YofNS with their 10 year anniversary. They are planning a publication and a series of celebration events. They did wonder whether Link might be able to lead on an event to discuss the need for National Parks? [AP: staff & NP TF?](#)

DJL & RF  
31 May 2012