

## **ANNEX 5**

### **FOCUS GROUP OUTPUTS**

A number of people were invited to participate in focus group sessions. The following is a list of who was able to participate.

#### **OFFICIALS, AGENCY, AND UMBRELLA GROUP REPRESENTATIVES**

September 16 2003 at the Garth Hotel, Grantown on Spey from 1-3pm

Alan Simpson	Highland Council
Bill Houston	Ballater & Royal Deeside Partnership
Helen Richardson	Laggan
John Rainy Brown	Badenoch and Strathspey Community Council Forum and VABS
Mary McCafferty	Dalnain Bridge Community Company
Roddy Dyce	Moray Bad Enoch and Strathspey Enterprise
Trisha Heldman	Birse Community Trust
Jacqui McNeill	Angus Council
Liz McManus	Moray Council
Murray Ferguson	SNH
Fransizka Smith	Moray Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise

#### **FOCUS GROUP FOR CCCG**

September 16 2003 at the Garth Hotel, Grantown on Spey from 7-9pm

Eric Baird  
Richard Renton  
Jane Angus  
Rita Marks  
Jimmy Oswald

#### **FOCUS GROUP MEETING FOR GIS EXPERTS**

September 17 2003 at the Garth Hotel, Grantown on Spey from 10 – 12noon

Euan Stevenson	Aberdeenshire Council
Martin Wanless	Moray Council
Sandra Middleton	National Park Authority
Lachlan Renwick	SNH

This page offers an index to the contents of this appendix. Note that the bullet points on this page are expanded in the following pages.

### **Agencies and Umbrella bodies**

To strengthen community development

- Build on existing structures to support bottom up development
- Provide support and resources for communities to develop themselves

To strengthen communications

- Better networking for improved information flow
- Better use of key channels of communication

To strengthen representation

- Remain open, flexible and creative in approaching the representation issue
- Improve the quality of representation through encouraging more systematic networking and discussions

Ideas and actions

### **Cairngorms Community Councils Group (CCCG)**

To strengthen community development

- Educate communities and give them more say
- Provide support and resources so that communities come to support themselves

To strengthen communications

- Build networks for improved information flow and allow time for ideas to be fully aired and discussed
- Make better use of key channels of communication

To strengthen representation

- Ensure that local people represent local views
- Encourage discussion and stimulate the need for representation

Ideas and actions

### **Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Group**

To strengthen communications by

- Promoting openness and transparency
- Improving accessibility to information
- Speeding up and increasing participation in data entry and analysis
- Making visual information more readily available

Ideas and actions

### **Provision of information, training and support**

**“What things could the CNPA do, or assist others to do, to strengthen community development?”**

**Focus Group - Agencies/Umbrella Groups**

The twenty one responses to this question have been categorised and listed below. The overall concept is to shift the emphasis from planning FOR communities towards planning BY communities although pragmatics will ensure that planning WITH communities remains common place.

The first six responses are strategic. They recommend that the CNPA should build on existing structures to promote bottom up development.

The last fifteen responses are more specific. They recommend providing the types of support and resources that communities need to develop themselves.

<b>Strategic options – build on existing structures to support bottom up development</b>	
	<b>Work from the bottom up to achieve sustainable development</b>
01	Work from the bottom up
02	Community to develop: economic, cultural, natural
03	Enhance the quality of environment and culture across the area
	<b>Build on existing structures</b>
04	Link in with existing structures/mechanisms
05	Do not re-invent the wheel, work with the agencies presently involved in community development ie Highland Council, Voluntary Sectors and Enterprise Co Health which all work together
06	Build on existing structures such as Community Companies, do not build new structures
<b>Specific Options – provide support and resources for communities to develop themselves</b>	
	<b>Encourage and support information sharing</b>
07	Support information sharing across area
08	Set up discussion forums for people to exchange ideas and to learn from each other on how to tackle similar problems
09	Help communities understand where they are with community development in relation to other communities in Scotland and beyond
10	If ‘community decree’ means enhancement of local places, then a published list of what CNPA are prepared to support/fund would be an advantage
11	Act as a gathering for accessing community information rather than attempting to redevelop info databases
	<b>Build community skills and confidence</b>
12	Build confidence in the communities’ ability to make changes that they want to see happen
13	Support community assistance to engage within the community ie leaflets
14	Facilitating skills development in terms of participatory and activation skills

... continued on next page ...

	<b>Encourage wider networking (vertical and horizontal – both directions)</b>
15	Provide advice and assistance to enable counties to deliver county development themselves
16	Develop and encourage communities to prepare local plans
17	MP representative at meetings in community
	<b>Provide human and financial resources</b>
18	More resources
19	There is a need for more resources ie people working in and with the communities
20	Paid community development staff
21	Halt holiday home buying ensuring accommodation returned to locals, ie retaining the community

**“What things could the CNPA do, or assist others to do, to strengthen communications?”**

Focus Group - Agencies/Umbrella Groups

The fifteen responses to this question have been categorised and listed below. The overall concept is to make better use of existing systems.

The first six responses are strategic. They recommend improved networking so as to improve information flows in all directions ie horizontal as well as vertical.

The last nine responses are more specific. They recommend improved use of some key communication channels

<b>Strategic options – better networking for improved information flow</b>	
1	Encourage community representative structures to find ways to involve more people locally in the work
2	Bring communities together in new ways and bring community representatives together with other agencies/interest groups
3	Encourage flows of information about hopes and fears about the future in the park with all other interested players-not always through the NPA.
4	Visit/get involved with/attend meetings at local level. Get acquainted with communities
5	Ensure feedback to communities on action taken in response to issues raised by communities
6	Develop a unified process of spreading good news to overcome east/west differences
<b>Specific options – better use of key channels of communication</b>	
	<b>Newsletters, local newspapers and local radio</b>
7	Provide a means by which Nat Park info can be disseminated eg newsletters
8	Regular Newsletters providing practical info and including opportunities for local counties to maximise possible benefits from the park
9	Publish much more information in the local press
10	Local press articles
11	Use of local newspapers and local radio to communicate progress of consultations and future communications.
	<b>Websites and email</b>
12	Set up publicly accessed consultant forum eg public website with upcoming changes coupled with a feedback mechanism
13	Enabling community email communications
	<b>Public Seminars</b>
14	Provide regular public seminars on what National Park has achieved or plans to do (like a public AGM for park residents)
15	Inform prior to consulting. Access a wide a range of people in a wide variety of locations

**“What things could the NPA do, or assist others to do, to strengthen community representation?”**

**Focus Group - Agencies/Umbrella Groups**

The sixteen responses to this question have been categorised and listed below. The overall concept is to be energetic in increasing the two way flow of information through all vertical and horizontal channels of communication.

The first four responses are strategic. They recommend that the CNPA remains open, flexible and creative in its approach to the representation issue.

The last twelve responses are more specific. They recommend improving the quality of representation, especially at the local level, through encouraging more systematic networking and discussion.

<b>Strategic options - remain open, flexible and creative in approaching the representation issue</b>	
01	Become an active rather than passive body
02	Avoid becoming another layer of bureaucracy
03	Keep trying a variety of methods
04	Use as many different media as possible
<b>Specific options – improve the quality of representation through encouraging more systematic networking and discussion</b>	
<b>Help local democratic structures to work better</b>	
05	The more local democratic structures work - don't by pass them (eg by jumping over them to work with others)
06	Encourage the local elected member to feel he has a constituency role
07	Encourage feedback from representatives to committees
08	Local newsletters and feedback
09	Elections for representatives other than councillors
<b>Encourage widespread discussion</b>	
10	Encourage continued dialogue/conversation about what should happen in the area rather than episodes of consultation
11	Encourage people to get involved with local issues and get on to the groups dealing with those issues. Motivate people
12	Take discussions to communities rather than expecting them to come to you
13	Support those outside the park area to become involved - demonstrate their importance
<b>Encourage more vertical networking</b>	
14	Invite to business meetings
15	Use county councils as sounding boards for committee
16	Contact park board members. Approachability of park staff

Focus Group: Ideas - Agencies/Umbrellas

Idea	Why CNPA?	How to implement	What resources and Alliances required?
<p>Ensure board membership is made up of real community and resident representatives, not just agency reps. Rotate CNPA's board membership</p>	<p>Because the CNPA's role is to protect the environment of the area and this is dependent on residents and communities that manage resources. The environment requires management for sustainability.</p>	<p>Ensure balanced representation on the board to ensure that wide comm. representation is heard not just agency views. Ensure that good understanding of the needs of individual and diverse communities is achieved. Set in place a consultation structure so that views can be collected across a wide spectrum.</p>	<p>People on the ground and in the communities. Partnerships with existing agencies. Use information points or create new ones. Funding to facilitate participation ie travel expenses.</p>
<p>Retain local services i.e shops, GP, schools etc Promote investment in community assets, services, strengths and leadership Provide more opportunity for people choosing to live and work in the area</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Encourage community enterprise or direct marketing initiatives by facilitating co-operative ventures and breaking down barriers such as insurance, legislation and facilities.</p>	<p>Provide collective resources which can be shared across community.</p>
<p>Strong relationship with community ie keep them informed via internet/leaflet</p>	<p>To be effective the CNPA must engage with community development organisations at a settlement level</p>	<p>Identify key organisations representing individual/groups of settlements</p>	<p>Strategically placed service points, Human and financial resources to facilitate 2 way communication and community engagement</p>

Idea	Why CNPA?	How to implement	What resources and Alliances required?
Assist local development organisations ie LRP's with core funding	The CNPA cannot be all things to all people, therefore organisations already locally active can provide an outreach facility. These organisations need basic core funds to progress and develop. The CNPA should support these voluntary organisations	Identify the organisations capable of providing these services and carry out an assessment of their abilities to deliver	Money
Public drop in style meetings (road shows) explaining developments in park area	As the policy and executive body for the park it must have the responsibility for the park	Road shows, newsletters, press articles, drop-in-meetings-local newspapers are already in place-use them!	Media communications expertise
To encourage 2 way communication and representation of community views. There needs to be small local contact points in main settlements to filter out suggestions etc	As above	Extend the principle of local service points	Manpower and funding-LRP's already have these facilities
Communities have already elected people to the board. Elected people should try and reach local groups on a regular basis to maintain a truly representative function on the board	Democratic elected members of the NPA	Ask communities what they want eg newsletters etc. Provide training/guidance to members	Members time, printing and publishing costs
Encourage communities to share experience & knowledge about what works/doesn't-within and outwith the park, and with other communities.	CNPA is the enabling authority	Visits to learn from experience of others. Global communication, develop existing structures. Use the web but don't rely on it	Travel and time costs

<b>Idea</b>	<b>Why CNPA?</b>	<b>How to implement</b>	<b>What resources and Alliances required?</b>
Concentrate on specific groups ie youth, elderly	CNPA has overview	Liaise with counties and public	Time
Promote understanding about the links between community development and the natural environment	CNPA has ability to bring 4 aims together -duty and power	Education, discussions pointing out benefits	Office and member time
Help strengthen the roles of County Councils	CNPA with other parties	Listen communicate and resource	Time and money-and willingness to later

**What things could the NPA do, or assist others to do, to strengthen community development?**

**Focus Group - CCCG**

The ten responses to this question have been categorised and listed below. The overall concept is to build the capacity of communities to help themselves..

The first three responses are strategic. They recommend educating communities and giving them more say.

The last seven responses are more specific. They recommend providing support and resources so that communities come eventually to support themselves.

<b>Strategic options – educate communities and give them more say</b>	
01	Support education for sustainable development
02	Give communities a say in natural resource management decisions
03	Address concerns, even the lack of affordable housing, as it would appear almost all current development is being billed????
<b>Specific options – provide support and resources so that communities come to support themselves</b>	
	<b>Encourage wider networking so as to meet local need</b>
04	Get enterprise companies and council business teams to meet with community representatives and their elected Board members to discuss assistance
05	Communities need help to maintain their proposals ie tourism
06	To take into account the need of individual communities and attempt to develop communities. Especially in regard to tourist attractions.
	<b>Improve information flows to, and monitoring by, locals</b>
07	Disseminate information on local developments park-wide
08	Individual monitoring by locals. Increase communications within the community
	<b>Ensure adequate human resources to provide support</b>
09	Provide support to facilitators, i.e. non-directive approach. Communicate with workers
10	Strengthen community development, through community committee- increase ease for tracing locally. Broadband

**“What things could the NPA do, or assist others to do, to strengthen communications?”**

**Focus Group - CCCG**

The fourteen responses to this question have been categorised and listed below. The overall concepts are to make better use of existing resources so as to allow more time to talk things through

The first ten responses are strategic. They recommend building networks for improved information flow and allowing time for ideas to be fully aired and discussed.

The last four responses are more specific. They recommend making better use of some key channels of communication.

<b>Strategic Options - build networks for improved information flow and allow time for ideas to be fully aired and discussed</b>	
	<b>Encourage broader networking for improved information flow</b>
01	Our local elected representative attends community assessment meetings and gives a brief report. Show report to the locals
02	Listen to community councils and act on information
03	Allow a social interchange with the public. Possibly best after the regular meetings
04	Provide easy access to the NPA staff so that people can interact with them
	<b>Give enough time for full discussion of issues and a working out of differences</b>
05	Time, enquiries and presence
06	Time
07	Communications must be made often so that communities can make their decisions
08	Must look closely at environmental issues ie foresting, hill farming, moorland management and communicate
09	Allow communities to support or disagree
<b>Specific options – make better use of key channels of communication</b>	
	<b>Newsletters, local newspapers</b>
10	Write the newsletter so that the public could convey ideas and concerns to the board
11	Send report on board meetings to local newspapers
	<b>Websites and email</b>
12	Roll out the connecting communities programme
13	E-learning
14	Broadband

**“What things could the NPA do, or assist others to do, to strengthen community representation?”**

**Focus Group - CCCG**

The twelve responses to this question have been categorised and listed below. The overall concept is to improve the quality and effectiveness of local level representation by encouraging more local level discussion and feedback.

The first four responses are strategic. They recommend ensuring that local people represent local views..

The last eight responses are more specific. They recommend encouraging widespread discussion and feedback and stimulating the need for better representation by giving communities control of resources.

<b>Strategic options - Ensure that local people represent local views</b>	
01	To require that community councils be made up of duly elected representatives of the people and give their opinions due consideration and influence on issues that concern them
02	Representatives need not be high profile persons.
03	Representatives should come from community councils or local groups
04	One person on many groups
<b>Specific options – Encourage discussion and stimulate the need for representation</b>	
<b>Encourage widespread discussion and feedback</b>	
05	Allow informal discussions so that CG’s can canvass opinions
06	Overcome the difficulty of infrequent meetings by small associations
07	Community meetings to be inclusive
08	Listen to community councils and act on information
09	Enable community.. associations and councils to send reports to each others meetings
10	Accountability ie community must ‘sign off’ discussions which affect them
<b>Stimulate the need for better representation by giving communities control of resources</b>	
11	Provide financial support to villages who demonstrate real need, desire, or public participation in a particular project
12	Give resources to community so they can decide how to use them

Focus Group: Ideas - CCCG

Idea	Why CNPA?	How to implement	What resources/alliances required?
CNPA must listen to community councils and respect and act on their recommendations	Because they are the responsible group	Read letters and listen	Time, energy, presence
Support community groups with resources – training/expenses etc	Main contact with local authorities.	Via CCCG	Cash
Provide support for village with real needs, desires and interested resident population	They are the authority responsible	Cash	Cash
Opportunity to discuss points raised at formal open meetings	Immediate 2 way communication. Observe body language – degree of commitment	Early communications (4-6 weeks) Local meetings with community councils/ associations Occasional Saturday mornings	Linking Co Community Councils
Address services within park, especially water supplies	No one proves DNG real solutions, dependent upon CNPA to assume responsibility. No water, power or services means no park	Boot up the back of SEPA, Scottish Water and local authorities	Considerable
Amend inappropriate and/or confusing national policies		Parliamentary change	Politics

**“In what ways can GIS to be used as a tool for strengthening communication in the National Park?”**

Focus Group: GIS

<b>To promote openness and transparency</b>	
1	To assist transparency and accountability in decision making - public bodies and others
2	Make National Park business processes more transparent and understandable to non-experts. (maps better than text)
<b>To improve accessibility to information</b>	
3	Improve accessibility of environmental/ social/ cultural/ economic data for groups traditionally outside the 1oop.
4	Mapping of alternative proposals for land use e.g. local plan info (aim is to improve public participation)
5	Public access and recreational information eg printed leaflets and maps; mobile devices –E-Maps
6	Provide interactive information where you choose information needs from a menu; Allow copyright map printing
<b>To speed up and increase participation in data entry and analysis</b>	
7	Internet mapping - quick way to import information visually
8	Show distribution of activities, funding, population etc. Get local input on why communities differ
9	Analysis tool – NP staff undertaking analysis-results communicated easily to other NP staff
<b>To make visual information more readily available</b>	
10	Provide visual information data on a map or photomap background
11	Visualisation tool - provides easy way to change the message/draw attention to particular points
12	Interactive maps with point and click queries and datasheets displayed on maps
13	Mapping to create a visual image of the park for interested parties -linking areas
14	Use GIS data to integrate path networks, transport etc – use visual mapping to create realistic suggestions
<b>Technical notes:</b>	
15	Need to distinguish between GIS and normal web presence
16	Need to develop scope for broadband within the public area

Focus Group: Ideas - GIS

<b>Idea</b>	<b>why is it needed?</b>	<b>how might it be implemented?</b>	<b>how feasible is it?</b>	<b>what possible constraints?</b>	<b>what wider opportunities?</b>
To provide a tool for empowering communities to participate in and actively take decisions about their locality	Part of video policy. Much of parks objectives will be delivered locally. Need to bring communities together.	Tie in with other technologies. Keep simple. May need better understanding of PC availability/ use/ tel. connection	Technically not a problem. Issue of resources, community names, broadband. Ensure integrity of broad community.		
Greatest benefit will come from simple things - visualisation and 'whats here?' type questions.	Important politically and to ensure that resources are used wisely. 80% of info has geographic element- "everything happens somewhere"	Concentrate on simple things and do it well. GIS used appropriately. At design stage- awareness of GIS + broader info handling.	Provision of internet is problem	Technical constraints- modems etc. Need awareness of bigger picture. Have a clear info strategy. Authority to have projects and programmes.	Broadband
Provide interactive mapping within a community website. Provide information to groups. Allow groups to provide information to other groups.	Biggest challenge is geographic spread. Communication between communities.	A CNP-portal with autonomy that allows for mutual learning. Buy a pc for everyone. Cost approx £1.5m	Design issue with website.	Info duplication/ currency. Community papers/ newsheets/ meetings	Overcoming disadvantage of not being able to go to meetings

Idea	why is it needed?	how might it be implemented?	how feasible is it?	what possible constraints?	what wider opportunities?
Use of internet technologies to allow people to find social information, groups, activities etc geographically and integrate transport networks to allow access to them.	Management tool for public meetings				Do data capture in field with non expert groups.
Data capture for supporting national park work. GPS and Mobile GPS As part of the educational resource available to schools and higher education.				Design of any system depends on the group one is working with in the park.	

Idea	why is it needed?	how might it be implemented?	how feasible is it?	what possible constraints?	what wider opportunities?
<p>Marketing tool - eg as part of a guide to facilities/ services. Provide info - demographic, economic, facilities and services, heritage-</p> <p>Web-based mapping to integrate other data sheets from various sources-</p> <p>To share views and ideas on development issues (through community planning?)-</p> <p>Storage tool-providing method for CNPA staff to efficiently communicate information to other NP staff-</p> <p>Consultation tool - to enable public comment on proposals.</p>	<p>If you have things to offer then offer them</p> <p>Info resource-people look for basic info-demographic data eg for lottery application</p>				

## Provision of information, training and support

During the Focus Group sessions participants were asked to indicate their impressions of how information, training and support were provided to community groups in the areas of the park with which they were most familiar.

A list of potential providers was given (see box) and participants were asked to indicate whether the provider was:

Active in the area but not totally covering it  
The main source of provision  
The main source of provision in the area and totally covering it  
Not active

### Providers of information, training and support to community groups

- Community Councils
- Community Businesses
- Local Authorities
- Enterprise Companies
- Voluntary Sector Organisations
- Local Rural Partnerships
- Agencies

The results show that there are no standard patterns of provision across the CNP area but some generalisations can be made.

The main providers are thought to be the Local Authorities, Enterprise Companies and Voluntary Sector Organisations although their relative importance varies from area to area and from group to group. For example the Enterprise Companies play a bigger role in the west of the CNP area while relatively small scale Local Rural Partnerships have a bigger role in the east.

Voluntary Sector Organisations, Local Rural Partnerships and Agencies are important providers in the areas where they operate.

Community Councils are seen as important providers of information and support in areas where they are active but not all are active to the same extent.

Community Businesses do not play a major role other than on a one-off way in some parts of the CNP area. (Note - the Birse Community Trust is a community business and also a Local Rural Partnership. It is the main provider of information, training and support to community groups in its area of operation).