

CRAGG

CAIRNGORM, ROTHLEMURCHUS AND GLENMORE GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THURSDAY 19TH JANUARY 2006

1) Present

William Gilfillan	Area Manager, Highland Council (in the Chair)
Sally Dowden	Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce
Allan Bantick	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Johnnie Grant	Rothiemurchus Estate
Andrew Harper	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Gregor Rimell	Highland Council
Stuart Benn	RSPB
David Jardine	Forestry Commission Scotland
Mary Ferguson	Rothiemurchus & Glenmore Community Association.
Richard Green	Rothiemurchus & Glenmore Community Association.
Willie McKenna	Rothiemurchus & Glenmore Community Association
Monica MacMillan	Badenoch & Strathspey Local History Group
Bob Kinnaird	Cairngorm Mountain
Anne Angus	I.N.B.S.E.
Neil Sutherland	Self
Keith Duncan	SNH
Tim Walker	Glenmore Lodge

Apologies

Audrey Mackenzie	Aviemore & Vicinity Community Council
Iain Fraser	

2) Minutes of the meeting of 27th October 2005

1. The apologies of Tim Walker and Anne Angus had been received and were registered. There were no other amendments to the draft minutes

3) Matters Arising

3.1 The History Project

Richard Green circulated the attached Progress Report on Funding Applications for CRAGG History Projects.

It was felt that more detail was required and that the scoping study was too expensive. Richard called for volunteers to help.

Action: Richard Green to update the next meeting.

3.2. The Off-Road Cycle Route

The decision about funding from Sustrans (50%) is still pending, but imminent. Once received the project will proceed according to plan.

3.3. Sale of HIE Estate.

The HIE decision is to proceed with discussions with Bidwells and with the Landowner. The main issues for consideration are:-

- What arrangements would be made for the government and/or management of the estate?
- How and from whom can advice be sought?
- What do the communities want and which communities should be consulted?
- How can Forest Enterprise best carry the proposal forward?

Action: David Jardine to keep the meeting updated

There are other groups similar to CRAGG being formed and concern was expressed that none of them should take the place of CRAGG in this or any other relevant matter. The community has requested to be involved with HIE and FC in the management of the estate.

4) Rules of Procedure

William confirmed that the Rules of Procedure had been circulated to all parties and assumed that they had been read.

Changes to include:-

- **Item 3) Rules of Procedure**
The word 'build' to be substituted with the word 'deliver'.
- **Item 7) Papers, Alterations to Rules or Contributions to the Integrated Management Strategy.**
Such bureaucratic rules are not necessary for an unconstituted group like CRAGG. A simpler system was suggested.

It was felt that procedures had been written covering all eventualities. If any member organisation does not believe in the principles of CRAGG, they should make their views known at this stage.

5) Current Remit

Sally Dowden delivered to the meeting a synopsis of the history of CRAGG.

Johnnie Grant emphasised the importance of the audit being visited by anyone new to the group, and revisited periodically by existing members of CRAGG.

6) Future Remit

William informed the group that he had spoken separately to representatives from the Cairngorm National Park Authority, the Destination Management Organisation, the Chamber of Commerce and Community Planning/Locality Planning Partnerships. Each was asked to prepare a short presentation to aid discussion on the future of CRAGG.

6.1 The Cairngorm National Park Authority

CRAGG has been involved in the development of the Cairngorm National Park Plan which is expected to be published in April / May 2006 and a draft of which is currently available on the website.

Action: Andrew Harper to email relevant link to all CRAGG members.

It is important that CRAGG should be instrumental in delivering the National Park Plan at a local level and monitoring the 'fit' between the Park Plan and the CRAGG Area Strategy. In order to achieve this, CRAGG should examine the contents of the Park Plan when it is published and participate in its delivery.

6.2 Community Planning

William outlined the statutory function of the Highland Council, in conjunction with other bodies, to implement the Community Plan. The Community Plan is a strategic partnership covering the following areas:

- Health and Wellbeing,
- Economy
- Learning and Community Capacity
- Housing
- Transport
- Culture Heritage and Environment
- Community Safety
- Tourism.

Key partners will lead on certain parts of this jigsaw but Community Planning will hold all the strands together. It is in no way an attempt to duplicate work already taking place as the expertise within certain groups will continue to deliver the service to a very high standard eg Destination Management Organisation or the role of the National Park or the role of the Police. Not one group can take the whole remit forward for Community Planning and William asked the meeting in what areas CRAGG could provide support and how Highland Council could best liaise with CRAGG.

CRAGG is good at sharing information and knowledge through audit. Its role is not one of consultancy. It was also emphasised that the role of CRAGG was not necessarily to achieve consensus, but only for the exchange of informed views. So in this respect CRAGG has

- a breadth of knowledge on local issues
- the ability to share information and knowledge
- the ability to share broad objectives

William let the group know that the next stage in the development of the Community Plan for Badenoch and Strathspey would be a community meeting to which individual representative groups in Badenoch and Strathspey would be invited to attend. Louise Clark is co-ordinating this approach.

6.3 Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce was brought to the table as part of the original 25 for CRAGG in order to facilitate the interchange of information. The role of CRAGG is to keep the Chamber informed so that the decisions over which it has influence can be made with greater understanding.

Sally, who was leading on this section, emphasised again the role of CRAGG is its

- ability to discuss and share knowledge and experience
- ability to influence the Chamber to develop a greater understanding of the issues in the area.

6.4 Destination Management Organisation (DMO)

Bob Kinnaird led on this section but he also had support from two of the other directors of the DMO - Johnnie Grant (Rothiemurchus Estate) and Tim Walker (Glenmore Lodge). The DMO has evolved over the last 18 months from ABSC Ltd to its new role as a DMO. This will be the first DMO operating in Scotland and has been set up following extensive research over the past 18 months into the operation of DMO's in Europe and America. There are now six directors under the chairmanship of Hamish Swan. The other directors are, Bob Kinnaird – Cairngorm Mountain, Johnnie Grant – Rothiemurchus Estate, Tim Walker – Glenmore Lodge, Ruari MacDonald – Aviemore Highland Resort, and Iain Miller - Coylumbridge Hotel.

How could the DMO fit with CRAGG?

- Communicate with Members
- Transport - clear link here to Community Planning
- Help manage tourism with the increase in visitor numbers which the DMO is likely to influence.

The strength of the brand is Aviemore plus the Cairngorms within the National Park. At this stage William summarised things by noting the clear pattern which has emerged in that CRAGG is without doubt an information sharing organisation with the depth and breadth of knowledge on local issues which cannot be underestimated. The Group has built up a significant level of trust and can certainly aid the delivery of the aims and projects of each of the organisations that have spoken this evening. At this stage Anne Angus of INBSE raised the positive point that INBSE found it very useful to air issues and topics with the wider CRAGG group. While this was perceived as useful, members of CRAGG again were keen to emphasise that CRAGG was for sharing information not necessarily consulting. CRAGG is after all not a consultative group. There may be too much conflict of interest and it is after all not constituted. The general feeling of the group is that it does not wish to be constituted and firmly believes that by remaining as it is, this in fact aids consultation and communication across the group. Whatever the future remit of CRAGG there is no doubt that it will evolve.

So where does CRAGG go from here?

For the next meeting it was agreed that Andrew Harper would lead discussion on the National Park Plan with a view to linking the CRAGG Area Strategy with the Park Plan. All members

of the group have been invited to look at the Park Plan before the next meeting and come prepared to discuss this key issue. An update will also be received on Community Planning and the DMO. Again links will need to be made to the CRAGG Area Strategy as several projects highlighted in the Strategy could be lifted out and set against the Tourism Development Plan delivered from the DMO and the Community Plan. It may well be that both these documents are not ready for the next meeting but would be an agenda item for the following meeting.

It was asked at this stage if the monitoring Stewardship Report should be continued; if the meeting should be open; and if, in the interests of transparency, issues should be published to a website.

Action: Andrew Harper to check whether as an unconstituted body, relevant documents can be put on a web site. He will also look at the possibility of support from the National Park in developing this web site for CRAGG.

7) Information Sharing

7.1 The tree cutting at Inverdrue has started.

7.2 Access Forum: advice is being compiled for walkers and for canoeists.

7.3 Cambusmore Consultations: there is a great deal of information available on this subject and if anyone is interested they should go onto the Rothiemurchus website.

7.4 The F.C.Forest Plan is now on public record. David Jardine expressed the gratitude of F.C. for the support of CRAGG

7.5 B & S Local History Group is collaborating with the Scottish Executive in developing plans for the year of Highland Culture in 2007

7.6 A 'son et lumiere' event is still a possibility, but a partner is required to realise it.

7.8 In order to contribute to the Nature Conservation Act, SNH is required to survey all SSSI sites in Scotland within 5 years. The first site will be Glenmore Forest.

7.9 CRAGG archive at Glenmore Lodge requires some work for the web site inclusion

Action: Tim to take a look at this following advice from Andrew Harper at the next meeting.
It will be decided how to include this material on the website.

8) Date and Share of Next meeting

Thursday 30th March at Glenmore Lodge, at 6pm.

William Gilfillan to chair the meeting.

It was also agreed that Keith Duncan SNH will chair the following two meetings.
Dates for these meetings will be set at the next meeting.