



Braemar Community Action Plan

May 2013



Mar Lodge.



Invercauld House.



Braemar sign.



Looking towards Auchendryne.

Welcome!

This document brings together a wide range of actions and projects, which the Braemar community believes are achievable and would deliver short, medium and/or long-term benefits for the village.

Following a thorough and inclusive consultation programme, all the proposed actions and projects are grouped under one of four themes:

- *Visitors Strategy, Attractions & Services*
- *Community Services & Transport*
- *Youth*
- *Housing, Employment & The Economy*

The four themes are described more fully on pages 6 to 8, while the tables on pages 12 to 15 list each project together with its associated key partners.

Introduction

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

For generations, the scenery and pure 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 countless writers, artists as well as photographers, and many visitors 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, 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 of three major cities: Perth, Dundee and Aberdeen.

Almost all 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, as the Cairngorms National Park approaches its 10th anniversary, is ideally placed to work with others to seek funding for a host of projects to secure a prosperous future.

Braemar In The Past

Braemar's origins are rooted in antiquity. The area has been strategically important since early times. Hill passes - from the north, south, east and west - converge where the modern village now stands.

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 fine 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 Marr was built by the Earl of Mar, near the site of the original St Andrews. 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 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 striving to become even better, with a raft of different projects underway. 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 two. 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 Grampian Fire & Rescue Service. A highly experienced volunteer Mountain Rescue Team, which operates in partnership with Grampian Police, also has a training base in the village.

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 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.



Braemar village centre c1960.



The Fife Arms taxi service c1890.



Castleton Terrace. The Old Mill, now The Bank House, Hutchinson's meat purveyor, Weather station c1880.



Hunting and fishing parties c1880.



Castleton of Braemar.



Looking to Cairngorms from Glenshee.



River Dee near Braemar.



Travelling Blaeberrys.

The two large coaching hotels provide accommodation for around 320.

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.

Three churches operate in the village: Church of Scotland, St Andrews 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 establishment providing curry and pizza as well as fish and chips.

A thriving variety of clubs and societies operates in the village. There is a long established SWRI, a Scout group, bowling club, local newspaper group, country dance group, book groups, local history group, choir, traditional music group, lunch club, pantomime group, walking groups as well as fiddle, bagpipe and highland dancing classes. The Village Hall is the venue 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 and Scout groups. Explorer Scouts meet at a separate hall, The Shieling.

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. It is also engaged in exploring a micro-hydroelectric scheme at Corriemulzie on Mar Estate, the building of a new footbridge over the Dee and, along with the project team, the restoration and revitalisation of Sir Ninian Comper's architectural masterpiece, St Margaret's Church. It has also recently restored the ancient Auchtavan crofting settlement as a self-guided attraction with dedicated open days.

Annual events are an important element in the life of Braemar, with the Junior Highland Games attracting crowds of over a thousand and the Braemar Gathering in excess of 15,000. To capitalise on the popularity of highland gatherings, Braemar Royal Highland Society has commissioned a feasibility study into 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 Races, as well as the recently introduced Creative Arts Festival, also help to bring visitors to the village.

Community Action Planning

The purpose of community action planning for Braemar was first explored at a public meeting held in the Village Hall in March 2012. Over 30 people attended to discuss the process and consider its potential benefits:

- to enable local people to say what they want for Braemar – now and in the future.
- to encourage everyone to think about what they value and want to protect.
- to build on existing good work, by publicising and seeking support for

ongoing projects.

- to evidence community needs to generate support from agencies and funding bodies.
- to prepare a plan for short, medium and long-term needs and aspirations.
- to engender collaboration to make Braemar even better.

At that initial open meeting it was agreed that a steering group should be set up by the Community Council.

Meeting regularly between April 2012 and January 2013, the steering group was determined that there should be an open process, involving everyone in and around Braemar, to publicise and generate support for community action planning, beginning with a detailed, village-wide survey.

The steering group was equally determined that Braemar's community action plan should build on previous endeavours such as the community vision work included as part of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) development plan review. Similarly, it should take account of the recent Master Plan exercise which focused on proposed built development in the village over the next 10-plus years.

As well as the steering group and Community Council, support for community action planning was provided by the CNPA, Aberdeenshire Council, and the Marr Community Planning Group. Assistance was also provided by the Marr Area Partnership and the Deeside Donside Development Project. The steering group together with BCL, obtained funding for the part-time appointment in November of a Community Action Planning Support Officer.

Promoted through a dedicated website, the *Braemar Buzzard*, the Community Council and through local shops, the

village-wide survey was completed by 96 individuals or households in May. As well as harvesting the comments and views from the survey, a number of other consultation initiatives fed into the drafting of the Braemar Community Action Plan.

These included an event in June when 17 young people were asked for their views on Braemar and what could be improved, and another during the same month, when primary school children were asked to draw pictures of things they want for the village. Information gleaned from these targeted meetings was particularly valuable given that, overall, 92% of responders were aged 36 or over.

A drop-in session in July attracted more than 60 people, who were given the opportunity to learn about information that had been gathered and to view displays by a number of groups on their activities and projects.

A further open meeting was held in September, attended by around 30. Four themes for action were distilled down by the steering group to help create this document, Braemar's Community Action Plan, which was submitted to stakeholders for comments before receiving final approval from the Community Council on 18 February 2013:

- Visitor Strategy, Attractions & Services
- Community Services & Transport.
- Youth
- Housing, Employment & The Economy



Braemar Junior Highland Games.



Fire Brigade and Braemar Cubs.



Snow gates and webcam.



St Margaret's audience.



Atholl Highlanders en route to the Braemar Gathering.



Braemar Castle.



Red Squirrel.



Royal Pavilion at the Braemar Gathering.

Theme I: Visitor Strategy, Attractions & Services

Tempered by the results of the survey, the steering group believes that the paramount 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.

Development of a formal visitor strategy will require objective external support and resources. It also would require buy-in from all sections of the community, calling for collaboration between groups in the village. It should complement, rather than duplicate or compete with, plans already developed by others such as the Royal Deeside & Cairngorms Destination Management Organisation (RD CDMO). And, crucially, it should be a dynamic document, revisited and refreshed over time.

Integral to delivery of the community action plan and owned by the Community Council, the process of engaging a suitable consultant to carry out such an exercise will require a steering group or lead organisation. The CNPA has already offered to provide support funding with other organisations indicating that they may also contribute including the Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP), National Trust for Scotland (NTS) and Aberdeenshire Council (AC). Such a strategy should take account of neighbouring tourist organisations including Glenshee and Ballater, as well as reflecting tourism strategies already developed at regional and national levels.

New ways are needed to persuade people to stop in the village and spend money. While further visitor data needs to be collected, it is known

that around 100,000 visitors a year stop at the Linn of Dee car park. More information is also required to understand the needs of visitors so that services can be better tailored to their needs. It was suggested that visitor surveys be carried out at some high footfall locations to plug the information gaps.

The survey also confirmed that local people most value Braemar's magnificent scenery, wildlife and tranquil environment. Similarly, when asked about what should be protected or enhanced, there was a clear consensus in favour of wildlife, woodland and open spaces. A significant proportion of responses also highlighted the village's sense of community, low crime rate and its small size.

Suggestions were received about how to enhance Braemar's attractiveness to visitors, with many people wishing to see improvements made to the appearance of the village in terms of signage, visitor facilities, customer service training, litter reduction, landscaping and hanging baskets.

Outdoors, even though two-thirds said they believe there are enough footpaths around the village, there is a need for quality improvements and link paths. Much progress has already been achieved by, for example, the Upper Deeside Access Trust (UDAT) and Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT). 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 recurring theme also called for 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. The continued support of organisations such as the RDCDMO, CBP, CNPA and others, is also key.

Given Braemar's climate, many responders volunteered ideas for indoor activities including the development of a swimming pool, tennis court, climbing centre and museum.

There is also an appetite to develop a visitor centre for Braemar Castle, an arts centre, a Highland Games Heritage Centre, a boutique hotel, consistent signage and a programme of improvements for Kindrochit Castle. Many of these ambitious projects will require further market testing and a feasibility study before they can be progressed. There were also calls for refurbishment of the Village Hall and suggestions made regarding enhanced use of other facilities including the golf club.

When asked for ideas about how to make Braemar even better, some of the other suggestions which emerged included improved shopping, a late bus, a pub, an internet café, better transport links, cafés and restaurants staying open longer, and completion of the footbridge over the Dee.

Theme 2: Community Services & Transport

Of the 96 survey respondents, nearly two-thirds said they take an active role in one or more community groups (64%). A similar proportion believes community groups work well together (65%), although there was consensus that more could be done to coordinate efforts for the benefit of the village as a whole.

For services provided by Aberdeenshire

Council, views were mixed in terms of refuse collection and snow clearing. There is a belief that refuse lorries should empty bins more frequently, that there should be a garden refuse collection, a large item uplift service, more frequent library visits and a snow plough based in the village.

A significant proportion believes that opportunities for adult learning could be improved (59%), with IT cited by many responders. Concerns were voiced regarding the future of the nursery and several noted that secondary school pupils were disadvantaged by the distance they need to travel.

In terms of accessing local information, the survey makes a case for an improved noticeboard and website. Local media such as the Deeside Piper and Braemar Buzzard, together with word-of-mouth, were cited as being most used as information sources, with radio and Braemar's village website least used.

Asked about any additional services which might be needed to help residents remain at home, 57% expressed the view that more could be provided, especially for the elderly. Such services could include a day centre for the elderly, a night settling service and local care worker.

While 66% said they believe health service provision to be satisfactory, 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 was considerable support for the local GP, who provides a 24/7 service.

Considering Braemar's carbon footprint, a number of responders voiced their objections to wind



Mar Lodge.



Linn of Dee.



Massed pipe bands.



Red Deer.



Braemar Primary School.



Braemar Cubs.



Braemar Scouts.



Highland Dancing.

turbines, although few are permitted within the Cairngorms National Park. There was considerable support, however, for a hydroelectric facility, solar panels, biomass scheme and community-based Combined Heat & Power (CHP) project. Improved public transport links would also considerably reduce car use.

The most frequently mentioned cause for dissatisfaction, cited across a number of survey questions, relates to public transport. Recurring concerns include: expensive, infrequent and unreliable services to Aberdeen, as well as the complete lack of any services to Blairgowrie and Perth, as well as other villages within the Park.

Suggestions volunteered include the introduction of an express bus service to Aberdeen, new services to the south and other parts of the Park, a dedicated school bus, a local taxi service and a shuttle service to the Linn of Dee and Linn of Quoich. Meetings have already been organised to begin discussions between transport providers, CNPA, community representatives and relevant local authorities.

Theme 3: Youth

Many responders complained of continuing drainage issues in the play park, together with the need for improving play equipment.

Some cited the lack of activities for teenagers in the village as a cause for real concern, together with few opportunities for local employment. There was, therefore, considerable enthusiasm for re-establishing a Youth Club with new facilities put in place.

Theme 4: Housing, Employment & The Economy

The survey revealed a dichotomy, with nearly every respondent calling for more affordable rented housing, 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.

Of the survey respondents, 46% say they run their own business or work from home. They cited the lack of affordable housing and, specifically, lack of accommodation for seasonal employees as a hindrance to business.

Looking at means to help stimulate business start-ups and existing businesses, there was a clear majority looking for faster broadband. Given that significant funds are being made available by the Scottish Government and Aberdeenshire Council, there is an opportunity for Braemar to bid for further investment.

Ideas were also proposed including IT, business and customer service training, low-cost workshop and office units, as well as much more collaboration with economic development agencies.

Many also recognise the need for improved marketing for the village and Braemar-based businesses, and call for a reduction in the use of non-local support services and tradespeople.

Next Steps

The steering group's work is now complete. The next step is the establishment of a small co-ordinating group, tasked with tracking progress against the four themes for action, as well as keeping the Community Council updated.

While nobody should expect that all the concerns and ideas raised through the survey and other consultations can be addressed, the Braemar Community Action Plan is based on what is believed to be achievable. The tables provide a guide to what it is intended to deliver over the short, medium and long terms, with precise timings varying between projects and difficult to assess at present. As projects are developed and finalised over time, priorities will necessarily change. Braemar's Community Action Plan will need to keep pace and, as such, should be kept under careful and ongoing review.

A number of other project ideas emerged during the consultation process, which currently fall outwith the community action plan remit. For completeness, however, they are captured in a separate table.

Delivery of a whole range of projects identified within the tables will require the setting up of sub-groups, each responsible for its own remit, and partnerships with other individuals and organisations. Some projects, such as development of the St Margaret's Church Arts Centre, Highland Games Heritage Centre and Braemar Castle Visitor Centre, will require significantly more resources than others. Determining what's needed will be the task of each sub-group. For the purposes of this plan, however, the tables provide a brief summary of actions proposed.

Every effort will be made to keep the community informed of developments, with interest expressed in joining one of the resulting sub-groups very much welcomed!

Finally, to all those who attended public meetings, responded to the survey, took part in other consultation meetings, as well as those organisations who lent their expertise or funding, the steering group would like to extend sincere thanks! For all who love living in Braemar, our new Community Action Plan represents a great opportunity to look ahead with excitement and confidence.



Looking towards Braemar Butcher.



7 Castleton Terrace c1880.

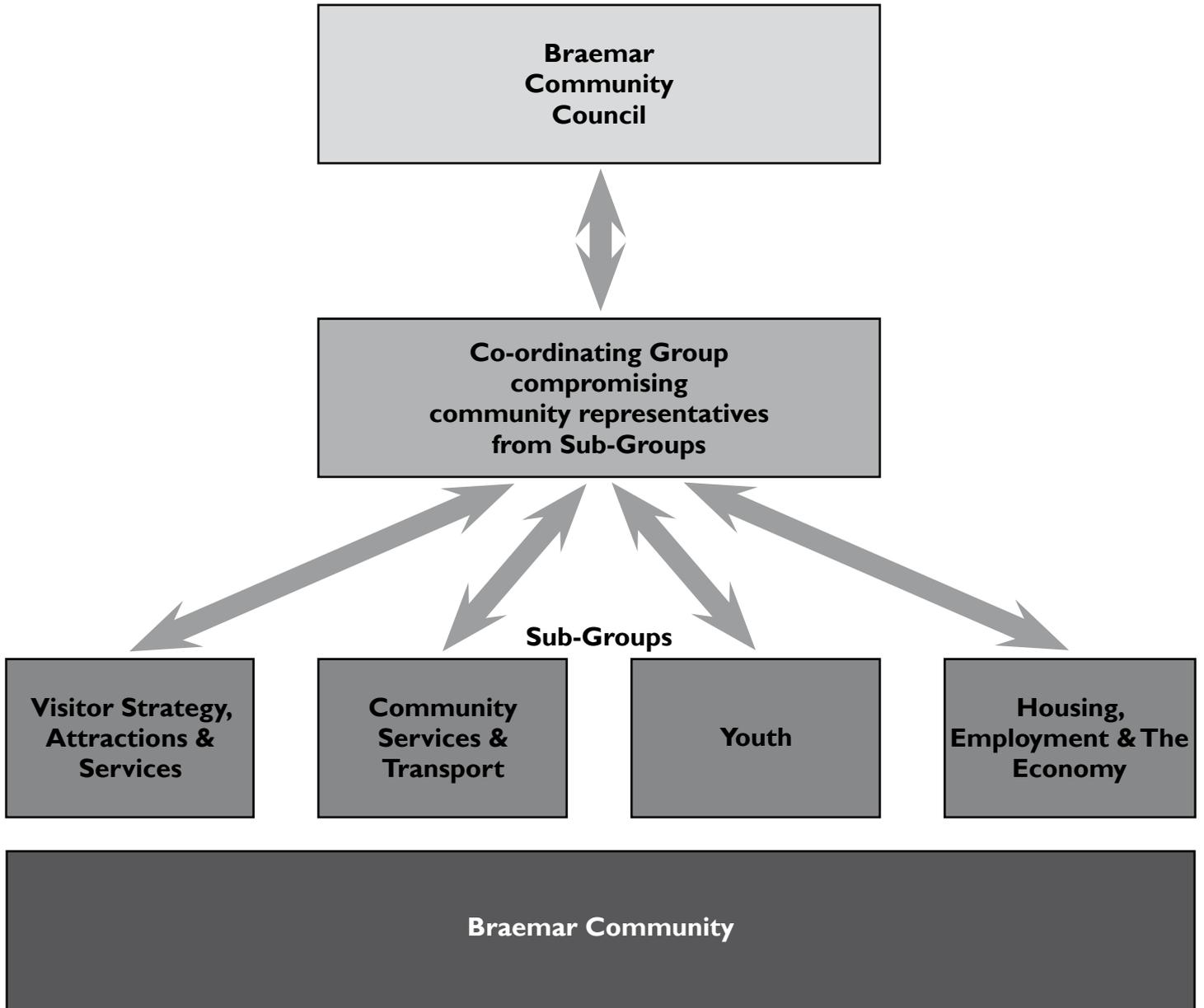


7 Castleton Terrace c1983.



Castleton Terrace. The Bank house c1983.

Delivering The Braemar Community Action Plan



Key To Organisations & Partners

Item	Abbreviation used	Organisation
1.	AC	Aberdeenshire Council
2.	BCC	Braemar Community Council
3.	BCL	Braemar Community Limited
4.	BRHS	Braemar Royal Highland Society
5.	BTG	Braemar Tourist Group
6.	BVH	Braemar Village Hall
7.	CBP	Cairngorms Business Partnership
8.	CHA	Castleton Hall Association
9.	CNPA	Cairngorms National Park Authority
10.	COAT	Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust
11.	DDDP	Deeside Donside Development Project
12.	GFRS	Grampian Fire & Rescue Service
13.	HS	Historic Scotland
14.	IE	Invercauld Estate
15.	MAP	Marr Area Partnership
16.	ME	Mar Estate
17.	MLE	Mar Lodge Estate
18.	NTS	National Trust for Scotland
19.	PKC	Perth & Kinross Council
20.	RDCDMO	Royal Deeside & Cairngorms Destination Management Organisation
21.	RDP	Royal Deeside Partnership
22.	SE	Scottish Enterprise
23.	SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
24.	SG	Scottish Government
25.	SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
26.	SYHA	Scottish Youth Hostel Association
27.	UDAT	Upper Deeside Access Trust
28.	VS	Visit Scotland

Theme 1: Visitor Strategy, Attractions & Services						
Item	Title	Description	Key Partners	Short-term Actions	Medium-term Actions	Long-term Actions
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.	BTG, BCL, BCC, BRHS, CNPA, CBF 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, enhance and promote visitor services.	
2.	Braemar Castle & Visitor Centre	To conserve, improve and develop Braemar Castle as a must-see visitor attraction.	BCL, IE, HS, volunteers.	Volunteers recruited covering: interpretation, shop and ticket sales. gardening, administration, marketing, fund raising and event organisation. The roof also requires repairs. Prepare Castle Landscape Plan.	Develop the learning experience the castle offers through schools as well as other educational establishments and special interest groups. Create a venue for corporate entertainment, including weddings and small scale music and drama.	Develop the interpretation of the collections, history and context of the castle to enhance and refresh the visitor experience. Develop a high quality, purpose-built Visitor Centre with reception area, toilets and catering facilities.
3.	Kindrochit Castle	To raise the profile of both Kindrochit Castle structures, explaining their historical significance.	AC, HS, CNPA.	Cut back vegetation. Form a Friends of Kindrochit or Adoption group from among the community to look after the Castle in the future. Funding has been provided by CNPA.	Stabilise and consolidate the walls, improve access (including disabled access), install feature lighting and install interpretive material with directional signage in the village.	Establish a maintenance programme for the future, in collaboration with AC and community volunteers.
4.	Highland Games Heritage Centre	To explore the opportunity to harness the Braemar Gathering's international reputation, creating a year-round attraction.	BRHS	Commission a feasibility study.	Develop proposals and funding strategy.	
5.	St Margaret's Church	To restore the St Margaret's Church building and develop it as a hub for arts-related activities, enhancing Braemar as a tourist destination.	AC, BCC, BCL, CNPA, BRHS, HS, IE, MAP, NTS, SE, Voluntary Project Team, Aberdeen University, Architectural Heritage Fund, Scottish Episcopal Church, Scottish Redundant Churches Trust.	A formal Feasibility Study (Irrescence & Tourism UK) and an Options Appraisal (Simpson & Brown) have been commissioned.	Develop detailed, costed plans, a funding strategy and long-term governance arrangements, probably through the creation of a board of trustees.	Create new employment opportunities as well as boosting revenues for local businesses.
6.	Footpath network	To develop an interconnected network of footpaths around the village, ensuring consistent signage, monitoring, maintenance and promotion.	BCC, BTG, CNPA, COAT, IE, ME, NTS, SYHA.	A working group has already been formed to scope out improvements to be introduced during 2013.	Explore Deeside Way linked path to Ballater. Develop initiatives to ensure that existing under-utilised car parks are brought into use.	

Theme 1: Visitor Strategy, Attractions & Services (continued)						
Item	Title	Description	Key Partners	Short-term Actions	Medium-term Actions	Long-term Actions
7.	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 2 years. Further plans for a connecting path to the east (Kailoch and old Brig o' Dee) along the south of the A93 may be developed.
8.	Glenshee Ski Centre	To explore an integrated approach to visitor management, attracting visitors for Braemar and the Ski Centre.	BTG, BCC, Glenshee Ski Centre.	Work with the Glenshee Tourist Association, as well as with the Ski Centre's management.		
9.	Braemar Golf Club	To partner with Braemar Golf Club, building visitor numbers through new joint marketing initiatives.	BTG, BCC, Braemar Golf Club.	An email campaign by the Golf Club, targeted at the Aberdeenshire business community.	Support investigation by the Golf Club of a new onsite tennis court.	

Theme 2: Community Facilities, Services & Transport						
Item	Title	Description	Key Partners	Short-term Actions	Medium-term Actions	Long-term Actions
1.	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, DDDR, AC, CNPA.	Await results of the independent review to determine whether the project can proceed.	Develop detailed design and build programme.	It is expected that this project will require 2 to 3 years to completion.
2.	Braemar Village Hall & Castleton Hall	To ensure that both halls are sufficiently kitted-out, maintained, promoted and utilised to serve the community and, as appropriate, visitors.	BVH, CHA, the community.	Repair roof and explore potential for renewable heating system. Funding is now available.		
3.	Guide Shieling	To increase use of the building for the benefit of the wider community. Operated by the Guide Association (there is no Girl Guide Pack in Braemar), the Shieling hosts Scout Association meetings for boys and girls from the age of 5.	BCL, the Guides.	Identify opportunities to integrate promotion of the Guide Shieling with other available facilities.		Move ownership of the Shieling locally.
4.	Adult learning classes	To identify and meet the demands for adult learning opportunities to benefit local people.	RDP.	Link to Upper Deeside Learning Centre. Commission needs assessment.		
5.	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.		

Theme 2: Community Facilities, Services & Transport (continued)					
6.	Noticeboards	To ensure that well-sited, well-designed and durable noticeboards are in place to help inform local residents and visitors of news, events and local meetings.	AC, BCC, CNPA, NTS.	New noticeboards have been developed, with sponsorship obtained to meet their costs and will be in place during 2013.	
7.	Emergency health care	To explain how the existing services available meet the emergency health care needs of Braemar, and how they are accessed.	BCC, the local GP.	Collaborate with the emergency services and the local GP to promote First Responders in the village.	
8.	Care in the community	To ensure the elderly and vulnerable have the best chance to remain for as long as possible in their own home.	AC, GP, the community	To explore funding opportunities and local assistance for non-personal care (for example shopping, laundry, cleaning and cooking).	
9.	Sports	To investigate the feasibility of building a tennis court in Braemar.	AC, BCC, Braemar Golf Club.	Identify potential partners, including the Golf Club, and research potential sources of funding.	
10.	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.	AC, BCC, CNPA, PKC, Nestrans.	Joint meetings to initiate dialogue with all agencies and bus company.	
11.	Links to Aberdeen	To secure additional bus services, including an express service, from Braemar to the North.	BCC, AC, bus companies.	Address potential for express service from Banchory with Marr Bus Forum.	
12.	Shuttle to Linn of Quoch and Linn of Dee	To provide a shuttle service from the village to these popular tourist features.	AC, BCC, CNPA, bus companies.	Investigate potential demand and viability and meet with potential providers.	

Theme 3: Young People						
Item	Title	Description	Key Partners	Short-term Actions	Medium-term Actions	Long-term Actions
1.	Youth club	To re-establish a Youth Club in The Shieling for Aboyne Academy pupils. It is intended that the Youth Club will be held fortnightly during term time, with the possibility to extend it throughout the year.	AC Community Learning & Development, volunteers.	Volunteers have already trained in Youth Development. Consult with young people about what they want from a Youth Club. Funding plan to be investigated.	Provide the facilities that young people want to ensure they remain engaged.	
2.	Play park, parks and landscaping	To ensure that the play park contains appropriate play equipment, providing a safe and stimulating environment for children in the village. Also, to ensure that general landscaping in the village is attractive and well-maintained.	AC, BCC, the community.	Review play park drainage and equipment. Review general landscaping in the village.	Restore the fountains.	

Theme 4: Housing, Employment & The Economy

Item	Title	Description	Key Partners	Short-term Actions	Medium-term Actions	Long-term Actions
1.	Affordable housing	To ensure that there is sufficient appropriate affordable housing to match demand.	AC, CNPA, IE, ME, Castlehill Housing Association.	Meet with affordable housing providers to assess demand and likely options for development. Input to allocation policy through the new Local Development Plan.		
2.	Business units	To ensure that there are sufficient business units to meet Braemar's needs and promote their availability.	AC, IE, ME, BCC.	Audit all business unit accommodation in Braemar and publish a regular update on space becoming available.	Gauge demand for additional space through a further survey, collaborating with potential partners, if required, to bring on new units.	
3.	Skills training for employment	To identify what additional employment skills are required, such as customer care training, and develop a delivery plan.	AC, BCC, BTG, CNPA, IE, ME, NTS, local tradesmen and businesses.	Establish a working group to gauge demand, identify existing training available, and promote new opportunities.		
4.	Mobile signal, broadband and radio reception	To ensure that the local communications infrastructure delivers the best possible service for business and the community.	AC, BCC, CNPA, SG, the community.	Set up meetings with key infrastructure providers to determine what improvements are achievable and how they might be funded.		
5.	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.	AC, BCC, 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 or ground-source heat pumps.	

Other Projects

Item	Title	Description
1.	Black House	Build a Black House, including a mock-up illicit still, in the grounds of Braemar Castle. Sheep and Highland Cattle could complement the Castle as an attraction.
2.	Swimming pool	The village survey confirmed that a swimming pool, for use by the Braemar community and visitors, would serve as a significant visitor attraction and popular local amenity.
3.	Dark Skies status	Stage star-gazing events over the winter months to bring in additional revenue to the village. Achieving accredited Dark Sky status would open up additional promotional opportunities.

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

This initiative is sponsored by Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership and run by Aberdeenshire Local Rural Partnerships. The aim is to provide community action plans in an attractive, 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 top priorities 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.

It is important that this booklet is seen by all concerned as an account of the community's

views at the time of the latest consultation, and that it 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 plan.

We recommend that this Plan has a maximum life of three years.

The development of this Community Action Plan has been further supported and sponsored by the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

Thanks are due to all the individuals and organisations who contributed to the development of Braemar's first Community Action Plan.

For questions about this document or to make suggestions about implementation of the plan please e-mail: info@braemarcap.org.uk

MARR AREA PARTNERSHIP

Gellan Cottage • Coull • Aboyne • AB34 5JU

T: 013398 87577 • E: enquiry@marrareapartnership.org.uk • W: www.marrareapartnership.org.uk



www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk



CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
ÙGH DARRAS PÀIRC NÀISEANTA A'
MHONAIDH RUAIDH

