

## **PE1678/BB**

Scottish Natural Heritage submission of 18 March 2019

When Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) gave evidence to the Public Petitions Committee on 25 October 2018, we undertook to provide an update to the Committee following the Ranger Development Partnership meeting in January 2019. This note provides that update and sets out the next steps SNH proposes to now undertake.

### **Ranger Development Partnership Meeting**

This took place on 29 January 2019. It was a positive meeting with much lively discussion across a range of issues relevant to the petition. The note of the meeting is at Annex 1. RDP members have now provided further comments to SNH on to what extent they feel an update or rewrite of [Rangers in Scotland](#) is required (attendees requested more time to consider this).

### **SNH Meeting with COSLA**

COSLA were unable to attend the Ranger Development Partnership meeting so we arranged to meet with COSLA separately in February to discuss ranger matters, as well as a number of other biodiversity and environment matters.

We agreed that there is common interest in the light of the petition of the need to raise awareness within COSLA of the profile of the ranger services in local authorities – this should focus on the benefits provided by ranger services across a range of local authority activity, rather than on the impact of individual budget decisions.

COSLA proposed that a paper could be prepared with SNH on future ranger service for discussion at an upcoming meeting of the COSLA Environment and Economy Board. They would also consider options for potentially hosting a future ranger managers meeting. There was an agreement to meet again, likely in May to discuss these matters further.

### **SCRA Meeting with SNH Chair Mike Cantlay**

This took place earlier in January. It was again a broadly positive meeting which covered the key challenges facing rangers and considered how SCRA, SNH and other ranger development partners could help move rangers forward again Scotland. In particular, the SNH Chair emphasised the need to develop a 2030 vision for rangers – to look beyond the current period of significant change/budget uncertainty - and committed SNH to providing continued co-ordination and leadership at the national level for this. He proposed a further meeting in a year's time to review progress.

### **Next steps**

We believe that this suite of meetings provide a firm foundation for further collective working on this agenda. Over the next 12 months, SNH will continue to work with

SCRA, the ranger development partnership and ranger service managers in taking a range of work forward, including

- refreshing the policy framework for rangers in Scotland;
- reviewing options for reporting on the work of ranger services and the benefits they provide with a view to undertaking reporting in 2020; and
- co-ordinating the development of a training and development programme for rangers in Scotland; and
- supporting the establishment of new junior ranger programmes

Finally, we are currently finalising our budget for 19/20, including our funding to community and private sector ranger services. While we need to look for further savings across all our expenditure, we are not proposing to stop funding these services next year. We will be informing these ranger services of our decision shortly.

**Annex 1**  
**Ranger Development Partnership Meeting – Key Points and Action Points**  
**Unconfirmed**  
**29 Jan 2019, Battleby Conference Centre**

**Attending**

Pete Rawcliffe, SNH (Chair)  
Alison Matheson, SNH  
Lucy Byrne, SNH (for the agenda item on funding)  
Adam Streeter-Smith, Cairngorms National Park Authority  
George Potts, Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association  
Martin Gray, Historic Environment Scotland  
Karen Ramoo, Scottish Land and Estates  
Mike Daniels, John Muir Trust  
Simon Ovendon, Crown Estate  
Fiona Carswell, Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park  
Alan Brown, Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park  
Piers DeSalis, Hopetoun House Preservation Trust  
Dominic Driver, The National Trust for Scotland

**Apologies**

Phil Whitfield, FCS  
Carol Evans, The Woodland Trust  
Leigh Hamilton, LLTNPA  
Lesley Forsyth, North Ayrshire Council  
Amanda Downie, North Ayrshire Council  
Suzanne Humphris, LLTNPA

**Summary of actions**

1	SNH and SCRA to develop an overview and ToR for the RDP and other liaison structures
2	SNH to reflect further in the light of this discussion on how to support ranger services with finding new sources of funding
3	All to send thoughts on Rangers in Scotland – update or rewrite to Alison Matheson by 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2019
4	SNH to consider options for national reporting further
5	All to send suggestions of topics for a Ranger Managers' Forum, along with ideas of how to encourage good attendance from Ranger Managers, to Alison Matheson.
6	All to send George Potts any suggestions for activities for the next Ranger Rendezvous which will be in September 2020, at Braemar, and will have land management as a main topic. Junior Rangers was one suggestion raised
7	SNH to identify future dates for RDP meeting in 2019 and 2020

**Note of Meeting**

**Welcome, introductions and background to the meeting**

Pete Rawcliffe welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves and to outline what they hope to get from the meeting. There were a number of aspects including: scope for joint working / benefits of collective effort; looking to the future of ranger services / forward direction; dealing with resourcing pressures and future funding.

There is no formal Terms of Reference for the RDP nor a note of the previous meeting which was held in March 2017. It was agreed that it would be useful though to develop a ToR alongside other liaison structures e.g. Ranger Managers' Forum, Ranger Rendezvous etc.

Pete Rawcliffe outlined that the purpose of the RDP was to provide a strategic overview of the delivery of ranger services across Scotland, sharing ideas and direction. It was good that the diversity of ranger services were represented around the table and we will ensure this is continued in future.

**Action point 1** – SNH and SCRA to develop an overview and ToR for the RDP and other liaison structures

### **SCRA petition update including SCRA survey results**

George Potts gave a presentation which is circulated with this note of the meeting.

Some key points from the discussion around the presentation were:

- The SCRA survey indicates national and local government ranger services have shrunk by 30% since 2008; even prior to the 2008 change when SNH could no longer grant aid local authority ranger services, there was a decline in ranger numbers;
- The reduction in rangers was impacting on the ranger careers – fewer senior rangers means less career progression for maingrade rangers; graduates don't always come with the softer skills required to be a ranger – soft skills that can be gained by working as a seasonal ranger or volunteering with a ranger service; there are also fewer seasonal posts which means it is more difficult for people to start out as a ranger;
- SCRA are keen to see the 2008 Rangers in Scotland policy statement renewed;
- SCRA consider that SNH's and SCRA's input to the Petitions Committee was weaker than it should have been because there is no overview – national reporting – of the outputs of all ranger services in Scotland; each year 50 million people visit sites that are managed by rangers;
- SNH had reported twice on ranger service activities, though input from local authority ranger services was limited to a small number of services on both occasions. CNPA developed an infographic showing ranger benefits (see Annex 2) but it was incomplete because 4 ranger services didn't contribute;

- According to the survey, only 2% of ranger services are community ones (should this be higher?); some uncertainty over how trust, community, charity and NGO services were recorded was also noted.
- Ranger services in Scotland are internationally recognised. It was felt that the continued erosion of ranger services would impact on this.

### **Funding ranger services – developing new sources and models of funding.**

Lucy Byrne, External Funding Officer with SNH outlined a number of points:

- It is difficult for ranger services to try to find additional funding on top of their day job due to lack of time. They also don't necessarily have the right skill set to do this.
- Not one funding model fits all. A number of ranger services charge for walks and talks, and have also been looking at other income generation for example bike hire or cruise ship passenger fees.
- Ranger Services are generally piecemeal in the way they seek external funding; there may be scope for larger, co-ordinated applications.
- Given the benefits provided, there may be more scope for health, tourism and education budgets and funds could be allocated to ranger services – though it should be recognised that spend in these areas is also under pressure.
- A recent report 'Where does Green Grant Funding Go' <https://www.greenfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/WTGGW-Scotland-digital.pdf> found that there's very little foundation funding for environmental work in Scotland. The Robertson Trust and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation provide most of it, yet, while they have a broad environmental remit they are not 'environmental' organisations – their mission statements are focussed on social outcomes. Esmée Fairbairn aims to improve the quality of life for people and communities; the Robertson Trust's mission is to improve the quality of life and realise the potential of people and communities in Scotland. So is there an opportunity to make more visible the social / community element of ranger work – and at the same time promote the need to support 'environmental' work and draw in more funding because these areas are clearly not separate.

The following points were noted in the discussion

- There is a diversity of arrangements for charging and there have been some complaints about publicly subsidised ranger services competing with commercial tour operators. CNPA has a policy position on the extent that ranger services can charge for events.
- Some money raising ventures can be very time consuming for rangers to deliver, with all of the other duties they need to carry out.
- To consider applying for health budget money, ranger services don't have to change what they do, just change how they promote it, for example call a Guided Walk and Health Walk.

- Some ranger services already have to completely cover their costs by the money that is made at their site.
- Ranger services have an ethos that they don't want to make money. They need to be more willing to be more commercial minded. If charging, the charge needs to be modest, proportionate and represent value for money.
- A small modest charge may not put the public off from taking part in a ranger activity.
- A Social Return on Investment study can demonstrate the value of ranger services – SCRA are aware of a study that demonstrated £10 return per £1 spend.
- Similarly, preventative spend studies can demonstrate the value of getting people outdoors with a skilled leader; the FCS Branching Out project has shown this. Though we are not aware of a ranger service study in this context.
- Perhaps the proposed visitor / tourist tax should help to fund ranger services.
- Can we bolder in charging for services? SCRA are aware of a ranger service (Lee Valley) near London that charges £8 per head for a half day educational visit, and there is massive demand for this service.
- Visitors to the countryside need to be made more aware of the cost of managing the countryside, for example managing path networks and maintaining greenspace, so that they understand 'your contribution will help to pay for this' when asked to pay for a ranger led activity.
- Case studies could be shared between ranger services and their managers on approaches to seeking funding.
- An advocate at the national level to promote the value of ranger services is required.

**Action point 2** – SNH to reflect further in the light of this discussion on how to support ranger services with finding new sources of funding

### **Mapping a way forward**

A number of topics were discussed with the following points noted:

#### **1) [Rangers in Scotland](#) 2008 document - update or rewrite?**

- A new statement should run to 2030 to align with the new biodiversity targets and also to reflect better the present challenges of the unsettled political and financial situation.
- We need to be clear who this policy statement is for and whether it is relevant or of use at this time. SCRA feel that it has value as a tool to promote the value of ranger services.
- There was a view that it needs reviewed to make it fit for purpose and to chime with the next generation of rangers. Co-design with young rangers may be helpful.

- An online document that can be easily and regularly updated may be a more appropriate format. Case studies could be included. It could be less bland and more demanding about the benefits of ranger services. It could be more explicit about the role that rangers play in health and education, and also the role that volunteer rangers have.

**Action Point 3** – *All to send thoughts on Rangers in Scotland – update or rewrite to Alison Matheson by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019.*

## **2) Raising the profile of ranger services - national reporting and other approaches**

- There was a general agreement that national reporting is still worthwhile. It was seen as key for increasing awareness, commitment and for making funding bids at both national and local levels.
- Could ranger service national reporting be linked to other local authority reporting?
- Should national surveys (such as the Scotland's People and Nature Survey, or the Scotland's Nature Omnibus Survey) or local ones (e.g. Cairngorms visitor survey), ask questions about ranger services and the benefits they provide to the public?
- There is a need to recognise that there will be 'noise in the data' for example which group of people go in to which reporting category – so guidance needs to be clear. The SCRA survey headline results could be good ones to focus on: learners at educational events; volunteers at practical conservation tasks; community groups engaged by rangers; and people attending ranger-led public events.
- Simple infographics are good for showing data e.g. the Cairngorms National Park Authority national reporting summary – see Annex 2.
- Collecting data is all very good, but only collect it if something meaningful will be done with it.
- There are concerns over too much reporting to different organisations and on different topics, as this can be very time consuming for ranger services. Many ranger services also struggle or strongly dislike collecting data.
- Some organisations already do a lot of reporting on what their ranger services deliver but they don't provide this information to SNH.
- Using people counters is expensive and time consuming. Could open source data help eg visitors scan their phone, or 'check in' when they arrive at a site.
- As well as deciding what to ask, the frequency of surveying is also key, as is the timing (avoid busy times for ranger services).

**Action point 4** – *SNH to consider options for national reporting further*

## **3) Maintaining the common identity of Scotland's Rangers – branding, training, standards.**

### *i) Badging*

- SCRA request that organisations use the national ranger badge because it is well recognised nationally and internationally. Double badging is OK from the SCRA perspective.
- SCRA are also of the view that the badge should only be worn by proper rangers i.e. those who meet the SCRA professional standards.
- There is a SCRA survey from around 5 years ago that looked at the ranger badge and the ranger brand, amongst both rangers and the public. The question was posed as to whether a new survey on this would be helpful, including asking ranger employing organisations who don't require their rangers to wear the badge, why they don't.
- Not all ranger services within the Cairngorms National Park wear the national ranger logo.
- NTS would be worried about brand dilution were they to adopt the ranger logo (SCRA feel that the badge is an addition not a dilution and advise that NTS have traditionally used the ranger logo). NTS also want their rangers to be branded in an identical way to other staff.
- JMT don't call their staff rangers and do not currently wear the ranger logo; their own JMT brand is their income.
- HES believed that the ranger logo is probably going to be dropped as the organisation is being rebranded; though the rangers could wear the SCRA pin badge.
- The ranger logo is perhaps more important for small ranger services to wear – those that don't have a big organisational brand.

### *ii) Training*

- SCRA are of the view that rangers carry out different tasks to others in their organisation so they need suitable background training before they can be badged as a ranger. The SCRA Continuing Professional Development helps with this.
- It was suggested that when organisations deliver in-house or local ranger training they consider widening it out to others, for example HES and CNPA both do in house training for rangers.
- SNH is considering refreshing its training and development partnership with SCRA.
- Should each of the national ranger employing organisations offer 1 event per year of ranger training? Ditto the ranger rendezvous?

### **4) Refreshing the Ranger Managers' Forum? (purpose / topics / chair).**

The Ranger Rendezvous and the Ranger Managers' Forum was discussed. The Ranger Rendezvous is a gathering of rangers and the Forum is a gathering of ranger managers. The latter may be useful as the RDP develops a 2030 vision for



rangering in Scotland, and its format will be shaped by RDP members' thinking on developing the 2030 vision.

**Action point 5** – *All to send suggestions of topics for a Ranger Managers' Forum, along with ideas of how to encourage good attendance from Ranger Managers, to Alison Matheson.*

**Action point 6** – *All to send George Potts any suggestions for activities for the next Ranger Rendezvous which will be in September 2020, at Braemar, and will have land management as a main topic. Junior Rangers was one suggestion raised.*

### **Junior Rangers**

SNH and SCRA continue to work on this, to promote the value of Junior Ranger groups. A recent piece of work has looked at Junior Ranger Delivery Models, circulated with this note. The next piece of work is to update the SCRA Junior Rangers Toolkit.

Following on from the Year of Young People 2018, and the need to invest in young people each and every year, there may be scope for Junior Rangers to be involved in a refreshed Rangers in Scotland strategy.

### **International Update (Europarcs, European Ranger Federation, International Ranger Federation)**

There wasn't time to discuss this at the meeting and an update is provided at Annex 1 of this meeting note.

### **AOB**

Lantra sent some information to RDP members about the proposed environmental management National Occupational Standards review. RDP members can consider it separately and write a letter of support to Lantra if they feel it appropriate.

### **DoNM**

This is to be confirmed, and to a certain extent depends on what members feel they'd like to do with the Rangers in Scotland policy statement, and also fit with other ranger liaison meetings and events over the next two years.

**Action point 7** – *SNH to identify next dates for RDP meetings in 2019 and 2020*

### **Attachments to this Note**

George Potts Presentation on the SCRA Survey  
Junior Ranger Delivery Models



## Annex 1 - International Updates from SCRA International Representative

### IRF (International Ranger Federation)



The IRF is currently gearing up for its 9<sup>th</sup> triennial World Ranger Congress, which will be held in Chitwan National Park, Nepal from 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> November 2019. This is the first World Ranger Congress to be held in Asia, a great achievement for the regional federation. In 2016, SCRA supported a Scottish delegate to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> World Ranger Congress in Colorado, and is now looking to support a Scottish Ranger, as well as supporting a Ranger from a developing country (hopefully Malawi) to attend the Nepal Congress in November.

The IRF continues to promote and support Rangers from all over the world, as well as supporting the welfare and training of Rangers and their families working in socioeconomically disadvantaged countries through the Federation's charity arm – The Thin Green Line Foundation.

### European Ranger Federation



Officially formed in 2017, the European Ranger Federation (ERF) currently has 25 member ranger associations, representing over 5,000 professional Rangers. ERF is a networking organisation for professional rangers and others involved in the day-to-day management of protected areas; the conservation of wildlife and habitats; visitor safety; education and interpretation; law enforcement and anti-poaching activities.

ERF are currently planning their 2<sup>nd</sup> European Ranger Congress which will take place in the Bavarian Forest National Park, Germany in May 2020. In the meantime, ERF continues to promote and organise training and workshop opportunities, exchanges and twinning partnerships between Ranger associations through its network.

### Europarc Federation



Europarc held its annual conference in September 2018 in Aviemore in partnership with the Cairngorms National Park Authority, on the theme of 'European Parks: Inspired by the Next Generation' as part of the 'Scottish Year of Young People 2018'.

The conference was a great success, and called for young people to be more involved in decision making, volunteering, working and living in Parks.

The participation numbers were higher than ever, with **465 registered delegates** from **42 countries** and over **600 participants** in some of the events, the agenda took place as scheduled and the enjoyment of the delegates was tangible from the beginning till the end.

## ERASMUS+ Study Tours

SCRA are now a registered partner of the Erasmus+ programme through the ArchNET Consortium.

This means that all SCRA members can apply to take part in one of the study tours that take place. This year's tours are complete, however there will be new tours available for 2019, so keep your eyes peeled! The programme is fully funded and costs are minimal.

## Annex 2 CNPA Ranger Service Infographic

# Ranger Services in the Cairngorms National Park



Countryside Rangers promote the enjoyment, understanding and care of the Cairngorms National Park

**13** Ranger Services  
Employed by a variety of organisations including public bodies, NGO's, Estates and charitable trusts.



Covering  
**117,240ha**

**9** Ranger Bases



**22** Full-time Ranger Staff

## Achievements in 2016/17

### ENJOYMENT



**750,140**



visitors welcomed

**6,671**

people attended ranger events

**200+**

miles of paths managed and maintained for the public

### UNDERSTANDING



**2,448**

children and young adults, including Junior Rangers, benefiting from educational activities

**1,153**

volunteer days delivered

Promoting Tread Lightly in the Park and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code

### CARE & SUPPORT



**35**

Cairngorms Nature Projects supported

Dealing with irresponsible behaviour

Supporting health walks and equality groups to enjoy the countryside

For further information about the valuable work of rangers in the Park visit: [cairngorms.co.uk/caring-future/rangers-services](http://cairngorms.co.uk/caring-future/rangers-services)

[www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)