



Learning more about our visitors to enable exceptional visitor experiences and a National Park richer in nature

Introduction

Visitors are an integral community to the Cairngorms. Ensuring they have a "wow" experience and a warm welcome is of paramount importance. They support over 5,000 jobs; contribute over £300 million into local communities and are critical to caring for the very thing that most people appreciate in the Cairngorms; the landscapes and wildlife.

Thanks to the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project, in partnership with the RSPB, Rothiemurchus, Forestry & Land Scotland and the Cairngorms Business Partnership, is about to embark on some research that will enable us all to get to know our visitors better than we ever have before.

An in-depth understanding of the motivations of different types of visitors, including those who live locally and visit the forests, and what makes an amazing visitor experience for them, can help us all cater more specifically for visitors; in a way that also enables wildlife in the Cairngorms to thrive.

The research

From the beginning of June, visitors to Abernethy Forest, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Forest Park will be invited to complete an online-based research survey and to take part in focus groups.

There will be a number of locations where a survey link and QR code will be displayed for people to go online and complete the survey. For anyone interested and willing to participate in a focus group, there will be a place in the survey to leave contact details.

The research will be carried out from June to September, both during and outside school holidays to reach as wide a range of visitors as possible.

Over 1 million people a year visit Abernethy, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore. The landholdings are designated to protect the threatened habitats and wildlife they contain, so there is much to learn from these sites.

The research is being conducted by an objective third party, Heritage Pathfinder Ltd. The views of over 1,200 visitors to the forests will be gathered to ensure a 95% confidence level in the results. The research will take account of the changes we're experiencing related to the pandemic and provision will be made to enable follow-up research when visitation returns to more usual patterns.

Over the research period, we'll find ways to share progress updates with interested parties and once complete, a summary of the research findings will be published on the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project website: cairngormscapercaillie.scot

So, whether you're an accommodation provider, landowner, outdoor activity provider, or you live locally and visit the forests of Rothiemurchus, Glenmore and Abernethy for recreation; the findings from this research will be available for us all to use.

Find out more

To enquire about getting involved, to ask questions or to share thoughts, please email: capercaillie@cairngorms.co.uk

You can also visit cairngormscapercaillie.scot/communities/visitors to find more information in our FAQs.