



NEWS RELEASE

CAMPAIGN TO GROW THE FAMILY OF NATIONAL PARKS IN SCOTLAND GATHERS MOMENTUM

For immediate release - Tuesday 3 April 2018

An important conference, to discuss the great progress being made to establish more National Parks in Scotland and to learn lessons from the two existing National Parks, is being held in Stirling on Friday 20 April with delegates in attendance from candidate National Park areas and many other parts of Scotland.

The Scottish Campaign for National Parks has organised this conference at what is an important time with efforts to grow the family of National Parks in Scotland gathering considerable momentum recently.

Strong community-led proposals have emerged for two new National Parks in the South of Scotland and the possibility of a new Argyll & The Isles National Park has been proposed by Argyll & Bute Council as part of a recent local development plan consultation exercise.

Speakers at the conference include Dame Barbara Kelly, President of the Galloway National Park Association and Jane Bower from the Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park, who will both outline the compelling cases for new National Parks in the South of Scotland.

Grant Moir, Chief Executive of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, will set the scene with an upbeat presentation on the work of the existing two National Parks – Cairngorms and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs – which have now been in existence for 15 years. He will also highlight some lessons for prospective new National Parks.

The final speaker will be John Mayhew from the Scottish National Parks Strategy Project, who will launch a brand new report *Still Unfinished Business Five Years On*, summarising the major steps forward since SCNP and its partner charity the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland launched their original *Unfinished Business* report in 2013.

Ross Anderson, Chairman of the Scottish Campaign for National Parks said: "I am greatly encouraged by the momentum that is gathering pace at grassroots level to grow the family of National Parks in Scotland, to ensure the natural beauty of landscapes in more parts of the country receive the international recognition and protection they richly deserve while providing a much needed economic boost to fragile rural economies."

“Sadly, Scotland is still near the bottom of the world league when it comes to recognising its special natural heritage qualities through the designation of National Parks, yet consumer research confirms we have some of the best wild scenery on the planet.”

He added: “Scotland would do well to follow the refreshing lead of the of Chilean Government, which recently designated five new National Parks, providing a massive boost to the country’s economy and conservation efforts. This demonstrates that the modest costs involved in designating more National Parks in Scotland would pay rich dividends and position the country much more strongly on the world stage.”

The event is being held in the Smith Art Gallery & Museum, Dumbarton Road, Stirling between 10.00am and 4.00pm on Friday 20 April. A buffet lunch will be available as part of the £15 conference fee and places can be reserved by contacting Ross Anderson at admin@eastlochhead.co.uk or by telephoning 01505 842610.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. For more information please contact Ross Anderson on 01505 842610.
2. The Smith Art Gallery & Museum is situated on Dumbarton Road, Stirling, within walking distance of the railway and bus stations. Off-road free parking is available beside the building.
3. A buffet lunch will be provided for those booking within the overall conference cost of £15.00 per head. Coffee and tea will be provided at all breaks. In addition the Gallery & Museum has its own small café but with limited seating.
4. Scottish Campaign for National Parks promotes the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of National Parks, potential National Parks and other nationally outstanding areas worthy of special protection. SCNP is a registered Scottish charity, No SC031008. www.scnp.org.uk
5. Copies of the *Unfinished Business* publication which outlines the case for more National Parks can be viewed on www.scnp.org.uk