



# ***Unfinished Business***

A National Parks Strategy for Scotland



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **MORE NATIONAL PARKS NEITHER COSTLY NOR COMPLEX**

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Creating more National Parks need not be unduly complicated or expensive, according to the [latest joint research report](#) published by two charities, the Scottish Campaign for National Parks (SCNP) and The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland (APRS).

The report argues that National Parks in remote less populated areas of Scotland such as Glen Affric in the Highlands or the northern Cheviots in the Borders would have smaller budgets, staffing and governance structures than our two relatively large and complex existing National Parks.

Ross Anderson, Chairman of SCNP said: "This is the second in our series of research reports building on our *Unfinished Business* report published a couple of years ago which called for the creation of more National Parks. It clearly shows that future National Parks in Scotland would cover smaller areas and would have fewer staff, smaller Boards and lower budgets than either of our two existing National Parks".

John Mayhew, Director of APRS said: "The flexibility built into the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 provides significant scope for a variety of approaches depending on the character and needs of the area concerned, whilst maintaining the balance between national significance and local accountability".

The research report argues that as the seven additional National Parks proposed by SCNP and APRS extend into only one or two Council areas, they could each cost as little as £1.5m to £3.0m per annum to run, with no more than 10 to 30 staff and 8 to 13 Board members. This new report follows on from *Unfinished Business*, published previously by SCNP and APRS, which challenged the Scottish Government to bring forward a national strategy to deliver more National Parks in Scotland.

At present there are only two National Parks in Scotland: the Cairngorms National Park and the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, with Boards of 19 and 17 Members respectively, primarily established to protect outstanding landscapes and manage visitor pressures. Scotland remains near the bottom of the world league in terms of its number of National Parks, yet travel writers regularly champion Scotland's natural and cultural heritage as of world-beating quality.

The Scottish Government has failed to fulfil its 2011 manifesto pledge to “work with communities to explore the creation of new National Parks”. A local referendum overwhelmingly supported the creation of Scotland's third National Park in Harris, but Scottish Ministers failed to back this grassroots enthusiasm. Ministers have repeatedly kicked the consideration of more National Parks into the long grass whenever the issue is raised.

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#### NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. For more information please contact John Mayhew on 07787 195690, 0131 225 7012 or [scnp-aprs@btconnect.com](mailto:scnp-aprs@btconnect.com)
2. The new report, *Future National Parks in Scotland – Possible Governance Models*, by Graham Barrow, can be read [here](#).
3. The report also argues that:
  - National Parks in remoter areas with smaller settlements would deal with far fewer planning applications than our two existing National Parks which have significant settlements and large resident populations
  - The National Parks (Scotland) Act requires National Park Boards to be made up of approximately 40% local Councillors, 40% national experts and 20% locally elected people, but while the maximum size is 25 it specifies no minimum size
  - National Parks need not be governed by a separate public body; for small areas this could be done by a sub-committee of the relevant local Council
4. The report is backed up by case studies from relevant areas in England, France and Wales.
5. SCNP 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](http://www.scnp.org.uk)
6. APRS promotes the care of **all** of Scotland’s rural landscapes. APRS is a registered Scottish charity, No SC016139. [www.ruralscotland.btck.co.uk](http://www.ruralscotland.btck.co.uk)
7. The *Unfinished Business* report calls for more National Parks to be established covering Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount; a coastal and marine National Park, centred around Mull; The Cheviots; Galloway; Glen Affric; Harris; and Wester Ross
8. Copies of *Unfinished Business* are available from John Mayhew – see contact details above – or can be read online [here](#).