

MY WORK AND VISION FOR SNH

TALK TO STRATHCLYDE AND AYRSHIRE AREA STAFF 12 OCTOBER 1998

What will I do for SNH this week?

- Summarise what I have done today: thought more about what I should say tonight, thought what I should say to English and Welsh National Park Directors tomorrow night in London, sent notes to Area staff on good publicity, received e:mail, completed the Area Manager Selection Board for Dumfries and Galloway, discussed Rothieburchus with 2 Board members., had a discussion with the Secretary of State's senior political advisor, reviewed and approved Rangers grant £360k.
- What sort of things will I do this week?
 - Seek to influence the Government's approach to the environment through discussion with political advisors and (with Jane Clark and SEPA) make strategic input to policy statement.
 - Interact with partner bodies: attend National Trust for Scotland Council as SNH's representative.
 - Engage with those delivering environmental advice to farmers: specifically Scottish Agricultural College and FWAG.
 - Plan publicity for SNH through AGM and Open Day, finalising Annual Report, external newspaper and calendar.
 - Promoting new approaches to the Natural Heritage: preparing for seminar on Natural Heritage Zones, interacting with Historic Scotland and others on World Heritage Sites, exchanging views on National Parks with English and Welsh colleagues.
 - Reviewing new running costs deal with The Scottish Office and implications for staffing budgets.
 - Deciding on staffing issues, including appointments and bids for filling posts.
 - Leading the Management Team on decisions for the next review of FTAs, Approach to Biodiversity, Community Planning, Community Grants and Rural Strategy.
 - Guiding management development programme through meeting with Steve Homer.
 - Liaising with SNH colleagues: Board Members, staff visits, e:mail.

- Obvious things are I am not working on my own, I am working together with colleagues inside and outwith SNH, but in the back of my mind all the time is to achieve our corporate aim.
 - Our aim is to help people to enjoy Scotland's Natural Heritage responsibly , understand it more fully, use it wisely, so that it can be sustained for future generations.
- And its all about my role as Chief Executive in leading and guiding SNH so that collectively we can
 - make SNH a more credible and effective organisation fit for our natural purpose and living within our means - the overall aim of our Organisational Development Programme.

So what does working for SNH mean to me?

- Admit that it is not always easy, and certainly has not been easy in the past. Constraints on resources, particularly staffing, climate of negative scrutiny from The Scottish Office, an administration which did not wish to move the environmental agenda forward did not help.
- Nevertheless, we have achieved so much in our six-and-a-half years and I am most proud of how we have adapted as individuals and collectively to the changing political and administrative environment, we have developed and delivered a wide range of initiatives nationally and locally, we have reached an advanced stage in implementing tough new wildlife protection legislation without a great hullabaloo, and, overall, people do seek our views even if they do not always respect them or accept them.
- For me particularly, being able to raise the profile of the environment, to think creatively about new approaches and to put them into action, to lead - hopefully - and to work with over 600 colleagues and through all the frustration to have a sense of achievement as to what SNH is and what SNH has done.

What about the future?

- Convince people that our role and functions are vital and that the integrated approach which we try to pursue at arm's length from Government is the best. That is why the Zonal Programme setting out what we want to achieve and how we will work with partners in each of the 21 zones is so vital, backed up by bedding-in our new structure and continuing to work hard at improving the way we work with each other within our own management units and elsewhere.
- I will continue to argue for more money for the environment: for positive programmes for SNH to deliver, for agri-environment and for proper appreciation of the importance of environment in other public expenditure.

- I will continue to argue for a better deal on staffing and other supporting costs.
- I will argue for a more formative role for SNH directly with the Scottish Parliament.
- And most of all, I want to see SNH recognised for all the good work we have done and for people living and working in Scotland to recognise the importance of their environment and what they can do better to protect and improve it.
- To achieve this we need to work together collaboratively, enthusiastically and purposively, whatever role we play in SNH: we do do it but we can do it even better.

Roger Crofts
12 October 1998