

Upgrade plan for 58 miles of Cairngorms pathways

AN AMBITIOUS project designed to protect the fragile mountain environment in the Cairngorms National Park will see improvements made to 58 miles of upland pathways.

A total of 17 footpaths will be completed during the £2.1million Cairngorms Mountain Heritage Project, which is receiving funding from bodies including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Natural Heritage and national park authority.

Eight trainees are being recruited to undertake the work, during which they will learn skills relating to drainage and surface techniques, operating small plant machinery, landscaping, re-vegetation and woodland work.

During their full-time employment, which will last eight months, they will also work towards a SVQ Level 2 in Environmental Conservation.

Managers believe that improving the paths will safeguard the environment and sustain visitor numbers to the area.

Dougie Baird, manager of the Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust, said: "It is vital that we have this training initiative at the start of the project, as it will allow people to train up in the required skills to take full advantage of the employment opportunities generated by the project over the next four years.

"We hope that there are a good number of people keen to get involved."

To apply to be a trainee path worker, contact Gordon MacDonald at the access trust on 01479 810766, e-mail gordon@cairngormsoutdooraccess.org or visit www.cairngormsoutdooraccess.org.uk.

The deadline for applications is Monday, March 7.