



ire at Cairn Gorm – no enterprise!

Never, when writing my post HIE's

crumbling empire on Wednesday ([see here](#)), did I guess that Cairngorm Mountain Scotland Ltd (CMSL) would have confirmed my analysis within 24 hours with this admission that the one ski resort in Scotland with natural snow, high in the Ptarmigan bowl, was inaccessible due to the lack of uplift.

This would not have happened had either HIE decided to install a modern chairlift, instead of repairing the funicular, OR management at Cairngorm Mountain Scotland Ltd (CMSL) had used the snow cannons to maintain the t-bar uplift tracks.

A day after announcing their new “operating model” in which Cairn Gorm would be closed two days a week due to lack of the white stuff, it snowed over much of the Scottish Hills. By 10am on Friday Glencoe Mountain, which has had a very difficult season, had seized the opportunity and had uplift operating to the top of the mountain.

By contrast CMSL staff announced they were assessing conditions at 8.15 am. As usual, staff were then allowed the whole day to prepare after a storm, with no lifts and no pistes open apart from the magic carpets at the bottom of the mountain. At 4pm CMSL finally announced the M1 Poma and the Ptarmigan T-Bar would be open today, Saturday.

Another day of lost revenue without which even this lavishly funded “commercial” business cannot remain open seven days a week.

The problems with HIE’s crumbling empire are both structural – the wrong infrastructure – and operational. Climate change in Scotland is making the continued operation of downhill snowsports ever more challenging but it remains possible with Cairn Gorm having a natural advantage because of its altitude. HIE’s failure to make use of that natural advantage and maximise use of what they have got is why the local community should be calling for a change of management. If that doesn’t happen it won’t be long before the facilities at Cairn Gorm will be closed for more than two days a week and it will be contributing even less to the local economy.

Category

1. Cairngorms

Tags

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2. funicular
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