
CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Cairngorms Local Access Forum is established under section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. It will have a maximum of 21 members and include one CNPA Board member. The Forum will comprise members appointed to it by the Cairngorms National Park Authority. The CNPA and the Forum itself will keep membership of the Forum under review, including a review of the public agency involvement.

Name and area of operation

1. a. The group will be called the **CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM** (referred to below as the Forum);
- b. The Forum's area of operation will include all land within and including the boundary of the Cairngorms National Park.

Objectives and Functions

2. The objectives and functions of the Forum shall be:
 - a. To act as the local access forum for Cairngorms National Park and to undertake the functions of that body in terms of Section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003;
 - b. To advise the Authority in the review of the Core Paths Plan;
 - c. To advise the Authority in the review of its Outdoor Access Strategy;
 - d. To advise the Authority and any other person or body consulting it, on the existence and delineation of rights of way and the exercise of access rights;
 - e. To promote responsible access and land management through assisting the Authority in publicising the Scottish Outdoor Access Code;
 - f. To promote discussion and the sharing of knowledge, awareness and good practice in outdoor access matters;
 - g. To support the provision of appropriate infrastructure that improves responsible access to the countryside for all; and
 - h. To offer advice that will assist in the resolution of outdoor access disputes.

Structure and Membership

3. a. The Forum consists of such persons as are appointed to it by the Park Authority and in line with good practice shall include representation from the following key sectors: Land Managers; Community Interests; Recreational Users; and Public Agencies;
- b. The Forum shall elect a Convenor and Vice Convenor to serve a term of three years. Members can stand as Convenor and Vice Convenor for up to, but not exceeding six years;
- c. Forum members are appointed for a three-year period. After this duration, Forum members will be invited to extend their membership for one to three years, by self-selection initially, but organised so as to achieve a balance of three-year memberships to six-year memberships;

- d. No member shall serve more than six continuous years on the Forum but may re-apply after standing down for a minimum period of one year;
- e. If a representative fails to attend three consecutive meetings their membership may be rescinded and the CNPA asked to instigate selection of a replacement;
- f. During the course of a Forum meeting members are required to declare an interest in an item at the point at which the item is raised. This may not exclude them from the discussion;
- g. The public agencies are charged with the responsibility for nominating a suitable officer to attend meetings, or delegate a substitute if the main member is unable to attend.

Proceedings of meetings

4. a. The Forum will hold meetings no fewer than four times year. Meetings may be rescheduled but not cancelled;
- b. The location of Forum meetings will circulate around the Cairngorms National Park;
- c. A review of the operation of the Forum will take place every two years. The review will take the form of an agenda item and discussion.

Administration of meetings

5. a. CNPA staff will be responsible for the administrative support, accommodation and facilities for meetings of the Forum;
- b. The CNPA may provide secretariat for Forum sub-groups at its own discretion.
- c. Meeting agendas shall be reviewed and agreed between the Convenor and Vice Convenor and the CNPA staff as secretariat. Any member may have an input to the agenda through the Convenor. A short briefing paper shall also be supplied to the Convenor and Vice Convenor on all papers submitted in advance of the meeting;
- d. All Forum members shall receive business papers by both email and by post to be circulated no less than 5 working days before the next meeting;
- e. Comments on papers received prior to the meeting from members who are unable to attend, will be circulated to the whole Forum;
- f. Minutes shall be kept of all Forum meetings;
- g. Parties with direct involvement in cases being discussed by the Forum will have the right to make short written submissions at the discretion of the Convenor. Submissions will have to be submitted to the Secretariat for circulation seven working days in advance of the Forum meeting.

Communication issues

6. The Forum will endeavour to communicate with organisations and individuals that have an interest in outdoor access by:
 - a. Making minutes and agendas of meetings widely available to the public through the CNPA website. Papers will also be circulated to CNPA Board members and neighbouring Local Outdoor Access Forums;
 - b. Communicating via the Press using regular post-meeting press releases when appropriate issues arise. The Forum will target the main local papers - the Strathyspey Herald; the Deeside and Donside Pipers; the Northern Scot; the Forfar

Dispatch Group and the Press and Journal. The Forum will also consider communicating where appropriate with more specialist press such as community, land management and recreational user media. All press communication will be approved by the Convener;

- c. Setting up working groups to address specific topic or area based access issues where appropriate. The subgroups may consist of Forum members, external interested parties, specialist advisers and others as agreed by the Forum;
- d. Convening a conference type meeting every two years on a key theme of outdoor access aimed to involve the wider population of outdoor access interests.