
CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

Title: Annual Report 2005 to date

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Purpose

To bring before the Forum a draft annual report covering the work of the Forum from March 31 2005 to date.

Recommendations

That the Forum advise on the content and format of the draft Annual Report; and plans for its circulation.

Background

In line with the proposal in the Operating Procedures, it has been agreed that the Forum should produce an Annual Report. This is the first such report, describing the work that has been undertaken from late March 2005 to August 2006. Future reports will be produced on an annual cycle. During the period covered by this report, considerable effort has been directed towards the establishment of the Forum, and the new body has also begun to address practical issues arising from the implementation of the new access rights.

The report aims to be a factual account detailing membership, secretariat support, meetings, venues, running costs and areas of work covered. It will be placed on the website; referenced with a link in Park Life and circulated to key stakeholders via hard copy and the e-bulletin.

The report will be prefaced by the Convenor's address.

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Outdoor Access Officer

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1. INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR

2. THE ROLE OF THE FORUM

Under Section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 the Cairngorms National Park Authority is required to establish one or more Local Access Forum (LAF). The main purpose of the Forum is to **advise** on issues relating to the implementation of Part One of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The Operating Procedures for the Forum state that:

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 Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) on strategic access issues and the drawing up and adoption of a Core Paths Plan in terms of its responsibility under Section 17 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003;
- c. To advise the Authority in the preparation 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.

The legislation goes on to specify that the Local Access Forum consists of those members who are appointed to it by the Park Authority. The Park Authority is required to ensure that the membership of the Forum reflects a **reasonable representation and balance** of those individuals or bodies with an interest in exercising access rights; and those individuals or bodies who own land (or who represent those who own land) over which access rights extend or on which there is a core path.

3. WHOSE WHO ON THE FORUM?

The Forum has been selected so that:

- It is a **balanced** group, which avoids being dominated by single interests
- It is **representative** of all interests including land managers; recreational users and communities
- It includes representatives from three **public agencies** – Scottish Natural Heritage; Forestry Commission and Sportscotland (formerly Visitscotland)

As you can see below, many members have several interests which broaden their knowledge base and experience to the benefit of the Forum as a whole.

3.1 PEN PORTRAITS OF FORUM MEMBERS

Mike Atherton

Formerly head teacher of a Cumbrian comprehensive school, Mike Atherton moved north in 1997. He is a keen orienteer, was recently President of the Scottish Orienteering Association and is currently Co-ordinator for the Grantown-based 2007 Scottish 6-Day International Orienteering Event. He is a regular hill-walker, and is member of the Strathspey Mountain Club and the local group of the Ramblers Association

Dick Balharry (Convenor)

Dick Balharry has had a lifelong career and personal interest in accessing the countryside, managing National Nature Reserves and contributing voluntarily to NGO's promoting the outdoors to the wider benefit of the public and the natural heritage.

Simon Blackett

Simon Blackett has been factor at Invercauld for the past 12 years. He is a Board member of Dee District Salmon Fisheries Board and Crathie Opportunity Holidays (disabled holiday charity). He is Chairman of NE Region of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society and Braemar Tourism Group and treasurer of Braemar Community Council. He walks 4 dogs every day, has 4 teenage children and skis when the conditions allow.

Nic Bullivant

Nic Bullivant, from Insh, is a past chairman of Kincaig and Vicinity Community Council, and member of the Association of Community Councils. He works as Head Ranger for the Highlands & Island Enterprise Cairngorm estate, employed by Cairngorm Mountain Limited. He is an active mountaineer and walker, founder of the Scottish Midweek Mountaineering Club. Nic coordinates the Country Diary for the local paper, and is a published short story author. Nic and his young family are active naturalists and recreationalists on land and water.

Jo Durno

As a member of a farming family in Glenlivet Jo Durno has played an active part over 16 years in the activities of the National Farmers Union Scotland. Her current areas of interest include Environment and Land Use, National Parks and Highland and Islands matters. She is involved in tourism and is a committee member of her local Community Association.

Helen Geddes

Formerly an environment professional in the paper industry, Helen is now an environmental consultant. Her home has been within the park for over 20 years. During this time she has been Vice-President – Access and Conservation, for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland; Convenor of the Cairngorms Campaign and has served on the Cairngorms Partnership Board and the Access Forum. A keen hill walker and ski-tourer, she “just loves paddling about in canoes!”

Fred Gordon

Fred Gordon is Head Ranger for Aberdeenshire Council and lives within the Park in Strathdon. He is an enthusiastic naturalist and mountaineer and ran his own guided walking holiday company operating in the Cairngorms area. For 10 years he was a member of Aberdeen Mountain Rescue Team. He also lectures in Countryside Management for Scottish Agricultural College, with a particular interest in Environmental Interpretation, and is chairman of the Lonach Hall Community Association in Strathdon.

Debbie Greene

Debbie Greene is SNH's Cairngorms Operations Manager, based in Aviemore, and coordinating the organisation's inputs to the National Park. Previously she has worked for SNH as an Area Officer covering Ben Nevis and Glen Coe, and also in the organisation's Recreation and Access Group, where she was minutes secretary for the National Access Forum, established the Hillphones scheme and managed recreation surveys in the Cairngorms.

John Grierson

A retired Northern Constabulary Police Inspector, John was a Police Wildlife Liaison Officer (WLO) for over 15 years with 6 of them as Force WLO. He has lived in Aviemore for 18 years. He is a Community Councillor and Company Secretary of the Aviemore and Cambusmore Enhancement Co. Ltd. His main interests are wildlife watching, hill walking, fishing and shooting.

Dave Horrocks

Starting out as a teacher, Dave Horrocks has worked as an outdoor professional for the last 28 years. He has worked with young people and adults in the education and commercial sectors, as an activity coach, outdoor educator and training facilitator. He currently works as a safety management consultant for two Scottish local authorities and as technical advisor for a number of adventure activity companies. Dave is a keen recreational canoeist and skier and has travelled, paddled and skied all over the world. He is married with two grown up children and lives in Aviemore.

Jack Hunt

Jack Hunt is Land Manager for Sustrans, key driver in a host of practical sustainable transport projects. For seventeen years he has been providing path infrastructure, by

planning, building and managing the 'off-highway' multi-user routes of the National Cycle Network in Scotland. He is a Forester, sculptor, walker, cyclist and generalist.

David MacKay

Until 2001 David MacKay was Director of the north region of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and is currently a member of the SEPA North Region Board. He is joint author of two chapters of *"The Ecology, Land Use and Conservation of the Cairngorms"*. He is chairman of Envirocentre plc, President of the Scottish National Anglers Association and Chairman of the Deveron Rivers Trust.

Ken MacMillan

Local representative of the Scottish Trades Union Congress, Ken MacMillan sits on the Employment Tribunals and as a Director for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise. He is the elected Chairperson of the Park Authority's All Abilities Communication Network. With early Western Isles crofting experience, he is interested in all aspects of sustainable development including employment creation, affordable housing, disabled access and Gaelic culture.

Peter Ord

Peter Ord is the Factor at Balmoral and involved in tourism, farming, forestry, field sports, conservation of the natural and built heritage, and footpath restoration. He is a Director of the Upper Deeside Access Trust and of Crathie Opportunity Holidays, also a former Chairman of the Angus Tourist Board. He is a Chartered Surveyor and has surveyed footpaths in Speyside. He is a member of Council of Snowsport Scotland, has walked and skied on the high Cairngorm hills, and canoed in the rivers.

Roger Searle

An enthusiastic horse-rider with a particular interest in long distance routes, Roger Searle is on the Scottish Access and the Grampian Committees of the British Horse Society (BHS). He is the BHS affiliate member of the Upper Deeside Access Trust, and an access officer for the Grampian Branch of the Scottish Endurance Riding Club. His Upper Deeside connections go back 50 years.

David Selfridge

Angus Council member David Selfridge JP currently serves on a number of bodies, including as joint Chairman of the Dundee and Angus Joint Structure Plan Panel. He serves on Angus Council committees. He was formerly Assistant Director of Water Services with Tayside Regional Council.

Tim Walker

Tim Walker is Principal of Glenmore Lodge, sportscotland's National Outdoor Training Centre. He is an internationally qualified Mountain Guide and Ski Instructor and has been

based in Boat of Garten for the last 30 years. Apart from his professional commitments to Glenmore Lodge he is involved with a number of other trusts and charitable organisations.

Richard Wallace

Richard Wallace is the Policy and Technical Support Officer for the Forestry Commission based in Highland Conservancy, Dingwall since 1992. His responsibility covers Highland Region plus the Islands. Access and recreation has been an increasing part of Scottish forestry and more so now. An occasional hill-walker, these days he has an increasing interest in skiing. He has served on Strathpeffer Community Council for the past three years, with the last two as Chair.

Andrew Wells (Vice Convenor)

Currently the Countryside and Forestry Services Manager for the Crown Estate rural estate and based on the Glenlivet Estate, Andrew Wells has worked for 20 years as countryside ranger, mostly in the Cairngorms area. He has been involved in a wide range of community projects and has considerable experience of access management, land use, environmental education and rural economic development. He is a keen hill-walker, mountain biker, canoeist and cross-country skier and knows the Cairngorms well.

Jamie Williamson

Jamie Williamson is resident factor, laird, farming tenant and forestry consultant on Alvie & Dalraddy Estates, also Chairman of Monadhliath Deer Management Group, Cairngorm Mountain Trust and Badenoch & Strathspey Fire Protection Group. He has been involved in the integration of land uses plus design, construction, maintenance and funding of access and visitor facilities, including the Badenoch Way.

Bryan Wright

Bryan Wright has lived and worked in the Cairngorms National Park area for nearly 30 years. As a director of Ballater Royal Deeside Ltd., a community company, he is in charge of the Ballater Community Woodland Project and has been centrally involved in Ballater Walking Week for the past four years. He has had a long involvement in community activities, and is a keen hill walker. He is now semi-retired from working as a farmer/chartered civil engineer.

3.2 OTHER PERSONS WHO ATTEND THE FORUM

The Forum is also attended by an officer from the Paths for All Partnership whose role is to advise the Forum and Access Authority on 'best practice' and gather information on the operating of access forums up and down the country.

Members of VSRG staff who attend on a regular basis include:

Murray Ferguson – Head of Visitor Services and Recreation Group
Bob Grant – Senior Outdoor Access Officer

Fran Potheary (Secretariat) – Outdoor Access Officer
Adam Streeter-Smith - Outdoor Access Officer
Sandra Middleton - Outdoor Access Officer

Secretariat

The Cairngorms National Park Authority provide the secretariat to the Forum. The main point of contact for enquiries relating to the Forum is Fran Potheary, Outdoor Access Officer who can be contacted on 01479 870533 or franpotheary@cairngorms.co.uk

4. WHAT'S HAPPENED IN 2005-2006?

4.1 ELECTION OF THE CONVENOR AND VICE CONVENOR

Murray Ferguson, the Head of Visitor Services and Recreation Group convened the Forum on a temporary basis until the Forum had decided on the election process for a Convenor. Dick Balharry was elected Convenor of the Forum and Andrew Wells, the Vice-Convenor at the Forum meeting in November 2005.

4.2 FORUM MEETINGS

Eight business meetings of the Forum have been held during this period in different areas of the National Park. The dates and venues were as follows:-

31 March 2005	Ben Mhor Hotel, Grantown on Spey
7 June 2005	Glenlivet Visitor Centre, Tomintoul
6 September 2005	Albert Memorial Hall, Ballater
15 November 2005	Newtonmore Village Hall, Newtonmore
24 January 2006	CNPA Offices, Grantown on Spey
7 March 2006	Albert Memorial Hall, Ballater (<i>extraordinary meeting</i>)
22 April 2006	Lonach Hall, Strathdon
13 June 2006	Glen Clova Hotel, Angus Glens

4.3 AGENDA ITEMS

Matters under discussion at the meetings are listed under the following headings:

Forum Procedures

- A Communications Strategy for the LOAF
- Operational Procedures for the LOAF
- Election of the Convenor and Vice-Convenor

- Moving towards Open meetings
- Procedures for upholding access rights

CNPA Duties and Powers

- Publicising and promoting the Scottish Outdoor Access Code
- The CNPA Outdoor Access Strategy
- Core Path Planning for the CNPA
- Advice on specific access issues – Loch an Eilean; Loch Kinord; Glen Clunie
- Prioritising casework in upholding access rights
- The Involvement of the Forum in casework
- General casework review

General

- Liaison between the National Access Forum and Local Access Forums
- An Information Leaflet for Land Managers
- The Speyside Way Extension
- Planning for the Annual Event 2006

Minutes, agendas and papers for the meetings are available on the CNPA website www.cairngorms.co.uk following links to Outdoor Access, then Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum.

4.4 SITE VISITS AND TRAINING MEETINGS

Outwith the winter months, four site visits and training meetings have been arranged for Forum members to attend. These events are generally scheduled for the afternoon of the main Forum business meetings.

The following events were held over the past year:

Glenlivet, 7 June 2005 – A site visit and presentation from Andrew Wells from the Crown Estate, Glenlivet followed by a workshop on access legislation and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code –facilitated by Ruth Grant

Ballater, 6 September 2005 – A walk around the proposed Ballater all-abilities trail and a presentation on “The Role of a Trust in Access Delivery” from Andrew Coleman, Project Manager of the Upper Deeside Access Trust

Newtonmore, 15 November 2005 – A site visit to the Wildcat Trail, Newtonmore followed by a presentation from Janet Davidson on the Newtonmore pilot Core Path Planning consultation exercise

Glen Clova, 13 June 2006 – Visitor management and access infrastructure in the Angus Glens – facilitated by Alan Gordon, Project Manager of the Eastern Cairngorms Access Project and Graeme Shilland, Angus Council Ranger Service

4.5 ANNUAL EVENT

This was held on Saturday 22 April 2006 at the Lonach Hall in Strathdon. The main theme of the event was Core Path Planning with an early slot given to the establishment and achievements of the Forum in its first year. The event was attended by approximately 60 people, predominantly from the Donside and Deeside areas. It is envisaged that the Annual Event will move to a time slot in the autumn and the next one will be scheduled for autumn 2007.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	2005-06	2006 YEAR TO DATE
VENUES	170.00	219.75
CATERING	596.82	701.99
MEMBERS' EXPENSES	1226.15	263.30
MISCELLANEOUS	17.50	
COMMUNITY LIASION		282.60
ANNUAL EVENT NOTICES		667.69
TOTAL	2010.47	2135.33

6. SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' EXPENSES

	2005 -06	2006 YEAR TO DATE	TOTAL
Atherton, Mike	12.50	-	12.50
Balharry, Dick	105.50	114.50	220.00
Blackett, Simon	85.50	27.50	113.00
Bullivant, Nic	30.50	16.95	47.45
Durno, Jo	27.50	-	27.50
Geddes, Helen	-	-	-
Gordon, Fred	34.00		34.00
Grierson, John	35.50	22.00	57.50
Horrocks, Dave	52.75	-	52.75
Hunt, Jack	157.60	-	157.60
MacKay, David	92.25	-	92.25
MacMillan, Ken	13.50	-	13.50
Ord, Peter	-	-	-
Searle, Roger	-	-	-
Selfridge, David	-	-	-
Wells, Andrew	18.75	57.60	76.35
Williamson, Jamie	124.50	24.75	149.25

Wright, Bryan	12.00	-	12.00
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Note: Members are encouraged to share cars wherever possible for environmental reasons and to minimise travel costs.

CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM
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	Mar 31 2005	June 7 2005	Sept 6 2005	Nov 15 2005	Jan 24 2006	Mar 7 2006	Apr 22 2006	Jun 13 2006	Total attendances
Selected members									
Atherton, Mike	✿	✿	X	X	✿	✿	X	X	4
Balharry, Dick	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	8
Blackett, Simon	✿	X	X	✿	X	✿	✿	X	4
Bullivant, Nic	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	✿	✿	✿	7
Durno, Jo	X	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	7
Geddes, Helen	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	X	6
Gordon, Fred	✿	✿	X	X	✿	X	✿	X	4
Grierson, John	✿	✿	X	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	6
Horrocks, Dave	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	X	X	5
Hunt, Jack	✿	✿	✿	X	✿	✿	X	✿	6
MacKay, David	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	X	X	5
MacMillan, Ken	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	X	X	5
Ord, Peter	✿	X	✿	✿	X	✿	✿	X	5
Searle, Roger	✿	X	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	6
Selfridge, David	X	✿	X	X	✿	X	X	X	2
Wells, Andrew	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	8
Williamson, Jamie	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	8
Wright, Bryan	✿	✿	✿	X	✿	✿	X	✿	6
Public agency representatives									
Armstrong, Scott*(Visitscotland)	✿	X							1
Dunlop, Ian** (Visitscotland)			✿	X	X	X	X	X	1
Greene, Debbie (SNH)	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	8
Wallace, Richard (Forestry Commission)	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿	X	7
Total numbers (out of 21)	19	16	16	15	17	15	12	8	
* left Forum September 05									
**joined Forum as from September 05									

