



## CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

### Core Paths Plan Review

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#### Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on the plan to review the Core Paths Plan and the LOAF's role in the review process.
2. The LOAF group is invited to nominate a member to sit on the project steering group.
3. The LOAF group is asked to review the current Core Paths Plan objectives and make any recommendations on their ongoing relevance and appropriateness.

#### Background

Under section 17 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (LRA or the Act) the Park Authority has a duty to draw up a plan of core paths "*sufficient for the purpose of giving reasonable access throughout their area*".

The [current Core Paths Plan](#) (CPP), based on a public consultation process in tandem with the Local Development Plan, was adopted in 2015.

Section 20 of the Act gives the Park Authority the power to review the adopted plan "*at such times as they consider appropriate and on Ministers requiring them to do so.*" The Park Authority received such ministerial direction on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July 2024.

One of the roles of the LOAF groups (as per Section 25 of the Act) is to advise the Authority on "*the drawing up and adoption of the Core Paths Plan.*"

#### Review of Core paths

We consider the current Core Paths Plan is sufficient in providing reasonable access across the Park and are not looking to make numerous significant changes. There are several amendments, corrections and updates that are required in relation to specific paths. This review is also an opportunity to evaluate provision in any areas of change eg newly constructed paths, new housing development links, recreational changes, active travel proposals etc.

Examples of likely amendments:

##### Minor amendments

- **Alignment update** - digitising error needing corrected to correctly represent path
- **Planning update** - path superseded / diverted as a result of planning permission



## Major amendments

- **New core path designations** - a newly constructed path, an existing path being designated or proposed new path (realistically delivered within two years) for example:
  - Speyside Way, Aviemore to Newtonmore (newly constructed path)
  - Dulnain to Grantown proposed link (proposed new path)
- **Core path modification** – a change or realignment of a route for a specific reason or benefit.
- **Core path de-classification** - for reasons such as; no path there on the ground, path closed and not sustainable to repair or un-sustainable to maintain, for example:
  - Removal of Allt Lارايدh gorge path at Newtonmore (closed and beyond repair)
  - Removal of all core paths over private level crossings – Dalnaspidal and Newtonmore (Ministerial instruction)

## The review process

The Core Paths Plan review will take a number of stages:

### 1. Development (Nov 24 – Mar 25)

- Produce engagement and communications plan
- Internal review of core paths (including active travel networks and consultation with conservation team)
- Production of core paths plan showing proposed amendments

### 2. Informal consultation (April – Aug 25)

Presentation of our proposed amendments, invite feedback and other suggestions.

- Online map-based consultation website – open for 4-5 months for any member of the public to make comments
- Direct targeted consultation in key communities / communities of interest
- Stakeholder consultation

### 3. Review (Oct 25 – Feb 26)

- Review of comments / feedback **\*LOAF\* (Nov 25)**
- Draft Core Paths Plan produced
- Additional reports (Equalities Impact Assessment EQIA, Strategic Environmental Assessment SEA, Habitats Regulation Assessment HRA)
- Sign off draft plan **\*LOAF\* (Feb 26)**

### 4. Formal consultation (Apr – Jun 26)

- 12-week public consultation of draft Core Paths Plan, public invited to make objections and representations



**5. Review (July – Aug 26)**

- Review of representations (**\*LOAF\***)
- Final plan produced / with list of outstanding objections

**6. Submission and adoption (~Sept 26)**

Development stage – LOAF role

1. **Project steering group.** A small internal steering group of three to four members of staff will be formed to oversee and monitor the project. It is anticipated that the group will meet quarterly (during office hours) or at a time when key decision making is required.

*The LOAF group is invited to nominate a member to sit on the project steering group.*

2. **Objectives of the Core Paths Plan.**

The objectives of the 2015 Plan identify that the core paths network will:

- a) help to conserve the Park's natural and cultural heritage and encourage people to enjoy it in a responsible way
- b) help those living and working on the land manage access
- c) help to deliver the priorities for each area identified in [Active Cairngorms](#)
- d) provide for a wide range of activities
- e) provide for a wide range of abilities
- f) include a wide range of popular routes and
- g) include paths within, around and between communities and to public transport connections and places of local importance

*The LOAF group is asked to consider if these objectives are still current, if there are any recommended amendments, and if they are fit for purpose for us to test the sufficiency of the Plan against.*

