
CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

Title: *Review of Forum membership*

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Purpose: *To review the membership of the Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum and instigate recruitment of new members*

Advice Sought

The Forum is invited to give its advice on the following points which summarise how we intend to proceed:

- a) *There is a need for a ‘staggered’ approach to turnover in membership next year, particularly in the community sector*
- b) *Members will be invited to remain on the Forum until after the May meeting, in order to ensure continuity of advice on the Core Paths Plan and its attendant planning process*
- c) *Recruitment is achieved by public advertisement and a convened selection panel*
- d) *New members will be recruited and eligible to attend their first meeting in August 2008.*
- e) *Dick Balharry and Andrew Wells should remain as Convenors until the November 2008 meetings and that the elections for Convenor and Vice Convenor are held then.*

Background

1. The Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum has been operational for three years in April 2008. This paper considers the future membership of the Forum with the aim of positioning new members in the Forum as from August 2008.

The Objective of reviewing membership

2. The Park Authority wants to ensure that the Forum is a fully functioning and effective Forum which is dynamic, responsive to change and, on a continual basis, seeks to bring in fresh skills and experience from new members whilst retaining and valuing the existing member resource. It also ensures the retention of the balance of interests – community, land management and recreation - and an equitable split between the three. There is also an opportunity for the Park Authority to consider individual places on the Forum with a view to ensuring that proper representation of interests are being met.

The Operating Principles

3. Paragraph 3 of the Operating Principles – written in 2005 – addresses the length of term for Forum members as follows:
 - *The Forum consists of such persons as are appointed to it by the Park Authority but in line with good practice shall include representation from the following key*

sectors: Land Managers; Community Interests; Recreational Users; and Public Agencies.

- *The Forum shall select a Convenor and Vice Convenor to serve a term of three years.*
- *Forum members are appointed for a **two-year** period. After this duration, Forum members will be invited to extend their membership for either one or two years, by self-selection initially, but organised so as to achieve a balance of three-year memberships and four-year memberships, while maintaining a balance across the four sectors.*
- *Future appointments will be made for a term of three years. No member shall serve more than six continuous years on the Forum.*

Current Forum members' length of term

4. The first recruited Forum members were given terms of membership for two years originally. The two latest recruits Paul Corrigan and Catriona Rowan were given terms of three years.
5. Last year, the original members were asked to indicate their preferred term of membership out of three options:
 - a) To **stand down** with effect from 1 April 2007
 - b) To extend their membership for **one** year – to 1 April 2008
 - c) To extend their membership for **two** years – to 1 April 2009
6. Ken MacMillan and David MacKay handed in their resignations making two spaces available. We received notification from 5 members – three recreational representatives Mike Atherton, Jack Hunt, and Dave Horrocks; and two land-manager representatives Jamie Williamson and Peter Ord - that they wanted a further **one** year's involvement with the Forum, concluding April 2008. Andrew Wells – a community representative - has also informed us that he will be leaving the area later this year.
7. Hence we are looking at recruiting at least 6 new members, including Andy Wells. However, it should be noted that the opportunities for recruitment are heavily weighted towards the recreational sector; to a slightly lesser extent, the land management sector, and with the possibility of only having one new member amongst the seven places available in the community sector (see Fig 1).
8. Potentially there could be little or no shift in community places before the end of 6 years (the maximum term that a Forum member can serve) is up. This would be undesirable as there would be a large ingress of new members into this sector and the sudden depletion of built up experience. So ideally it would be good to see two community places becoming available next year. If in the event that all members in this sector want to serve out their maximum turn, the Park Authority will look at a mechanism for asking for voluntary 'retirements', possibly using as a basis attendance records over the previous years.

a) There is a need for a 'staggered' approach to turnover in membership next year, particularly in the community sector

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Fig 1 - Length of term of membership – Cairngorms LOAF as at February 2008

The timing of selecting new members

Members	Year 1 2005-06	Year 2 2006-07	Year 3 2007-08	Year 4 2008-09	Year 5 2009-10	Year 6 2010-11
Recreational						
Atherton, Mike	✓	✓	✓			
Searle, Roger	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Hunt, Jack	✓	✓	✓			
Geddes, Helen	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Horrocks, Dave	✓	✓	✓			
Land Manager						
Rowan, Catriona			✓	✓	✓	
Ord, Peter	✓	✓	✓			
Williamson, Jamie	✓	✓	✓			
Durno, Jo	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Blackett, Simon	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Community						
Gordon, Fred	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Grierson, John	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Bullivant, Nic	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Wells, Andrew	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Balharry, Dick	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Wright, Bryan	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Corrigan, Paul			✓	✓	✓	

Review of membership – options for future terms

9. Normally members would be selected to attend the first meeting of the financial year i.e. May 2008. However there is merit in retaining the current membership of the LOAF until after this meeting, at which the Forum will be given the opportunity to respond formally to the Core Paths Plan. This is the culmination of three years work and Forum input and we consider that it is important to ensure continuity of advice.

b) Members will be invited to remain on the Forum until after the May meeting, in order to ensure continuity of advice on the Core Paths Plan and its attendant planning process

The process of selecting new members

10. Members for the Forum are selected on the basis of direct appointment. It is proposed that in March 2008, adverts will be placed in the local press and interested parties will be invited to apply. A small selection panel consisting of one member of access staff; the CNPA Board representative on the Forum and the Convenor of the Forum will select the next members according to the criteria that were worked up for the first recruitment drive. Forum membership is ratified by the Convener of the Park Authority.
11. This method of direct appointment was agreed by the CNPA Board as being the fairest way to ensure that a Forum could be created combining the right mix of skills, experience, interest representation and geographic spread. It has resulted in a Forum of the highest calibre which is attracting respect across Scotland.
12. Given the quantity and calibre of applications we have had in the last two years, previous applicants will be asked if they would like their applications carried forward to this next round of recruitment to be considered alongside new people who might apply.
13. It is intended that new members will be in place to attend their first meeting on 19 August 2008

c) Recruitment is achieved by public advertisement and a convened selection panel

d) New members will be recruited and eligible to attend their first meeting in August 2008.

Election of Convenor and Vice Convenor

14. The Convenor and Vice Convenor were elected in November 2005 and have served three years. It will be important that new members coming onto the Forum have an opportunity to settle in and get to know their colleagues before they select a new Convenor and Vice Convenor. This can be achieved through participation in the August Forum Meeting and the autumn Annual Event, before electing new leaders at the November meeting.

e) Dick Balharry and Andrew Wells should remain as Convenors until the November 2008 meetings and that the elections for Convenor and Vice Convenor are held then

Fran Potheary
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