



# Community Path Leaflets

## Design Guidelines

## Foreword

Scottish Ministers have now approved the Core Paths Plan for the Cairngorms National Park. This plan outlines 575 miles of paths which local communities, land managers, walkers, cyclists and horse riders have identified as being really important routes. These core paths also provide the key links to a wider network of paths around the Park.

We have all worked hard to agree which paths are important. Now, we need to encourage people to use these paths and the networks they link to around settlements. We believe that by working with communities to produce clear, consistent path leaflets throughout the National Park we will make it easier for people to use and enjoy these routes.

We are particularly grateful to the wide range of individuals and organisations that have helped us develop this document and hope that you will find it both informative and easy to use.

## Eric Baird,

Vice Convener, Cairngorms National Park Authority

## Acknowledgements

This guidance has been developed by the Cairngorms National Park Authority by working with a wide range of interested parties including community path groups, Inclusive Cairngorms, RNIB, Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum and Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust.

We are grateful to David Warnock and Stirling Surveys for workshop facilitation, specialist advice on mapping and drafting the text.

## Feedback and advice

We are committed to reviewing this guidance and welcome feedback. We are also keen to provide advice and support to anyone producing a community path leaflet.

Please email your comments to the CNPA at:

[outdooraccess@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:outdooraccess@cairngorms.co.uk) or write to the address below.

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For a large print version of this publication please contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority: telephone 01479 873 535.

## Introduction

Walking, and particularly short walks of one to five miles, is the most popular outdoor activity in the Cairngorms National Park. Providing good information about such routes around communities will encourage more people to use these paths.

## Existing community path leaflets

Many communities in the National Park already have path leaflets. However, there is no consistent style to these leaflets and, as some are quite old, they do not meet current best practice in providing information that is easy for all to understand. Few leaflets make links to other local networks and few make the most of their location in the National Park.

To help improve the quality of path information, the Cairngorms National Park Authority and partners have developed this design guidance for community path leaflets. To help us, we have used feedback from community workshops, Inclusive Cairngorms and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). Research and specialist input was provided by David Warnock and Stirling Surveys.

## Cairngorms National Park

The Cairngorms National Park is now widely seen as a strong and recognisable identity and evidence suggests that visitors to a National Park expect to have a high quality experience. Following these guidelines will ensure that path leaflets are produced to current best practice. Visitors seeing these leaflets will know they are in the Cairngorms National Park and, as a consequence, many are likely to behave more responsibly.



Accurate and easy to understand information on leaflets will help people to use paths



Community workshops will give many useful suggestions for path leaflets

## Using these guidelines

This guidance is for people who want to produce a leaflet promoting the paths around their community in the Cairngorms National Park. It should also be used by designers working with path groups to produce such leaflets.

One of the main reasons that visitors come to the Cairngorms National Park is for walking, and short 'low level' walking is the most popular outdoor activity undertaken. This guidance is designed to produce a leaflet that encourages people new to the area to explore the low level paths in and around villages.

The guidance provides advice on the design and layout of path leaflets, encourages use of best practice and develops a recognisable 'family' of Cairngorms path leaflets.

We recommend that you read the entire document before starting any work. It is important to consider that the whole process, from the initial idea to visitors using your leaflet and enjoying your paths, is likely to take between six months and a year, possibly longer! However, help is at hand; officers of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) will be pleased to help you if needed (see Section 10, p15). If you are thinking about a leaflet then please let us know to avoid possible duplication of effort.

## What makes an effective path leaflet?

Evidence indicates that a good community path leaflet:

1. Promotes a network of four to six easy-to-use short paths (one to five miles) based around one or two starting points: your path network.
2. Provides good reasons to explore the paths around your community and tells the visitor what is special about your part of the Cairngorms National Park: your stories.
3. Is a convenient size and has an effective front cover: one that clearly tells you what the leaflet is about and 'sells' the paths in your area.
4. Uses text and route descriptions that are easy to read and understand.
5. Has a map that is easy to use and understand.
6. Contains attractive photographs or drawings that 'sell' the paths in your leaflet.
7. Provides basic visitor information so that people can plan their day out.
8. Provides information on responsible access so that visitors enjoy their day out.

Keep referring back to this 'project checklist' to measure progress and avoid problems later on in the process. Read on for more guidance on each of the above points.

## I. Your path network

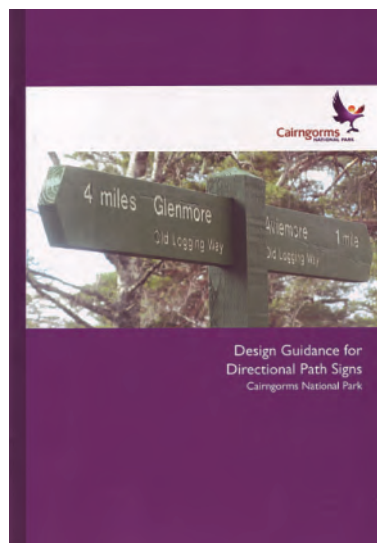
Before creating a leaflet you need to be clear what paths you want to promote. This will be affected by what you want to show people about your community (see Section 2).

Most visitors to the Cairngorms National Park want short walks of one to five miles. The path leaflet is your opportunity to highlight the best paths in and around your community. It doesn't always help to promote all the paths equally.

Evidence and our experience suggests that promoting four to six good paths around one community is ideal, and that well signed and waymarked routes will be used by more people (see **Cairngorms National Park Design Guidance for Directional Path Signs**, CNPA, 2009).

For example, the Anagach Woods (Grantown-on-Spey) path leaflet promotes three easily followed, colour coded paths. However, the map also shows a lot of other paths that are not waymarked but can be used by more confident visitors and those with local knowledge. Promoting all the paths equally would be very confusing to visitors.

If you are promoting new paths you should consult with the land manager (see **Cairngorms National Park Guidance on Responsible Promotion of Outdoor Access**, CNPA, 2010).



A key objective of a path leaflet should be to 'showcase' the best paths on a network



Working with land managers to integrate promoted paths with other estate activities



## 2. Your stories

Visitors are likely to want to know why a path is recommended. Think about why you enjoy a walk and incorporate that into the name and route description, for example 'Viewpoint Walk' - worth the climb to the top of the hill for the fantastic views of the Cairngorms.

When deciding which paths to promote consider how they link to existing interpretation. If people want more information about an historic feature, where can they find it?

You won't have space to tell visitors everything about your village, so work out what is particularly special, what is attractive about your area and use the walks, text and photographs to present your village.

Reading **Sharing the Stories of the Cairngorms National Park: A guide to interpreting the area's distinct character and coherent identity** (CNPA, 2009) will help you think about what is special about your part of the Cairngorms National Park.

### Welcome to Ballater

Ballater, renowned for its Royal connections lies on a meander of the River Dee under the shelter of Craigendarroch. As you will see, Ballater is a very attractive village that has helped put the 'Royal' into Royal Deeside. Ballater is the nearest settlement to, and was the railhead for, Balmoral Castle, which lies eight miles along the River Dee to the west.



### Ballater Paths

A network of paths and tracks lead out of the village, providing a variety of circular routes to enjoy with fine views, a rich local history and abundant wildlife. This leaflet suggests six routes of varying length, all starting and finishing in Ballater so you can give the car a rest! Each colour-coded route is shown on the map and there are corresponding coloured waymarkers along each route to help guide you. However, please take a few minutes to read the route descriptions on the map before you set out, just to make sure that your chosen route is suitable for you and any others in your group.

### About COAT

The Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust works to build and improve paths, it also gives information about access in the Cairngorms area. Leaflet sales help this work. Find out more at: [www.cairngormsoutdooraccess.org.uk](http://www.cairngormsoutdooraccess.org.uk)

### Abernethy Forest → → → →

The Forest of Abernethy was widely exploited for timber over hundreds of years. Abernethy pine had many uses including; shipbuilding, railway sleepers, construction and pitprops in mines.



### Timber! → → →

Forestry grew to be the area's second most important industry, after agriculture. Coulnakyle (near the Broomhill Walk) was once the centre of the forestry operations, and was built in 1765 to a design by the architect John Adam.



### Regeneration → → →

On the edge of Dell Wood, giant Wellingtonia trees and beech hedges mark the entrance to the nursery which was established in 1855. Seed was gathered locally and pine seedlings grown for replanting the forest.

### 3. Size and cover

We recommend a leaflet size of:

- 1/3 A4 (ie A3 paper folded three times or A4 folded twice) 99 x 210mm

This size has a number of benefits:

- standard paper size keeps production costs lower
- standard size fits distribution racks and storage boxes
- it allows large maps to be reproduced on one side of the leaflet
- additional maps/leaflets can be printed from standard A3 printers and copiers

The **front cover** is the part of the leaflet that grabs people's attention.

We recommend a standard front cover design template that informs people that:

- this is a path leaflet
- this is about paths around your community
- this was produced by - this is the place to use your community logo or brand
- this is part of a path network in the Cairngorms National Park

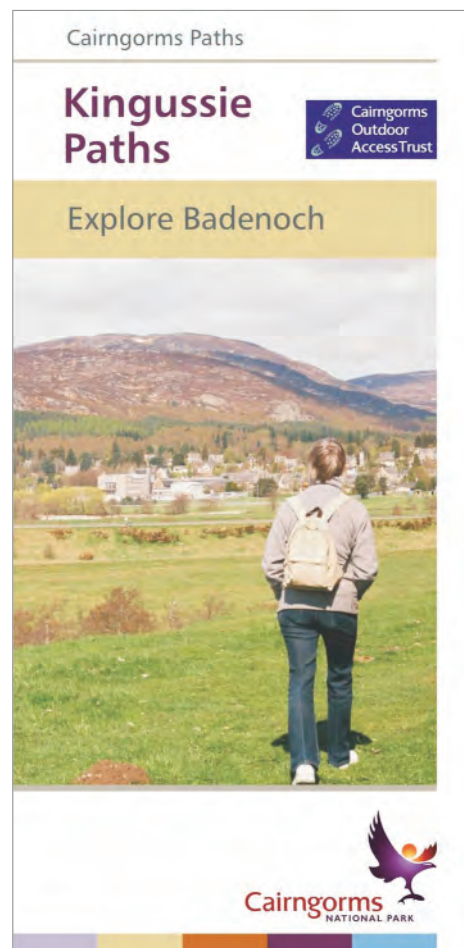
Cover photos or illustration should be big and clear, interesting and bright. This is your opportunity to show what is special and distinctive about your community.

The **back cover** layout should include a location map that clearly shows your community and surrounding villages. This map will also help direct users to other local path networks.

This is also the place to acknowledge partner support and provide other useful visitor information.



Keeping leaflets to standard sizes will make them easier to display and result in greater use



## 4. Text

The design impact of text is often overlooked. However, legible text is a very important part of the overall leaflet appearance.

- keep sentence and paragraph length short
- make it as easy as possible for the reader
- be ready to edit rigorously - sometimes less is more

Large blocks of type set in capitals are difficult to read. A paragraph set in all capitals takes 15% longer to read and takes up 40% more space. See the next page for further guidelines on clear and accessible print.

Route descriptions can be very helpful, particularly for those who are not confident map-readers. Include information about route distance, path conditions, barriers (gates etc) and gradients. Use descriptions that everybody is likely to understand, for example 'narrow path, rough in places, muddy when wet, one short steep hill'.

Consider highlighting routes that are barrier free with a good surface and low gradient, ie accessible to a wide range of users.

Use plain English throughout including straightforward, conversational words that are friendly and encouraging. **Writing Effective Interpretation** (SNH, 2008) is a useful guide.

### Type and Layout

The typeface used throughout these guidelines was chosen for its legibility and range of styles. Recommended fonts are Gill Sans, Arial and Humanist.

### Broomhill Walk

River walk by open fields between Nethy Bridge and Broomhill Station

**Distance:** 3 miles (return)

**Approximate time:** 1½ - 2 hours

**Start:** Community Centre

**Terrain:** low-level riverbank path with stiles.

**Warning:** path may be impassable when river level is high. Keep dogs on leads near farm animals.

### Wilderness Trail

Circular walk through pine woodland.

**Distance:** 1½ miles

**Approximate time:** 1 hour

**Start:** Causer car park

**Terrain:** Low level forest paths, some parts can be muddy in wet weather, kissing gates.

### River Walk

Circular walk alongside the River Nethy and through pine woods.

**Distance:** 1½ miles

**Approximate time:** 1 hour

**Start:** Community Centre

**Terrain:** Low-level forest paths. Some parts can be muddy in wet weather. Riverside path is all-abilities.



## An easy to read leaflet

The best leaflets are those designed to be used by as many people as possible. Therefore the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and RNIB guidelines on clear and accessible print should be followed in the design of all publications. These include:

- text should contrast clearly with the background
- keep headings aligned to left
- use clear and uncomplicated layout
- text should be set horizontally
- do not set text over images
- minimum use of upper case letters, use title case for proper names only
- range text from left
- use minimum coloured text, ie to highlight potential hazards
- avoid underlining and italics, use bold instead for emphasis
- avoid 'light' or condensed font styles
- avoid watermarking
- use minimum 11 point size or 12 point where possible as here; possibly use 14 point for websites and telephone numbers
- have some large print versions at minimum 14 point size available at outlets such as Visitor Centres and Visitor Information Centres

Visit [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) for further guidance.

### Welcome to Nethy Bridge!

The village of Nethy Bridge lies within the Cairngorms National Park; on the River Nethy beside historic Abernethy Forest, with the impressive backdrop of the Cairngorm Mountains to the south.



### Walks →→→→→→→

A network of way-marked paths, including an all-abilities trail, provides a great opportunity to discover more about the Abernethy area. The paths are generally low level, with minimal gradients, and range from 1½ to 5 miles in length. Each route's way-markers are a different colour for easy route finding (see above). The network links with the neighbouring villages; to Boat of Garten via the Strathspey Steam Railway, and to Grantown-on-Spey via the Speyside Way long-distance route.

### Explore Abernethy

Before starting out on a walk, why not drop into the Explore Abernethy Ranger Base in the Community Centre, to check on things to look out for on your chosen route? Browse the displays to find out more about the natural and cultural history of Abernethy Forest and the surrounding area.

## 5. Maps

Producing maps that are easily understood probably presents the greatest challenge in developing a path leaflet. The key to a good map is simplicity and clarity. You are likely to require help from a specialist map maker or designer who not only knows how to produce good maps but will also be able to advise on copyright law.

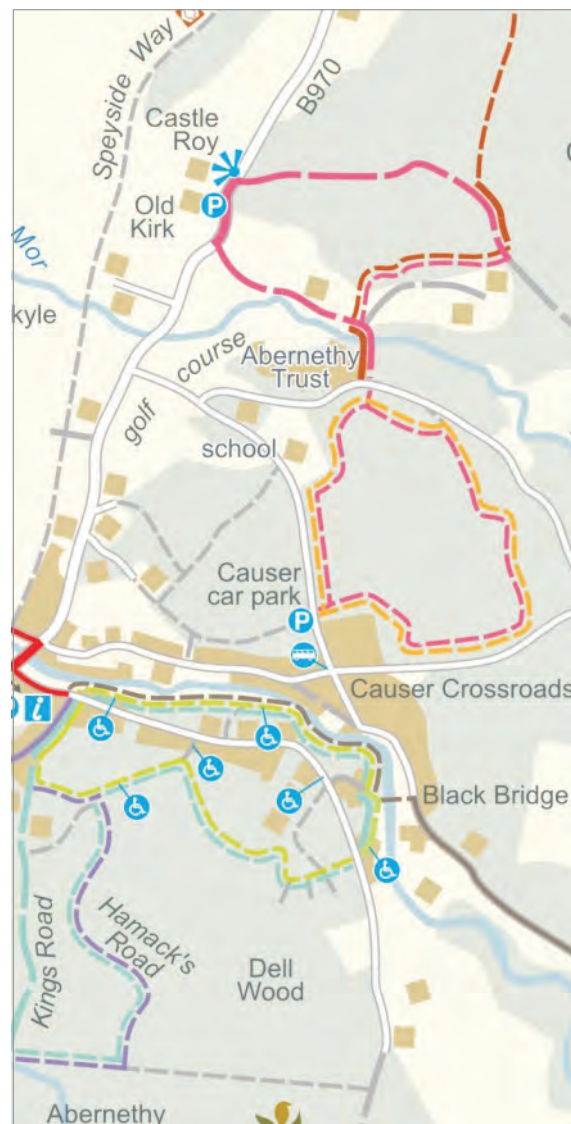
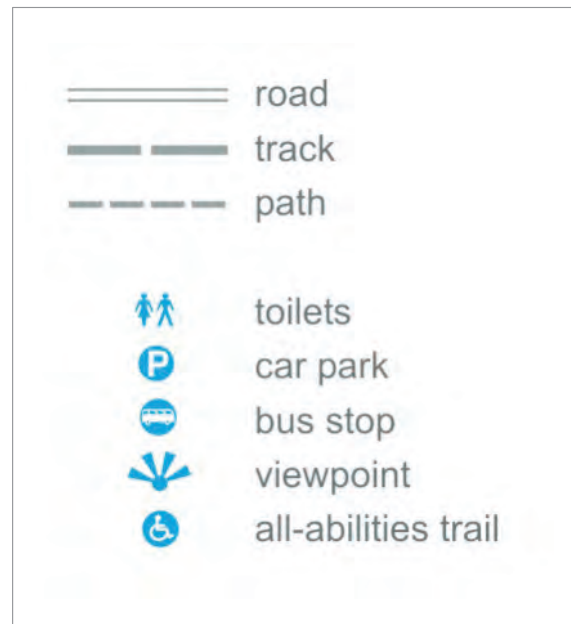
Recent research has found that people use a variety of ways to read and interpret mapped information.

Many people are simply not used to reading maps. Therefore, in order to reach the widest possible audience, it is good practice to supply information in a variety of forms: maps, waymarkers and route descriptions (see sections 1 and 4, p5 and p8).

When designing maps keep the content as simple and uncluttered as possible.

Ways you can do this include:

- use traditional 'bird's eye' maps rather than perspective or oblique views
- show distinctive features and waymarks for navigation
- use colour in a simple and consistent way, linked to features in a predictable fashion, for example:
  - green is usually woodland
  - blue is usually water
  - red is usually something important
- avoid using similar colours together when showing different paths
- show paths by making the route as big and bold as possible - **remember, the paths are the most important thing you are trying to highlight.**





- use standard blue icons to show visitor information such as information centres, car parks, toilets and viewpoints
- consider highlighting routes that are barrier free with a good surface and low gradient
- only show topography if it adds information essential to the route and then use a simple design - contours are not understood by many people
- reduce the words on the map to those that help the user
- show obvious landmarks such as churches, castles etc

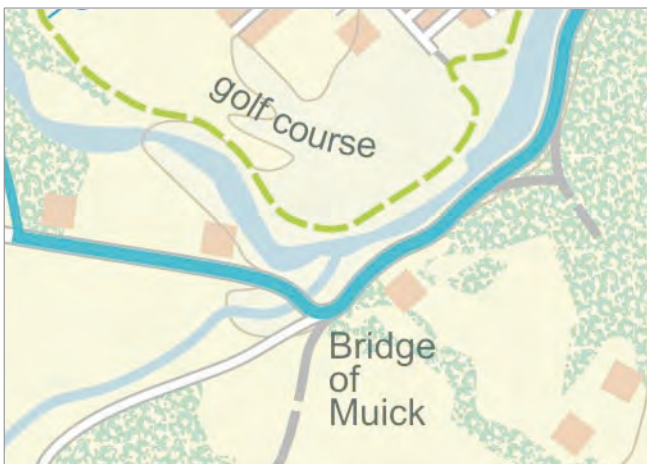
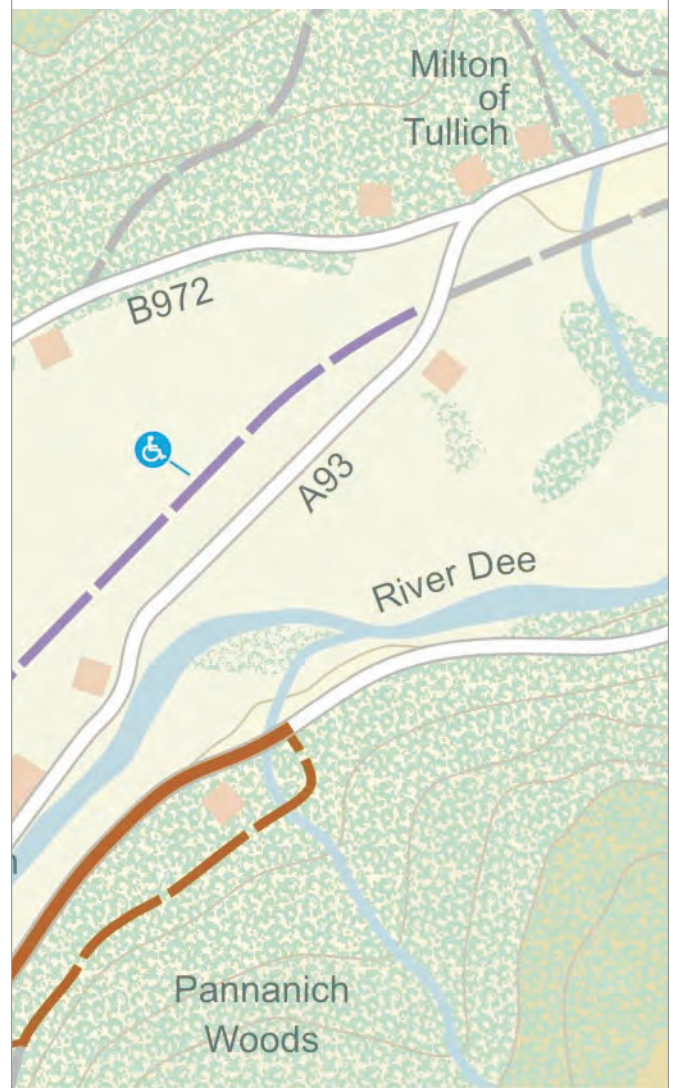
### Other points

If the map shows waymarked routes make sure that the waymarkers are actually in place on the ground and match the colour/design on the map.

For those who have real difficulty reading maps or need additional information, consider making some expanded text descriptions of the route available either online or in Visitor Centres or Tourist Information Centres.

Before you go to print ask a few people who have not been involved with the leaflet, and don't know the area, to take a draft of the map out to test it.

## Ballater Paths Map



### Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- take responsibility for your own actions
- respect the interests of other people
- care for the environment.



**KNOW THE CODE  
BEFORE YOU GO**

SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE [outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://outdooraccess-scotland.com)

## 6. Photographs and drawings

Photos should show your paths and what's special about your community. Plan what photos you will need at the start of the project.

### Quality

All images should be high resolution, a minimum of 300 dpi (dots per inch) at the same size they are going to be printed. JPEG format is usually the most suitable. Your designer or printer should be able to give detailed guidance.

A large, original photo gives more flexibility - allowing you to crop a section of the photo without loss of quality.

Use authentic photos of your area: people can spot a fake.

Pictures should be as large as possible. This gives them more impact and makes it easier to see detail. Don't be tempted to squeeze in too many photos.

### What about old photos?

You can still use older photos taken in print or slide format by getting them electronically scanned.

Historic views can be great for showing contrasting 'then and now' views. For example, if you have a section of path that follows a disused railway you can show the route's former use. However, remember to use only good quality originals.

### Style

One of the reasons why communities want to produce path leaflets is to help welcome visitors. So images, as well as reflecting the subject of the leaflet, should also show people relaxed and enjoying the outdoors. Avoid wooden, posed 'set-ups' and think about the old saying: 'a picture speaks a thousand words'!



© Hendy Pollock / Strathspey Railway Company



© Highland Council



© Sandy McCook / Explore Abernethy



## Copyright issues

Make sure you get written permission from the copyright holder to reproduce any photograph. You should also get people's permission to use their image in leaflets. You must get parents/guardians permission to use photographs of children.

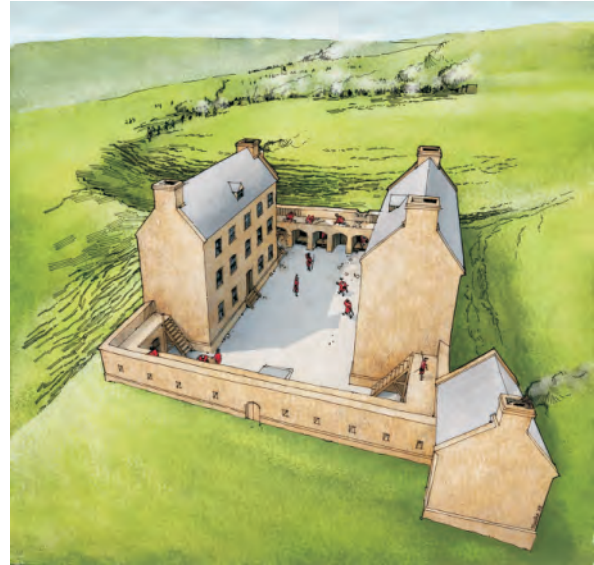
## Illustrations

A good illustration can be useful for showing things as they were. For example, a building that is now a ruin.

Illustrations are also helpful to give a clearer idea of things that are hidden. For example, the cross-section of a landform.

A clear, simple line drawing is often more effective than a complex illustration.







In general (as with photos) use quality illustrations, as large as possible.



Attack on Ruthven Barracks, Kingussie, August 1745  
© Crown copyright, Historic Scotland  
[www.historicscotlandimages.gov.uk](http://www.historicscotlandimages.gov.uk)

## 7. Visitor information

Visitors are likely to find a wide range of other information useful but it is important to present this information in a clear and consistent way. These can all be shown on the map using internationally recognised blue icons.

- toilets 
- car parks 
- bus stops 
- viewpoints 
- information points 
- all-abilities trail 

National Nature Reserves and Long Distance Routes can be named on the map alongside their brand.

Naming individual businesses is only recommended if they are key landmarks such as golf courses or historic buildings.

Useful websites can be listed on the back cover. Again, avoid the temptation to write too much.



National Nature Reserve



Long Distance Route

## 8. Responsible access

Your leaflet is the opportunity to promote **specific areas of responsible access** for the benefit of path users and land managers. So if your local woodland has ground nesting birds, advise walkers, for example: **'Help us to protect ground - nesting birds. Please keep your dog on a lead from 1st April to 15th August'**.

Use the 'Know the Code' logo to strengthen the impact of these messages. For details visit: [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)



## 9. Other things to consider

- **number of leaflets**

Leaflets date quickly and are relatively inexpensive to reprint so don't be tempted to produce too many at once.

- **distribution and sale**

Consider in advance of producing the leaflet where and how you will distribute it. Try to work with neighbouring community path groups to promote each others' routes. If you want to sell the leaflet, consider how you are going to collect income and take specialist advice on copyright issues particularly relating to maps.

- **use of the Cairngorms National Park brand**

We want to see communities present themselves as part of the Cairngorms National Park by using the brand, but please contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority for permission.

- **A Park for All**

Making your leaflet easy to use will encourage more people to use the paths around your community. Following these guidelines should ensure that your leaflet can be used by most people and as a consequence will cover your requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Nevertheless, consider consulting Inclusive Cairngorms or others with specialist knowledge to help make sure that the leaflet is accessible to a wide range of people. Think about producing large print, foreign language and audio versions of path descriptions.

For further information visit [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

## 10. Role of the Cairngorms National Park Authority

One of the key outcomes in the Cairngorms National Park Plan is to encourage a wider range of people to enjoy the outdoors. We see promoting local paths as a really important way of helping us do this. So if you want help with a path leaflet please contact us on 01479 873535.

## **Sources of useful information:**

### **Publications**

**BT Countryside for All: A Good Practice Guide to Disabled People's Access in the Countryside,**  
Fieldfare Trust, 1997

**Design Guidance for Directional Path Signs,**  
Cairngorms National Park Authority, 2009

**Design Guidance for Public Facing Leaflets,**  
Cairngorms National Park Authority, 2009

**Promoting Recreational Opportunities Responsibly within the Cairngorms National Park,**  
Cairngorms National Park Authority, 2010

**Sharing the Stories of the Cairngorms National Park: A Guide to Interpreting the Area's Distinct Character and Identity,**  
Cairngorms National Park Authority, 2009

**See it Right,** Royal National Institute for the Blind, 2007

**Writing Interpretation,** Scottish Natural Heritage, 2008

### **Websites**

Cairngorms National Park Authority  
**[www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)**

Fieldfare Trust  
**[www.fieldfare.org.uk](http://www.fieldfare.org.uk)**

Outdoor Access  
**[www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)**

Paths for All Partnership  
**[www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk)**

Royal National Institute for the Blind  
**[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)**

Scottish Natural Heritage  
**[www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)**

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