

# GUIDANCE ON THE PROMOTION OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK

## BACKGROUND

1. The Cairngorms National Park Authority has developed guidance in collaboration with others for those promoting recreational opportunities, on working with land managers and conservation interests. The purpose of the guidance is to encourage dialogue between the two parties and ensure the best quality visitor information for the Park. It is directed primarily at those who are actively intending to promote recreational opportunities (eg developing a mountain bike trails map or a walking route website or a brochure on long distance horse-riding routes). It is also intended to help land managers and others who have an interest in land over which these opportunities are promoted.
2. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code already defines how to manage and exercise access rights responsibly and advises, in the section entitled Running a Business, that:

“If you are writing a guidebook, leaflet or other promotional material about access in an area, try to talk to the relevant land managers to see if any local issues relating to privacy, safety or conservation need to be referred to in the publication” (para 3.63, page 49).
3. Everyone has access rights, which means that almost all the National Park is available to visitors to explore as long as they behave responsibly. Large areas of the Park are environmentally sensitive and wildlife and habitats may be prone to damage or disturbance at particular times of year or under certain conditions. Likewise land management activities vary from season to season and will impact differently on people’s outdoor experience, and vice versa. It is especially important that people promoting activities give consideration to this environmental and land management context. Contact with land managers can inform this and they will welcome the opportunity to help.
4. Visitors’ expectations in a National Park are high and the provision of good quality information to promote activities in particular areas can really help them have the best possible experience. There are many ways to draw attention about recreation opportunities to potential visitors – for example, through books, magazines, leaflets, activity-specific maps, websites and social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Flickr. The influence of each piece of promotion varies hugely: large-scale commercial guidebooks may have a significant impact on where people go and what they do while a website for local club members will have a much smaller ‘readership’ and probably quite limited impact.
5. This guidance builds on the Scottish Outdoor Access Code by laying out what promoters and land managers can do in the course of developing, or responding to, the promotion of particular recreation opportunities. It also clarifies the role of the Park Authority in this process.

## THE GUIDANCE

Responsible promotion of recreation is that which:

- Refers to the responsibilities of access takers contained within the Scottish Outdoor Access Code;
- Emphasises the promotion of outdoor access opportunities that can be taken without damaging sensitive natural and cultural heritage sites or features, and information as to how people can reduce their impact whilst participating in their chosen activity;
- Provides the best quality information for visitors – including information about the special qualities of the National Park – and results in good visitor experiences;
- Gives land managers the opportunity to contribute to the provision of visitor information where significant issues arise.

**If you are promoting particular recreation opportunities you should:**

- As a general point, promote responsible behaviour as described in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and if you are promoting specific activities, utilise the good practice guidance provided by that activity's representative body;
- Consider carefully whether promotion of the recreation opportunity will potentially cause environmental damage, problems for land managers or other users; take into account the potential for cumulative and increased impact as a result of your promotion
- Make contact with the land manager if you are in any doubt about the point above. If you are unable to find out who the land owner is, contact a representative group such as the Scottish Rural Property and Business Association or National Farmers Union of Scotland; or the Cairngorms National Park Authority;
- Draw particular attention to any issues likely to be faced in the area or route you are promoting, in light of your liaison with the land managers;
- Provide a contact point and invite feedback about the information provided and respond constructively to any feedback received;
- Contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority if you require further assistance.

**If you own, or have an interest in, land over which particular recreation opportunities are promoted:**

- Work positively with information providers to ensure the best quality of information and advice;

- If you are concerned by the information provided, make direct contact with the source of the information, expressing your concerns and, if appropriate, suggesting reasonable changes;
- Ensure you have a point of contact so that information providers can reach you;
- Contact the National Park Authority if you require further assistance.

**The Cairngorms National Park Authority will:**

- Highlight awareness of the concerns that may be raised by land managers and other interested parties in regard to specific promotion; and promote knowledge of the guidance together with partners
- Mediate between promoters and land managers (or other interested parties) when invited, where significant issues present themselves and when other negotiations have been exhausted, taking advice from the Local Outdoor Access Forum when necessary;
- Assist information providers by providing contact details for land managers and offering general advice; and vice versa
- Request that anyone applying for CNPA or Cairngorms Leader funding or wishing to use the Cairngorms National Park Brand follow this guidance.

**Useful Links**

Cairngorms National Park Authority - Outdoor Access  
[www.cairngorms.co.uk/outdooraccess/rightsandresponsibilities](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/outdooraccess/rightsandresponsibilities)

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

Scottish Natural Heritage Sitelink (interactive maps of areas protected for natural heritage interests)  
[www.snh.org.uk/snhi](http://www.snh.org.uk/snhi)

Scottish Rural Property and Business Association  
[www.srpba.com](http://www.srpba.com)

National Farmers Union of Scotland  
[www.nfus.org.uk](http://www.nfus.org.uk)

Mountaineering Council of Scotland  
[www.mcofs.org.uk](http://www.mcofs.org.uk)

British Horse Society Scotland  
[www.bhsscotland.org.uk](http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk)

Scottish Canoe Association  
[www.canoescotland.com](http://www.canoescotland.com)

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
[www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)