



Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum

Paper 2 – Membership and election of a new Convener

Adam Streeter-Smith 3 November 2025

Purpose

Members of the Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum are invited to advise on membership of the LOAF and acknowledge that the current Convener is stepping down in February 2026 thereafter there will be an appointment of a new Convener.

Advice Sought

Forum members are invited to give advice on the following points:

- a) LOAF members are invited to advise on ways to recruit new members**
- b) LOAF Members are invited to comment and agree on how to appoint a convener.**

Background

1. As of the end of 2025 one member of the LOAF has stood down and two members including the convener have exceeded their 6-year terms. Furthermore, the current Public Agency rep has secured a new position and will be moving on. Extending members terms was agreed by the LOAF considering challenges associated with the pandemic. In 2024 and 2025 four new members have joined. Park Authority staff are in contact with another prospective member who has yet to confirm if they wish to be involved.

Recruitment

2. Representation as per the Operating Principles (annex 1) is nominally split between; Land Managers; Community Interests; Recreational Users; and Public Agencies. Currently representation is:
 - a. Land Managers- three



- b. Community Interests- three
 - c. Recreational Users-three
 - d. Public Agencies- One
3. Geographic representation is:
- e. Badenoch and Strathspey – five
 - f. Deeside – One
 - g. Tomintoul and Glenlivet-one
 - h. Atholl and Angus – One
 - i. Public agency is deemed to be Park wide
4. Whilst it is recognised that members bring a broad range of experience across sectors to the LOAF with a further two members due to step down representation will be:
- a. Land Managers- three
 - b. Community Interests- One
 - c. Recreational Users-three
 - d. Public Agencies- One (NB this will be a replacement)
5. Going forward it is advised that greater representation is sought from Deeside, Highland Perthshire and Tomintoul and Glenlivet principally representing “community interests”

LOAF members are invited to advise on suggested ways to recruit new members

LOAF Convener

- 6. Firstly the Park Authority would like to acknowledge and thank John Grierson for his commitment and experience as convener of the LOAF.
- 7. Secondly members are asked to consider how they wish to elect a new convener post the February 2026 meeting. Annex 2 sets out a process by which a convener could be elected.

LOAF Members are invited to comment and agree on how to appoint a convener.



Annex 1

CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Cairngorms Local Access Forum is established under section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. It will have a maximum of 12 members and include one CNPA Board member. The Forum will comprise members appointed to it by the Cairngorms National Park Authority. The CNPA and the Forum itself will keep membership of the Forum under review, including a review of the public agency involvement.

Name and area of operation

8. The group will be called the CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM (referred to below as the Forum)
9. The Forum's area of operation will include all land and water within and including the boundary of the Cairngorms National Park.

Objectives and Functions

The objectives and functions of the Forum shall be:

10. 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;
11. To advise the Authority in the review of the Core Paths Plan;
12. To advise the Authority in the review of its Outdoor Access Strategy or Plan;
13. 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;
14. To promote responsible access and land management through assisting the Authority in publicising the Scottish Outdoor Access Code;
15. To promote discussion and the sharing of knowledge, awareness and good practice in outdoor access matters;
16. To support the provision of appropriate infrastructure that improves responsible access to the countryside for all; and
17. To offer advice that will assist in the resolution of outdoor access disputes.

Structure and Membership

18. The Forum consists of such persons as are appointed to it by the Park Authority and in line with good practice shall include representation from the following key sectors: Land Managers; Community Interests; Recreational Users; and Public Agencies;



19. The Forum shall elect a Convenor to serve a term of three years. Members can stand as Convener for up to, but not exceeding six years;
20. Forum members are appointed for a three-year period. After this duration, Forum members will be invited to extend their membership for one to three years, by self-selection initially, but organised so as to achieve a balance of three-year memberships to six-year memberships;
21. No member shall serve more than six continuous years on the Forum but may reapply after standing down for a minimum period of one year;
22. If a representative fails to attend three consecutive meetings their membership may be rescinded and the CNPA asked to instigate selection of a replacement;
23. During the course of a Forum meeting members are required to declare an interest in an item at the point at which the item is raised. This may not exclude them from the discussion;
24. The public agencies are charged with the responsibility for nominating a suitable officer to attend meetings, or delegate a substitute if the main member is unable to attend.

Proceedings of meetings

25. The Forum will hold meetings no fewer than three times year- two virtual and one face to face. Meetings may be rescheduled but not cancelled;
26. The location of Forum meetings will circulate around the Cairngorms National Park;
27. A review of the operation of the Forum will take place every five years. The review will take the form of an agenda item and discussion.

Administration of meetings

28. CNPA staff will be responsible for the administrative support, accommodation and facilities for meetings of the Forum;
29. The CNPA may provide secretariat for Forum sub-groups at its own discretion.
30. Meeting agendas shall be reviewed and agreed between the Convenor and the CNPA staff as secretariat. Any member may have an input to the agenda through the Convenor. A short briefing paper shall also be supplied to the Convener on all papers submitted in advance of the meeting;
31. All Forum members shall receive business papers by both email and by post to be circulated no less than 5 working days before the next meeting;
32. Comments on papers received prior to the meeting from members who are unable to attend, will be circulated to the whole Forum;
33. Minutes shall be kept of all Forum meetings;
34. Parties with direct involvement in cases being discussed by the Forum will have the right to make short written submissions at the discretion of the Convenor.



Submissions will have to be submitted to the Secretariat for circulation seven working days in advance of the Forum meeting.

Communication issues

35. The Forum will endeavour to communicate with organisations and individuals that have an interest in outdoor access by:
36. Making minutes and agendas of meetings widely available to the public through the CNPA website.
37. Setting up working groups to address specific topic or area based access issues where appropriate. The subgroups may consist of Forum members, external interested parties, specialist advisers and others as agreed by the Forum.



Annex 2

METHOD FOR ELECTING A CONVENER

1. The Forum shall elect a Convener from amongst its membership. The process of election will be as follows:
 - a) Members may propose themselves as Convener, but another member must second the nomination for it to be valid.
 - b) Candidates together with the names of their seconder must be notified in writing to the Secretariat two weeks in advance of the Forum meeting at which the election will take place if there is more than one candidate.
 - c) Members who are absent from the meeting may nominate themselves for election, provided they have indicated to the Secretariat in writing their wish to be nominated and have the appropriate backing. If they wish, their written statement may be circulated at the meeting in lieu of a verbal statement.
 - d) Members who are intending to be absent from the election meeting may vote. In this case, names of the candidates; short statements from the candidates (if available) and voting slips will be circulated to them no less than seven days before the election meeting. Voting slips will be returned in sealed envelopes and these votes revealed and counted at the election meeting once the members present have scored their list of candidates.
 - e) Each candidate will have the opportunity to make a short verbal statement to the meeting (maximum 5 minutes). The statement may be written for circulation to absent members who are eligible to vote by post.
 - f) Election will be as follows:
 - The election for the Convener
 - All voting will be by secret ballot.
 - Members will score the candidates in descending order of preference – for example, if there are **four** candidates their preferred candidate will receive **four** points; second choice, three points; third choice, two points and last choice, one point.
 - The candidate with the overall highest number of points in each election will be the Convener.
 - If votes are tied, members who are present will have one vote for their preferred candidate. Members voting by post will have their vote ascribed to the tied candidate who scored highest on their voting slip.
 - If the votes are still tied then the decision will be made by cutting a pack of playing cards, the candidate with the highest card will win. An ace is



considered as a low card. If any of the candidates are absent, another member will be assigned to cut the cards for them by proxy.

- In the event of only one valid candidate, they will automatically be confirmed as Convener.

The duration of office for the first Convener.

2. Thereafter the duration of the office will be 3 years (unless the member concerned ceases to be a Member of the Forum, or resigns from the position of Convener before the end of the period).
3. For cases in which a Convener resigns or ceases to be a Member, the above process will apply, as the first item of business, at the next Forum meeting following the vacancy arising.
4. The Convener will preside over meetings and in his or her absence members will decide who will preside.
5. At the second last Forum meeting before the term of office of a current Convener expires, election of the next Convener shall take place.

Notes

Para 1b) Agency staff are the only members of the Forum with substitution rights, which is incompatible with the need for a Convener who are consistent individual members of the Forum

Para 2) This ties in with the length of time of Forum membership for the inaugural term

Para 3) This ties in with length of appointment for future terms of membership