

Useful Information

Websites

Cairngorms Hostels
www.cairngormshostels.co.uk

Mountain Weather
www.mwis.org.uk

Outdoor Access Trust Scotland
www.outdooraccesstrustforscotland.org.uk

Path History
www.heritagepaths.co.uk

The Cairngorms National Park
www.cairngorms.co.uk

Visitor Information
www.visitcairngorms.com

Volunteer Cairngorms
www.cairngorms.co.uk/caring-future/volunteers/

Contact ScotWays

Call: 0131 558 1222
Email: info@scotways.com

Write: The Secretary,
ScotWays,
24 Annandale Street,
Edinburgh,
EH7 4AN

Web: www.scotways.com

Mountain rescue
In an emergency dial 999 and ask for mountain rescue.

If you would like a large print version of this leaflet please contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority:
t. 01479 873535 e. info@cairngorms.co.uk

Published by:

CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

ÙGH DARRAS PAIRC NAISEANTA A' MHONAIDH RUaidh

Outdoor
Access Trust
for Scotland

ScotWays

Cover image: © Glenshee Tourist Association

Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland

The Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland is an innovative environmental charity working to promote sustainable public access.

We work to develop and implement outdoor access projects that integrate the needs of land managers, access users and local communities, whilst conserving and protecting the natural heritage throughout Scotland.

The Trust was formed in 1998, originally known as the Upper Deeside Access Trust and then as the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust. In 2017, the name changed to Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland which reflects our success in delivering projects such as The Mountains and The People across both of Scotland's National Parks and surrounding area.

www.outdooraccesstrustforscotland.org.uk



Stepping up for Scotland's National Parks

With some of the most impressive landscapes, historic towns and unique wildlife, it's no wonder that the Cairngorms National Park plays host to over 1.8m visitors each year. But huge numbers of visitors and the Scottish weather takes their toll in the form of mountain paths erosion and the destruction of nearby habitats.

The alpine habitats of the Cairngorms are world renowned but fragile and have a very short annual growing season meaning repair of erosion can take generations.

The Mountains & The People Project is a unique charity led partnership project, which aims to involve the people of Scotland, and beyond, in the enhancement and protection of the wild and special qualities of the mountains within Scotland's National Parks.

To do this the project will deliver a wide range of both physical improvements on the ground as well as providing opportunities for people to get involved in conserving and learn about the mountains.

The activities will focus on:

RESPECTING
the natural heritage of our mountain landscapes.

RESKILLING
the conservation workforce of tomorrow.

REPAIRING
damage to our nation's fragile upland landscapes.



Play your Part

When visiting the Cairngorms and experiencing the wonders made accessible through the network of hill paths you can play your part in protecting the landscape by keeping to the path to help minimise erosion in fragile areas. Please refer to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.



© The Mountains & The People

Get hands on

If you or someone you know wants to play a more active role in conserving these landscapes then get in touch to find out more about:

- Conservation Volunteering
- Adopt a Path
- Path Skills Training



Get in touch:
contact@themountainsandthepeople.org.uk
[@MountainsPeople](https://twitter.com/MountainsPeople)
[/ The Mountains and The People](https://www.facebook.com/TheMountainsandThePeople)
www.themountainsandthepeople.org.uk

Tread Lightly in the Park

Camping and litter
Pitch your tent well away from cars, roads or buildings and keep the numbers of your group small. Move on after a couple of nights and remember to always carry out what you carry in.

Outdoor cooking
Use a stove rather than an open fire. Place foil barbeque trays on a solid, fire-resistant surface such as stones, sand or shingle.

Fires
Never light a fire during prolonged dry periods or in woodlands or on peaty soils. Never cut down or damage trees. Keep your fire small, under control and supervised at all times and remember to remove all traces of it.

Toilets
Use a public toilet if there is one but if not, dig a hole and bury waste well away from buildings or well-used areas.

Dogs
April to August, please keep your dogs on a short lead or close to heel in areas of ground nesting birds. Avoid fields with livestock, particularly young animals. Clean up after your dog and put any waste in a bin.

Deer Management
The most sensitive time is the stag stalking season (1 July to 20 October) but be aware that stalking continues during the hind season between 21 October and 15 February and you should, as always, be prepared to follow reasonable requests.

Find out more at:
www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/Practical-guide/public/Heading-for-the-Scottish-Hills

SCOTTISH
OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE

KNOW THE CODE
BEFORE YOU GO

outdooraccess-scotland.com

Cairngorms Paths

Hill Tracks
Cuairean Beinne

Explore our Hill Passes



Make it Yours

CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK

PAIRC NAISEANTA A' MHONAIDH RUaidh

The Cairngorms National Park

The Cairngorms National Park is an area of outstanding natural and cultural heritage that needs special management. At 4528sq km, it is the largest National Park in Britain with about half of the area designated for nature conservation.

Some 18,000 people live in the area and it is owned and managed by many different people including: businesses, estate owners, farmers, charities, public bodies, groups and individuals from local communities.

Our Vision for the Cairngorms National Park is- “An outstanding National Park, enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together”.

We will only achieve our Vision if we **all** work together.



© Mark Hamblin/2020VISION

Exploring the Park



© CNP Cairngorms summit

The Cairngorms National Park includes some of the finest mountain scenery in Britain. The Cairngorm Plateau contains five of the six highest mountains and the largest areas of land above 600 metres (2,000ft) such as the famous Làirig Ghrù (833m).

The landscape in the Park is more like the Arctic than Scotland. We have a rich palette of geology, landform, vegetation and land and wildlife. Individually and collectively these characteristics combine to give the National Park its outstanding scenery and special places.

The mountains, forests and surrounding moorlands are a refuge for our rare and endangered plants and wildlife and the Park is home to around a quarter of Britain’s protected species such as the Capercaillie.

There is a lot you can explore in the Cairngorms National Park and this leaflet provides details of the network of waymarked paths over hill passes through sometimes very remote areas.

The Path Network

The Cairngorms National Park covers an area with a distinct geography featuring very mountainous terrain and long river systems. Historically, this landscape has acted as a significant constraint to people travelling through the area and has prevented few modern roads penetrating far into the Cairngorms National Park, making it particularly rich in long distance historic paths and roads.

These routes include the Lairig an Laoigh (route 207), the Minigaig (203) in the west, and Ladder Road (222) and Capel Mounth (189) in the east.

- The Cairngorms National Park is also the Access Authority with specific responsibilities to:
- Promote responsible access
 - Uphold access rights

As well as hill tracks, there are also 1000kms of waymarked paths close to towns and villages that allow you to explore the area. Look out for the 17 community paths leaflets as well as two easy access guides; one in Badenoch and Strathspey and one in Deeside. There is also the Place Names leaflet which gives an introduction to the linguistic heritage of the Park.



All of these leaflets are available at various outlets including visitor information centres around the Park.

ScotWays

The Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays) is a charity, dependent on voluntary support. It dates from 1845 and has as its primary objective: “the preservation, defence, restoration and acquisition, for the public benefit, of rights of access including public rights of way, and their amenity”.

It is believed to be one of the world’s oldest access bodies, and its reputation was made in the 19th century by fighting and winning some public battles against major landowners. Some of the key victories were in Glen Tilt (route 202) and Jock’s Road in Glen Doll (route 188) where the case went to the House of Lords.

In the later 19th century the Society introduced green signs, erecting them throughout the Park at the beginning of the Làirig Ghrù (route 206), Làirig an Laoigh (route 207), Glens Feshie (routes 205) and Tromie (route 203).

Nowadays, ScotWays achieves much by negotiation and mediation rather than confrontation but is still recognised for its expertise on legal issues. ScotWays also maintains the National Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) and responds to over a thousand access issues annually.

© ScotWays Richard Barron



The Heritage Paths Project



© Photo Illustrations Scotland

The Heritage Paths Project is run by the Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society and has been researching historic paths throughout Scotland since 2007.

Heritage Paths are classified as old routes used for a specific purpose and include Roman roads, medieval roads, coffin, kirk and pilgrimage routes, drove roads, trade routes, and military roads.

The project’s aims are to identify as many old paths across Scotland as possible, to research those old paths in order to encourage more people to use them and learn about them, hopefully helping to ensure that the cultural heritage value of these paths is not lost. The main objective is to secure the long-term care of this aspect of our heritage and to raise awareness of its cultural importance.

Getting Involved

The Heritage Paths web site www.heritagepaths.co.uk includes details of over 400 historic routes throughout Scotland. The project is always interested to find out about paths not yet recorded or to receive updated access information, so please get in touch via the website above to find out how you can help.

In 1947 ScotWays published the first edition of Scottish Hill Tracks, a guide to hill paths, old roads and rights of way throughout Scotland including the Cairngorms. The route numbers in the latest edition correspond with those in the map overleaf.



© ScotWays-Brian Kille

Hill Tracks in the Cairngorms National Park



Cairngorms
NATIONAL PARK
Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh

This map shows the main walking routes over hill passes in the Cairngorms National Park. It is not suitable for detailed route finding so please use a more detailed map for navigation. It is intended to assist route planning.

The routes shown on the map are numbered and these numbers correspond to the routes featured in the book, *Scottish Hill Tracks*, ISBN 978-1-907233-16-6. This gives distances, grid references and a description for each route.

Remember these routes are not waymarked; use a more detailed map – at a scale of 1:50,000 or larger – and a compass for navigation. Some of them are signed and follow the lines of existing paths – but others are not even shown on large-scale maps.

There are few bridges in the core mountain area and at times river crossings will be difficult and potentially dangerous.

Remember to respect the livelihoods of those who make a living in these hills – be they shepherds, stalkers or foresters – and care for the environment. Much of the area has been designated as of European importance for animals, birds, flora and geology and should be respected as such.

Please take your litter home and respect the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

WARNING

Many of the routes cross high remote country, far from human habitation and lives have been lost on them at all times of the year. Routes 185, 188, 202-207, 211 and 216 are particularly demanding.

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**
www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

Before you set out:

- Study a map and the route description to make sure that the proposed route is suitable for the fitness and the competence of your party.
- Get a weather forecast.
- Make sure you are properly equipped with a compass, map, footwear, clothing and food appropriate for the time of year (it can snow even in June).
- Make sure that someone else knows where you are going and when you expect to arrive.
- Plan accordingly and err on the side of caution in estimating times. In much of the terrain it is unrealistic to expect to cover more than 3-4km per hour and in poor weather possibly less even for a fit party.

