

MLOAF

MORAY LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM SUPPORTING INFORMATION

FOUR NEW MEMBERS SOUGHT IN 2024

The Moray Council has a statutory duty to establish and facilitate at least one Local Outdoor Access Forum in its area. The Council has set up one Local Access Forum covering the whole of Moray. The Moray Local Outdoor Access Forum (MLOAF) acts in an advisory capacity to Moray Council on matters relating to outdoor access. MLOAF should have 20 members with equal representation from four groups – public agencies, landowners and land managers, community groups and outdoor user groups.

Four vacancies have arisen on the Forum:

2 members representing outdoor access users

2 members representing community groups

Selected new members will join the Forum from March 2024 for three years, with the chance to re-apply to continue membership.

There are about four meetings per year. Membership is on a voluntary basis but travelling expenses associated with Forum business will be reimbursed on request.

Prospective candidates should ideally be resident in Moray, but this is not essential. They should have a good familiarity with the area's geography and social history. They may already be involved with path development, outdoor recreation or management of outdoor leisure resources.

They should state in which group(s) they have expertise and can submit an endorsement from a body or organisation of which they are a member and which supports their application.

Applicants are also required to offer a referee who may be contacted to provide information to support their application and to help determine suitability.

Prospective candidates should outline, in approximately 250 words, what skills and experience they have to offer MLOAF. Appointment to the Forum will be made by a panel made up from current Forum members and the Council's Open Space, Access and Policy Officer. All applicants will be advised of the outcome of this selection process.

Contact details for applications:

Ian M. Douglas, Moray Open Space, Access and Policy Officer,

The Moray Council,

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Elgin,

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APPLICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN:

FRIDAY 1st MARCH 2024

MLOAF

Background Information

MLOAF has no executive powers, but plays an important consultative role in relation to outdoor access across Moray. This includes involvement in:

- Moray Access Strategy Review
- Moray Core Paths Plan preparation, implementation and review
- Upholding access rights
- Raising awareness of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code
- Procedures for conflict/dispute resolution
- Advising on planning applications/development plans

Within these areas the Forum sets its own practical and, hopefully, achievable aims and targets.

The groups represented on MLOAF cover a wide spectrum:

- Public agencies e.g., Forestry and Land Scotland, NatureScot, Moray Council, National Farmers Union
- Landowners/land managers e.g., estate owners, farmers
- Community groups e.g., local access groups, community councils
- Access users/activity groups e.g., walkers, cyclists, horse riders, canoeists. One place is also allocated for a representative of those who are less able to access the outdoors.

The Forum was set up in 2006 following the introduction of new legislation to advise the Council when exercising powers and duties under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The Forum seeks to reach agreement between a wide range of interests in an effort to reduce conflicts. It has been actively involved in a range of activities, including wind farm developments that affect access opportunities, Core Paths planning and review and upholding public access rights. It is currently exploring other areas of outdoor access that it can help to promote.

MLOAF Convener Terry Ballard says:

“The Forum provides a unique platform to balance the needs and interests of local communities, groups, landowners and individuals.

MLOAF has been instrumental in maintaining and improving outdoor access throughout Moray through the development of the Core Paths Plan and via a process of collaboration with developers and land owners. The Forum has also been closely involved in helping to resolve a number of access disputes.

Membership of the Forum is very rewarding, enjoyable and challenging. It is great to see people coming together from contrasting backgrounds, with differing perspectives and, through mutual understanding, devise creative ways to improve outdoor access in Moray.

Get involved! this is an exciting opportunity to join MLOAF and help shape the future of outdoor access in Moray.”