



FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

Consultation Response

Cairngorms National Park Fire Management

16/4/24

If you have any questions about this response, please contact our policy team:
policy@pathsforall.org.uk

Who We Are

Paths for All is Scotland's walking charity. Established in 1996, we work in partnership with 30 national organisations with a shared vision of a healthier, happier, greener Scotland, where everyone can be active every day. Walking is the easiest and most accessible way to be active, and our work to change the way people move, travel, and enjoy life in Scotland is focused on the following three themes:

- Walking is for everyone.
- Walking is for everywhere.
- Walking is for every day.

Our [strategy](#) sets out our vision for tackling physical inactivity, poor mental health, increased health and transport inequalities and the climate emergency.

Our Response

Cairngorms National Park

Fire management consultation.

1. What is your connection with the Cairngorms National Park?

Third Sector organisation working Scotland wide

2. Do you think a fire management byelaw is part of the solution for the Cairngorms National Park Authority to tackle wildfire risk?

Don't know

Climate change is going to increase the likelihood of wildfires, with a combination of increasing levels of visitors and extended period of dry weather and high temperatures.

Generally, we agree that asking people to do something voluntarily is always preferable to legal enforcement. So we would tend towards option one. The role of National Park rangers would remain to elicit voluntary compliance from visitors. However, there may be questions over the capacity of staff to deliver option one.

Option two may be open to interpretation and misunderstanding.

Option three raises the issue of changing the role of rangers in the National Park from education to include an element of enforcement. This could have negative implications for relations with visitors.

As the consultation identifies, the public would be required to not light fires at times when land managers are still allowed to undertake prescribed burning and that this can be seen as inconsistent.

Likewise, the public would be asked to refrain from lighting fires and barbecues during periods when there is minimal risk of fire spreading and this could be perceived as heavy-handed.

3. Which of the three options do you think the Park Authority should take forward

Something else

We would suggest applying elements of option one with a view to considering a more legalistic approach in future if needed.

Adequate resourcing of the ranger service and communications will have a big impact on whether the voluntary approach can continue to work.

4. Do you think that prescribed burning should be included in a byelaw?

If a byelaw is introduced this would seem a consistent approach.

5. Is there a different option that you think the Park Authority should consider?

Yes

See above



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