



Lochnagar & Ben Macdui indicators

Most members will be aware of the long-running saga over replacing the viewpoint indicators that had been erected by the Club on the summits of Lochnagar and Ben Macdui just over 100 years ago. Delays involved much discussion over materials, design, and manufacture, and a variety of “events” including a smashed knee! However, actual installation of replacements has now been accomplished, with the results summarised here; a longer article will appear in the next Club Journal.

The new indicators were manufactured from 5mm stainless steel made to fit snugly over the original stoneware indicators which had stood the tests of time, weather, and people remarkably well but were eroding at the edges. Their design largely copies the originals, but with the central text slightly modified, and metric heights and distances inserted. They are fixed to the originals around the lip by embedded grub screws, which it is hoped will resist all efforts to shift or even remove the replacements.

The Lochnagar replacement was installed on 16 May 2026 by a small Club party in somewhat chilly but otherwise ideal conditions. The event was assisted by Balmoral Estate allowing two cars up to the Gelder col below Meikle Pap: this considerably lessened the porterage work which otherwise had only to cope with a few snowy stretches on the Ladder. The Macdui event on 6 June – again aided by a vehicle lift, this time by the Cairngorm Mountain ranger up into Coire Cas – took place in somewhat less clement conditions, cloud obscuring the higher stretches of the mountain all day, a “moderate wind”, and drizzle threatening to turn into rain at times. However, a valiant group of 20 turned up for the occasion (two from Derry Lodge), and stayed around for a damp and chilly hour or two while the installation work was completed.

Thanks are due to several people, including donors; Craig Thomson who provided the artwork files; Jordan Law of Sign Industries Ltd in Forfar for the steel work; the human porters on installation days, and especially engineer and non-member Alan Holmes who supplied detailed design and installation specifications and materials, as well doing most of the actual installation himself. I could not have managed without them all!

A small “Celebration” booklet was produced for each mountain, and distributed to those attending the exact centennial events in 2024 and 2025; some copies of these remain (especially Macdui), and they can be downloaded from the publications section of the website. I will produce a similar small brochure describing the new replacements and their actual installation in more detail, which will be similar to the Journal article that will come out in a couple years’ time.

Ken Thomson



Lochnagar & Ben Macdui indicators



Day Meets



Black Spout



Ben Rinnes

With the new year came a LOT of snow across the region, so our annual January walk to Lochnagar was postponed, but an impressive attendance of 30+ keen walkers still made the rearranged date. A President's Party of 14 made it to the top through very wintry conditions, with others summiting via the north-east ridge, and an intrepid few via Black Spout Gully. A very successful day out ended with dinner in Aboyne before returning home.

By February most of the snow in low-lying areas had gone, but on our trip to Ben Rinnes members experienced some proper winter conditions once up high, with a fine traverse of Moray's finest peak. On the summit we got to see the newly adorned trig point, but only after removing some snow and ice.

Our March day meet took us up Glen Callater. Tolmount was the target Munro, although the conditions meant the peak was out of reach. Other routes in the Loch Callater area were taken, with the main group bagging Carn an Tuirc. In April we set off for Mount Keen. An adventurous approach from Glenmuick was taken and the party that reached the summit didn't linger, instead making a rapid descent to escape the gale-force winds, eventually emerging at Ballater for a well-earned pub stop.



Day Meets



Heading to Beinn Bhrotain



West of Mount Keen

Beinn Bhrotain was our May meet, and a clear spring day gave walkers incredible views of the entire Cairngorm area from this western peak. On returning to Linn o' Dee, members had clocked up close to 30km. May also saw a small party install the new Lochnagar indicator.

June saw a larger group with the other new indicator head to Ben Macdui in dreich conditions. The month will see a second day trip to An Socach on Sunday 21st June.

Looking forward to our summer trips, we visit Driesh and Mayar in July and have an overnight wild camp in the Ben Avon area in August. Then in September our annual Cairngorm traverse is from south to north and will cross Carn a' Mhaim and Ben Macdui en route. This will be a perfect opportunity to see the new indicator. Please check the website for details.

As always I'd like to thank everyone involved in arranging the day meets: the organisers, leaders and drivers whose great work contributes to the success of these memorable days that our members enjoy.

See you on the hill soon, [Craig Thomson](#)



Weekend Meets



The weekend meets continue to be as popular as ever.

We have already been in Glencoe, Blackrock Cottage, Crianlarich, Inverardran and Assynt, Naismith this year. Glencoe brought snow and some epic winter days and Assynt brought sunshine - and marvellous views. The photos provide a glimpse of some of the fantastic places we have visited.



We look forward to another visit to Lagangarbh in June, Camping in Arran in July and a visit to Forest way bunkhouse near Ullapool in August.



Caroline Watt will be taking over the weekend meets Secretary role after the AGM and she has been busy booking huts for us for next year so watch out for another exciting range of weekend outings in 2027.





Mid-Week (Thursday) Walks

This series of Club meets continues on its merry ways, most recently to Glensaugh, the Correen Hills, and the Pollagach Glen. These are car-sharing trips (usually from Kingswells Park & Ride) a drive of under 1¼ hour; 4-5 hours of walking; and a (non-mandatory) café visit afterwards. Upcoming meets, with their organisers (MOs), and details to be emailed out about a fortnight before each date, are:

24 June (Weds)	Morven (from Groddie)	Alister Birnie
30 July	Sgor Buidhe, Ballater	Brian Purves
27 August	TBA	TBA
24 September	Glen Brindy	Ken Thomson
29 October	Coiliochbhar, near Alford	Donald Thomas
26 November	Tap o'Noth	Marj Ewan
December TBD	from Finzean farm shop (joint with Stravaig)	Eilidh Scobie

Route and MO suggestions for 2027 are already welcome; please convey to Ken T. at mww@cairngormclub.org.uk.



Training Events

Navigation Training

Planned for this autumn: an introduction to mountain navigation for complete beginners. This will involve a number of 'classroom'-based evening sessions (likely to be at the Fountainhill Church Centre) followed by a day on the hill putting it all together.

Wild Camping for Beginners

If there is enough interest, we will spend a Saturday night under 'canvas' at an easily accessible location. This will allow us to take time, discuss kit options, pitch tents (or bivies) and cook meals without having to achieve any other objectives such as traversing several Munros. This should provide members with the confidence to join other Club overnight adventures.

Other Training

The usual Night Nav sessions will take place towards the end of 2026 and early 2027 and the Winter Skills for the weekend Sat 27 -Sun 28 Feb 2027.

For further information or to register interest in these events please email: training@cairngormclub.org.uk



Stravaigs



The Stravaigs continue to be well attended by a good cross-section of members. Although these shorter (5-6 miles, with shorter options usually available), less demanding walks were started by members who were beginning

to find other Club walks just too demanding, the Stravaigs continuously evolve and we now find that many members who are free at this time of day are coming along for an additional walking option in good company.

In other cases, members who've experienced injuries or health issues that temporarily curtailed their walking have found the Stravaigs to be a good starting point for rebuilding fitness and stamina. The common point is we all want to keep walking fit and the social element - including cake and coffee somewhere in the day - is an excellent way to get to know the Club.

To date we've had an excellent and varied selection of walks which have been blessed with much better weather than expected - the weather gods were shining on us!

Forthcoming walks include: Tarland in July and Rhynie in August. These will all follow interesting old tracks, often with points of interest on the way.

Details of the walks and contact person for each meet are given in good time by Google Group messages, so watch for them!

Gill Shirreffs



Cambus O' May woods



Club Dinner and Ceilidh 2026

We're trying something different this year! Friday 20th November, 2026 - The annual club dinner will be followed by a Ceilidh with a well-known Ceilidh band: www.darkisland.co.uk.

The evening will be held at the Station Hotel, Guild St, Aberdeen, with the meal starting at 6.30pm followed by the Ceilidh 8.45pm. You can attend either one or both of those events that night - yes, you can just come for the ceilidh if you wish! Club members are welcome to bring guests.

The dinner will be held in a separate room to the ceilidh, so there will be space for people to chat after dinner. The cost of the 3-course meal will be £35 per person (+£3 suggested tip). Menu options for the evening dinner will be sent out nearer to the event date.

The cost of the ceilidh per adult (guests are welcome to attend) will be £15; children are welcome at a cost of £5 per child. The Station Hotel has offered a 15% discount on accommodation booking for the night (£60 approx. for double room B&B) - book directly with them and be sure to tell them you are with the club.

Booking deadline for the meal is 6th November - please make your payment to Payment to the club account (Sort: 83-15-31, Acct: 19165508) with reference Dinner, and email Tom at social@cairngormclub.org.uk, with a cc to treasurer@cairngormclub.org.uk.



Summer BBQ

This year's summer BBQ will be on Saturday 25th July at Bonnymuir Green (Bonnymuir Place, Aberdeen, AB15 5NQ) starting at 6.00pm. The BBQ will include chicken, beef burgers, sausages (including vegetarian), salads and sides, and soft drinks. The cost of the BBQ will be £22.50 per person. Please bring your own tipples, if that is desired.

As requested from a number of club members in recent years, this year's BBQ will be a club self-organised event - so we need volunteers!

1. to help organise the event, and
 2. to be on-the-day BBQ cooks and helpers
 3. To bring or let us borrow a couple of BBQ units (gas BBQ units preferred) for the day.
- To help with any or all of the above, email Tom at social@cairngormclub.org.uk

Please confirm places by transferring £22.50 per person into the club account (Sort: 83-15-31, Acct: 19165508) with reference BBQ. Once you've done that, email Tom Litterick (social@cairngormclub.org.uk) with a cc to treasurer@cairngormclub.org.uk. Please specify dietary requirements, including vegetarian/vegan, in your confirmation email to Tom.

Deadline for payments will be the 18th July, to allow for ordering of the food.

Club Calendar

Event Types

Day walk	Weekend away	Stravaig walk	Mid-week walk	Indoor
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Events

Date	Day(s)	Event
12 Jun	Fri	Bullers of Buchan
12 Jun	Fri & Sat nights	Laganarbh Cottage, Glencoe
21 Jun	Sun	An Socach (Baddoch to Inverey) minibus trip
24 Jun	Wed	Morven from Tullich
10 Jul	Fri & Sat nights	Arran, Camping
17 Jul	Fri	Tarland area
19 Jul	Sun	Glen Clova (Mayar & Dreish)
25 Jul	Sat	Club BBQ
30 Jul	Thu	Sgor Buidhe, Ballater
9 Aug	Sun	Ben Avon (Corgarff to Keiloch with overnight option)
14 Aug	Fri	Rhynie
14 Aug	Fri & Sat night	Inver Lael, Forest Way
27 Aug	Thur	Midweek walk
4 Sep	Fri & Sat nights	Langdale, Raw Head

Date	Day(s)	Event
11 Sep	Fri	Keithhall Circuit
13 Sep	Sun	Cairngorms Traverse
24 Sep	Thur	Glen Bindy
Oct 9	Fri & Sat nights	Morvich, Kintail
Oct 16	Fri	Burn o'Vat circuit
Oct 17	Sun	Meall a' Buachaille
Oct 29	Thu	Coilichbhar
Nov 6	Fri & Sat nights	Muir Cottage – members weekend
12 or 13	Thurs or Fri	Drumoak
Nov 15	Sun	Hill of Wirren
Nov 18	Wed	Club AGM
Nov 20	Fri	Club Dinner
Nov 20	Fri & Sat nights	Roy Bridge, Riasg
Nov 26	Fri	Tap o' Noth
Dec 4	Fri & Sat nights	Corran

Outdoor climbing every Tuesday until autumn

For further event details and updates, please check the events calendar on the website:

<https://cairngormclub.org.uk/meets-calendar/>



Muir Cottage

Work Weekend Quite a few people turned up and put in a lot of work between the Thursday and the Sunday. Along with the usual cleaning, wood piling, etc, the floors of all the bedrooms had a lot of accumulated grime in the corners. Two new members got down on their hands and knees and scrubbed them clean, steam cleaners and other fancy methods proving ineffective. Sound insulation was improved around the drying room, and the first stage of an air blower shoe and glove dryer was built. We started painting the common room walls too. This is unfinished and needs more work, so please let me know if you can help.

There is no magic to how Muir looks. The more people we have doing more jobs, the better it is. It is too much work for just the custodian, it needs a team. Please volunteer to help if you can, and if you are out there staying, please leave the place spotless.

Bikes There has been a bit of a stooshie regarding the bikes out there. It boils down to the same thing: we can only provide services if club members step up to help. I sent an email asking for someone to be responsible for the bikes, to create a program for maintenance and inspection etc. that would satisfy the committee. This request was repeated in the recent email from Donald Thomas. No one has come forward to take up that role, so alas, no more bikes at Muir.

Kevin Adam



North East Mountain Trust

The Trust is an umbrella body representing about 1000 hillwalkers and others as individual members or through their clubs (which include the Cairngorm Club). It campaigns to conserve the environment of the local hills (and cliffs) for the benefit of the public wishing to take recreation there, both now and in the future. It operates via a small Council which meets every couple of months. Three members of the Cairngorm Club – Donald Thomas, Mike Duguid and Ken Thomson – already serve in this way, but they have other responsibilities, and another Club member would be most welcome. If you could help out, please get in touch with any of these three, or direct with the Trust, via www.nemt.org.uk.



Membership

The following have transferred to Ordinary Membership:

John Fenemore (Coupar Angus), Iain Sneddon (Airdrie), Caroline Watt (Aberdeen)

The following members have been admitted:

Malcolm & Mary Duff (Finzean, Ordinary)	Claire Scott (Aberdeen, Associate)
Aurelie Najm (Glasgow, Ordinary)	Warren Birch (Inchmarlo, Associate)
Sarah Wingrove (returned Ordinary, Inverness)	Andrew Apanasionok (Stonehaven, Associate)
Maria Badia (Newmachar, Associate)	Chris Stapenhurst (Dyce, Associate)
Isolda Da Costa Soares (Aberdeen, Associate)	Greg Donald (Ballater, Associate)
Philip Johnston (Aberdeen, Associate)	Ursula Witte (Newburgh, Associate)
Ben Warmington (Aberdeen, Associate)	Michael Barnard (Banchory, Ordinary)
Dominic O'Riordan (Peterculter, Associate)	Tom McCormick (Aberdeen, rejoining Associate)
Mark Currey (Hirn, Associate)	Matthijs Van Dam (Midmar, Associate)
	Sharon Falconer (Portlethen, Associate)

+ 30 new Interim Members. 15 members resigned or lapsed.

Congratulations to **Jamie Vince** on his recent compleation, view a highlights clip he has made here: <https://youtu.be/gfGjAAhAhbl>



In Memorium

The club is sorry to note the deaths of the following members:

Jack Connell (Perth; Honorary; member since 1984; Midweek to 2008)

John Inglis (Aberdeen; Ordinary member, joined 1987)

Robbie Middleton (Newtonhill; Honorary member; joined 1974; Com 86-89, Hut C 93-05, Aud 08-19, Hon Pres 21-24)

Helen Ross (Edinburgh; former Life member 1973-2022)

James Friend (Lochwinnoch, Ordinary; Com 12-14, Pres 14-17)



Club AGM

This was held on 19 November, with 23 members in attendance. Draft minutes (to be confirmed at the 2026 AGM) are available in the club forum under Club News and Discussion. After the year's activities were reviewed, so were the accounts, which showed a small deficit, similar to the previous year, of about £1500, while the balance on 30 Sept. 2025 remained above £100,000. Membership had again risen slightly, to 380, and Club subscriptions (for 2026-27) were left unchanged. Elections then took place for office-bearers and "ordinary" Committee members, with the results shown on the final page of this Newsletter. The Independent Examiner was re-appointed. Considerable discussion took place on developments at Muir. Under AOCB, progress on incorporation of the Club was reviewed, with the promise of future consultation meetings.



SCIO Update

The move to a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) is to make the Cairngorm Club a legal corporate entity so that liability lies with the Club and not with individual members. At the AGM there was a vote to progress on the incorporation; since then, two aspects have been under construction.

First, Richard Shirrefs has been using the existing Club constitution to create the new company's constitution in as close of terms as is legally possible. That is still in progress. The second aspect is that the April committee meeting voted on the structure of the new committee (what in the new SCIO will technically be the Board of Trustees, but will probably continue to be called the committee).



Treasurer

Cairngorm Club Subscriptions (1 Oct 2026 – 30 Sept 2027)

At the Club AGM in November 2025, the subscription rate for the above year was maintained at £13.00 (reduced rate £6.50) plus the Mountaineering Scotland affiliation fee. The MS affiliation fee (including the Civil Liability Insurance premium) for the year 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027 is £28.75. Subscriptions paid by Direct Debits will be collected on 1st October:

	Club	MS	Total
Full Rate	£13.00	£28.75	£41.75
Reduced Rate	£ 6.50	£28.75	£35.25

Members not paying by direct debit should arrange payment during October.

The reduced rate applies to Club members who have informed the Treasurer that on 1st October 2026 they will be 65 or over, 21 or under, or in full-time education, or are normally resident and working more than 80 km from Aberdeen.

Members wishing to pay at the reduced rate should tell the Treasurer of the reason.

Members who do not participate in any Club-organised outside activity and do not use Muir Cottage may, if they desire, withdraw from paying the MS Affiliation Fee. Please discuss this with the Treasurer.

Members of multiple clubs (or Individual Members of MS) wishing to pay the MS affiliation fee other than through the Cairngorm Club should tell the Treasurer their MS membership number and which club it will be paid through if appropriate.

All members are encouraged to pay their subscription by Direct Debit and, where appropriate, to make a Gift Aid Declaration. Forms for each are available from the Treasurer.

Donald Thomas treasurer@cairngormclub.org.uk



Membership

2026 e-membership cards have been emailed to all who have paid the 2025-26 subscription.

When making payments to the Club, the bank details are:

Name: “Cairngorm Club” Sort Code: 83-15-31 A/C 19165508.

Please use the purpose of the payment as the reference e.g., “Traverse” or “Membership”.

Please do not include your name unless different from the account name, which is provided by the bank.



More news

Core Paths in the Cairngorms The Park Authority has reviewed its Core Path Plan, to “reaffirm if the current network of core paths is sufficient to facilitate access across the National Park and if there are any significant gaps in the current network”. A December 2025 report summarised the 208 responses received - mostly for Speyside, but some on Deeside - during an “informal consultation”. The consultation is open until 21 August. On Deeside, the only changes appear to be path realignment up the Lion’s Face from Braemar, along the LHS of the lower Quoich, and NE of Craig Leek, with no additions (such as the Clais Fhearnaig). There are more changes proposed for Speyside, e.g. core paths up to Loch Einich and above Glen Feshie. See the cairngorms.co.uk website for details. The revised Plan is to be finalised by autumn 2026, and then submitted to Ministers.

Adopt A Path Project The OATS (Outdoor Access Trust Scotland) Adopt a Path scheme involves path “adoptees” on Deeside and elsewhere within the Cairngorms National Park. For volunteers, path adoption means reporting on erosion damage and other issues so as to target and prioritise maintenance. Maintenance days in July are: Monday 13th – Callater; Monday 20th – Braeriach; and Tuesday 30th – Glenlivet. No path work experience is needed, only enthusiasm (and a strong back)! Anyone interested in the scheme (or in adopting a particular path, e.g. from Callater Lodge up towards Carn an t-Sagairt Mor) should contact Eva Kupska, OATS Outdoor Access Volunteer Coordinator, 07498 219 177, eva.kupska@outdooraccesstrustforscotland.org.uk. More on OATS, including the 2025 Annual Review, is available at www.outdooraccesstrustforscotland.org.uk.

ScotWays recruiting surveyors for summer 2026 ScotWays maintains the National Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) which helps local authorities and ourselves uphold public access rights. They also maintain Heritage Paths, a free online collection of historic routes including route descriptions and heritage interpretation. A resurveying project is starting this summer, with volunteers requested to travel some of these routes, take photographs, record details and to report findings so that ScotWays records can be updated.

<https://scotways.com/volunteer/route-surveyor/>



Online news

SAIS avalanche reporting There were 7x the reported avalanches in 2025-26 compared with the previous year.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cm2rwmw2v7mo>

Mountain Training Mountain Training's report on their winter mountain leader season is now available:

<https://www.mountain-training.org/about/what-we-do/news/winter-mountain-leader-course-provision-winter-2025-26/>

NESBREC Their mammal atlas of the North-East Scotland and the Cairngorms, previously print-only, is now available to download for free here:

<https://nesbrec.org.uk/mammal-atlas/>

Scottish Mountain Rescue report from 2025 now available

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/71074464/scottish-mountain-rescue-annual-review-2025>

John Muir Trust have a range of volunteer hands-on conservation days at local estates such as Glen Tanar, Balmoral and Mar lodge

<https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/whats-new/events/870-north-east-scotland-members-group-volunteer-days>

Anna Wells who presented about her winter munro round at the last Club dinner, if you didn't get a copy of the book on that night it's also available here:

<https://shop.rocksandtrails.com/>

Scottish Wildlife Trust are fundraising to expand Gight Wood Wildlife Reserve near Ellon

<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/how-to-help/make-a-donation/appeals/gightwood/>

Forestry and Land Scotland have handed over Kilbo Bothy to Dundee NCR Hillwalking and Climbing club

<https://forestryandland.gov.scot/news-releases/fls-hand-over-keys-for-glen-p-rosen-bothy-to-mountaineering-club>



Gallery

Some photos from our [FaceBook page](#) and the [forum](#), check those out to see many more...



WANTED - NEW DAY MEETS SECRETARY



Later this year at the Club's November AGM, I will be standing down as the Day Meet Secretary after 3 years. My aim is to continue as a meet organiser for one or two meets each year, but to step back from the role of secretary. Therefore we're looking for someone to take over the position. If you feel this is something you could do to help the Club in the organisation of our traditional monthly meets, then please contact me and I'll be happy to explain further what is involved,

Craig Thomson.

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OTHER ROLES

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Any comments or suggestions for future newsletters? Email the editor: newsletter@cairngormclub.org.uk

