

## GUIDANCE FOR ORGANISERS OF EVENTS HELD IN MORAY AND ABERDEENSHIRE FOREST DISTRICT FORESTS

Thank you for your enquiry about the use of Forestry Commission land for your activity. We aim to allow all permission requests to be granted where at all possible so in order to avoid clashing with other events and activities or normal working operations in the forest, we require notice of a MINIMUM OF 6 WEEKS prior to the start of any activity or event

### When is permission required?

According to the SNH publication '[Outdoor Events in Scotland: guidance for organisers and land managers](#)', permission is likely to be required for those events where any of the following criteria apply:

1. The event would need new or temporary facilities and services.
2. The event is likely to unreasonably hinder land management operations;
3. The event is likely to unreasonably interfere with the other people's enjoyment;
4. The event is likely to unreasonably affect the environment.

**In addition to the above**, a permission must be sought if **vehicle access is required into the forest**, or if requiring a **guarantee that your chosen location will be available** on a particular date at a particular time.

[The guidance](#) recommends liaison with the land owner (in this case, Forestry Commission Scotland), even when permission is unlikely to be required.

### How to apply

- Please complete and send the attached application form along with a risk assessment, insurance documents and OS map to the address on the application form or forward by e mail. **Remember to include any days you would like access for setting up to be considered as well as your activity or event dates.**
- We are always happy to meet with event organisers to discuss appropriate routes through the woods Your direct contact for this area is our Recreation Ranger. They will endeavour to provide specific advice about any aspect of your application.
- Please include a covering letter if you feel there is insufficient space on the application form to explain your activity or event.

**If you do not require vehicle access into the forest**, or are happy to take the forest as you find it then it may be possible to run small events without a permission or charge, following the guidelines of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com).

In this case we can check for any other events booked or normal working operations in the forest but we are unable to give a guarantee our plans will not change and that the site may become unavailable. If you are running an event under SOAC guidelines you may have to follow guidance given on signage at any operations site you encounter. This may mean you have to change your plans on the day.

### Costs

For events other than those being held under the bounds of SOAC, costs are implemented to try to recover at least some of the administration and management fees incurred when arranging permits to use FC land.

We will advise of any charges payable in respect of your application.

Car Parking Charges: Event Organisers, event participants and event spectators will be liable to pay Forestry Commission Scotland car parking/site entry charges where these are normally levied

National Agreements: Our headquarters in Edinburgh form 'national agreements' with umbrella organisations such as the Scottish Orienteering Association for orienteering events. In such cases we are obliged to implement the charges as per the national agreements agreed between those organisations.

## Useful information to consider when organising your event.

- Plan your event in advance and remember to apply for dates for setting up if required (we require at least 6 weeks' notice)
- Seek permission from other landowners or authorities where relevant
- Provide an OS map of your route or the areas you would like to use when returning your application form
- Provide a Risk Assessment to include in particular, but in no way exhaustive, provision for First Aid, and 15mph speed limit if applicable
- Ensure your proposed activity is compatible with environmental aspects of the forest e.g. no smoking or fires.
- Confirm to us that you have adequate resources for marshalling, car parking, toilets, emergency cover, etc.
- Ensure adequate insurance cover is in place.
- Immediately after the event, remove litter and any signs, instructions or tape you have put up.
- Ensure any relevant emergency services are fully informed of all aspects of your activity (if required).

As an event organiser you should consider the impact your activity will have on the local landscape and wildlife. To help protect the forests you might like to think about:

- The numbers of participants, spectators and vehicles. What affect might they have on the verges and tracks, and on the wildlife?
- Parking. Vehicles may not be parked in front of gateways and access points under any circumstances as they may be the only access point in the event of an emergency. Will there be sufficient space for parking?
- Paths, roads and other access points. These should not be obstructed in any way. There may be other people using the forest at the same time and they should be allowed to enjoy their recreation. Some roads also access other properties and access must be maintained at all times.

## APPLICATION FOR AN ACTIVITY /EVENT IN MORAY & ABERDEENSHIRE FOREST DISTRICT FORESTS

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE ADDRESS BELOW ALONG WITH MAP, RISK ASSESSMENT & PROOF OF INSURANCE

- **Title of event or activity:**
- **Day, date and time of event and any pre / post event requirements:**
- **Location of event:**
- **Maximum numbers (Senior):** **Maximum numbers (Junior):**
- **Is this a commercial venture (i.e. do you charge for this service) YES /NO**
- **Brief description** (For example vehicle access, wildlife study, organised walk, educational visit etc.)
  
- **Is vehicle access required into the forest? (for example for emergency safety cover) YES / NO**  
If yes, registration number(s) of vehicle(s): (15 mph speed limit applies on FCS land)
- **Organisation:** (Name)
- **Name of contact** (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/etc):
- **Address & postcode:**
  
- **Telephone:** **Mobile:**
- **E-mail** (if regularly checked):
- **Date of application:**

### RISK ASSESSMENT

It is ESSENTIAL for ALL permissions that a risk assessment is submitted. To include in particular, but in no way exhaustive, provision for First Aid, and 15mph speed limit if applicable.

### INSURANCE

You must include a copy of your Insurance document or proof of current fully paid up membership of an appropriate association that provides insurance cover to its members

### MAPS

It is ESSENTIAL that an OS map of the area(s) or route(s) to be used is returned with this application form.

#### CHECKLIST:

TO HELP US PROCESS YOUR APPLICATION QUICKLY HAVE YOU INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

1. Application form
2. Proof of Insurance
3. OS map showing area / routes
4. Risk assessment
5. More detailed information regarding the event if necessary

**RETURN ADDRESS:** to Karen Patterson,  
CRT Assistant,  
Moray & Aberdeenshire Forest District,  
Portsoy Road,  
Huntly,  
Aberdeenshire, AB54 4SJ

**Telephone** 0300 067 6173  
**Email** [karen.patterson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:karen.patterson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)