

The new Heading for the Scottish Hills (HFTSH) web service: guidance for participating estates

Introduction

The new HFTSH service is intended to include all Munros and Corbetts, and a small number of other popular hills, across the whole red deer range. Estate information is provided in tables of hills in eight geographical areas which collectively cover all of Scotland. These will be available through the Scottish Outdoor Access Code website at www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/hftsh.

The general appearance of these tables will be as follows:

Carn Dearg	Glenmore Estate. Stalking between late Sept and 20 Oct. No stalking on Sundays. The routes by the SW ridge from the car park on the A42, and from the west by Coire Buidhe, are always OK. Recorded phone message: 01928 326098. If further information is needed, please phone 01928 339564 (office hours only).
Meall Garbh and Geal Charn	North of ridge: National Trust for Scotland. No stalking issues. South of ridge: Glenbeg Estate. Stalking between beginning of Aug and 20 Oct. No stalking on Sundays. Regular updates are provided at www.glenbeg.co.uk/hillwalking . If further information is needed, please phone 01928 469456 or e-mail fred.bloggs@glenbeg.co.uk .

Adding estate information to the tables

The information provided for each estate needs to be very concise to keep the tables to a manageable size (if they become too hard to navigate, hillwalkers will be less likely to use them). It's also important to focus on things that will remain the same from year to year, so that updating will only be needed if there are changes to estate management, contact information or web links.

It will be up to neighbouring estates to provide their own information, which will be presented alongside (but separate from) the information you provide. If they do not provide any information, your entry will be unaffected and will appear on its own.

Estates where there is no potential conflict between hillwalking and stalking

Please provide a very short message in the form "John Muir Trust. No stalking issues" which we can insert in the relevant row(s) of the table. If your estate boundary doesn't include the entire hill, this message should be preceded by a very short, simple description of the relationship between the hill and the boundary (eg. "North of ridge: Glenmore Estate. No stalking issues"). If this is difficult, for example because the boundary is complex, Annex 1 provides additional guidance.

Estates where there is potential conflict between hillwalking and stalking

Please provide the following information for us to insert in the relevant rows of the table:

- Name of estate. If your estate boundary doesn't include the entire hill, the estate name should be preceded by a very short, simple description of the relationship between the hill and the boundary (eg. "North of ridge: Glenmore Estate"). If this is difficult, for example because the boundary is complex, Annex 1 provides additional guidance.
- Approximate period when stag stalking actually takes place, in the form: "Stalking between mid-Sept and 20 Oct";
- Days of the week when stalking never takes place, eg: "No stalking on Sundays";
- Any routes to the summit(s) which are not affected by stalking, in the general form: "The route to Ben X from Y is always OK". It is particularly helpful if you can suggest one or more routes of this type, which is very useful to hillwalkers and could significantly reduce the number of phone enquiries you receive. If possible, it is usually best to encourage hillwalkers to use the most popular route up the hill, as those who are oblivious to your message (and there will always be some!) will tend to use this route anyway. A route on a different hill or on low ground is unlikely to be a useful alternative, so if it isn't possible to suggest a specific route up the hill concerned, it's better to omit this altogether. In suggesting "always OK" routes, bear in mind that some low level hill approaches use rights of way and hillwalkers cannot be asked to avoid these.
- Any sources of more detailed daily information, such as on-site signs, recorded phone messages or a link to an estate website, eg: "More detailed information is available at (link)"; "A sign will be posted at (location) indicating where stalking is taking place and a suggested route to Ben X".
- Contact details for further information about stalking if needed, in the form: "If further information is needed, please phone / e-mail etc". This may, for various reasons, be of limited practical value on its own, but it may provide a useful supplement to other information sources (as above).

The attached proforma in Annex 2 may provide a useful prompt when composing your message, but this is entirely optional.

Sending us your message

Please send your message(s) by e-mail to hftsh@snh.gov.uk.

There will be opportunities to prepare your message(s) at forthcoming DMG meetings, when SNH staff will be on hand to help if necessary. Your DMG Chair or Secretary may also be able to offer advice if needed.

Keeping your message up to date

Please let us know if any alterations to your message become necessary, for example because of changes in estate management, contact information or web links. You can send these by e-mail to hftsh@snh.gov.uk or phone Margo Moncur at SNH on 01738 458648.

Please let us have an e-mail address which we can use if we need to contact you about your message in the future. This will not appear in the table.

Annex 1: Further guidance on describing estate boundaries

Most estates have fairly complex boundaries which can't be described both accurately *and* concisely in words. Fortunately, however, an exact description is unlikely to be needed and the aim is simply to provide enough information for hillwalkers to decide which estates their intended route will pass through. Some useful pointers:

- If the entire hill and its approaches are on a single estate, don't mention the boundary.
- Some rows in the table contain a single hill, while others include multiple summits (usually along a single ridge). The description should be set in this context and it will often be enough to simply say "south-east of summit" or "north of ridge" rather than repeating Gaelic hill names in full. This may not be possible for larger mountain groups which border onto multiple estates, in which case a slightly more specific wording will be needed: eg. "North of Meall Garbh-Sgurr Mor ridge".
- In a few cases, boundaries follow less obvious routes that don't link to strong features on the ground. In these cases, use a succinct wording as appropriate – eg: "low ground north of Geal Charn" or "summit area and land to south". A more complex example is: "Land in Upper Glen More catchment to east of summits and north of Carn Dearg ridge". A few estate boundaries cross ridges at right angles rather than running along them. In these situations it should be enough to say something like: "Land east of summit".
- If it's absolutely necessary to refer to features other than major hills or ridges, be sure to use features that are named on the OS 1:50,000 map.

Annex 2: Proforma for HFTSH messages

Names of key hills (Munros and Corbetts) on your estate.

Name of estate and (if needed) how its boundary relates to the key hills, in the general form:
"North of ridge: Glenmore Estate"

Approximate period when stag stalking actually takes place, in the form: "Stalking between
mid-Sept and 20 Oct"

Days of the week when stalking never takes place, eg: "No stalking on Sundays"

Any routes to the summit(s) which are not affected by stalking, in the general form: "The
route to Ben X from Y is always OK"

Any sources of more detailed daily information, such as on-site signs, phone numbers for recorded messages, or a link to an estate website, eg: "More detailed information is available at (link)"; "A sign will be posted at (location) indicating where stalking is taking place and a suggested route to Ben X"

Contact details in the form: "If further information is needed, please phone / e-mail etc".

E-mail address in case we need to contact you about your message in the future (this will not appear in the table).