

The Cairngorms National Park Elections (Ward No 1)

Candidate's Statement by Deirdre Falconer

I am from a crofting family, long established in Badenoch, and have lived, worked and raised a family here. I was a Teacher of Geography at Kingussie High School for 15 years, and for the last 10 years I have worked in the tourism sector, managing a local estate.

An outdoor enthusiast, I helped establish the Rural Skills Programme at school which equips youngsters with the knowledge and skills required to work in the rural environment. I am passionate that our young people should be able to obtain well- paid employment across the Park, where they can remain, contributing to our local communities and sustaining them for future generations.

As manager of a well esteemed hospitality venue I am an ardent and knowledgeable ambassador for the magnificent natural and cultural heritage of the area. I am a member of the Cairngorms Business Partnership and work tirelessly with them to provide a five star experience for all who visit the Cairngorm National Park.

As Chair of Kincaig and Vicinity Community Council, I believe strongly in community empowerment and work collaboratively with 3rd sector bodies, the Cairngorm National Park Authority and Highland Council to achieve positive outcomes for my community. My environmental knowledge makes me a valuable member of the Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group.

If elected, I will push for a real increase in truly affordable housing, to both rent and buy for those working in the Park area.

Candidate's Statement by Dave Fallows

With ten years experience as a Councillor for Badenoch and Strathspey up to 2017 and over ten years on the Park Authority Board of which I am currently Chair of Audit and Risk, I understand the challenges facing Badenoch and Highland Perthshire communities. My ambition is to constantly strive to make the Park work better for us all.

I have lived in Newtonmore for thirty years and have a working studio as a professional artist in Chapel House Arts, Kingussie. I am Chairman of the Trustees of the Society of Badenoch and Strathspey Artists who run the Iona Gallery in Kingussie, a committee member of Creative Cairngorms, a Life Member of Newtonmore Camanachd Club and a member of the John Muir Trust and the SNP.

I care passionately for the Park as a special place and about the communities that live and work here. My particular interest is in ensuring that young people can find comfortable and appropriate places to live at an affordable price, close to their work and worthwhile jobs that pay a decent wage. At the same time, I believe that housing development needs to be appropriate in scale to our smaller communities, and incrementally developed to avoid over-expansion whilst maximising the numbers available for local people.

I want to see a vibrant and forward looking Park that protects and enhances the unique environment around us, yet provides for living and thriving communities.

I ask for your confidence and trust. I am always ready to listen.

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Candidate's Statement by Ian Gibson

Who am I? Born in Kilmarnock through circumstance, but live in Newtonmore through choice. Since 2005 I have played a full part in the local Community as a Board member of VABs, Newtonmore Camanachd Club secretary, Newtonmore Business Association secretary, vice chair Newtonmore Winter Lights and a volunteer at the Wildcat Centre and Creag Meagaidh.

Experience? My career was in senior management in the NHS, civil service, private sector and laterally as Director of Macmillan Cancer Support. Making a difference to the lives of people with cancer and their families was particularly rewarding.

I have been a Trustee of several health and homelessness charities and currently am a Trustee of CLIC Sargent. My involvement with children and young people in the charity's decision making has been inspirational to me.

I was the first Independent Chair of Highland Council Adult Protection Committee, on the Care Commission Board, NHS Highland Board and a lay member on the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission. In all these roles I helped deliver change.

Why me? I want the CNPA to be successful and I have the time to contribute. I would value the opportunity to work as part of the CNPA team, to enhance its reputation and improve its communication with the communities it serves. I want to contribute what I do best: teamworking with others for the common good; using my experience to get results; helping others to deliver improvements. I care about our communities and I have a record of achieving results.

No Candidate's Statement received by Neil I M MacKintosh

Candidate's Statement by George Milligan

I have known Badenoch since earliest childhood, initially during school holidays at my family's house in Kingussie which I have owned since 2003. I have been a member of Kingussie Golf Club for nearly 60 years and was skiing in Cairngorm in the early 1960's. My wife and I keep a base in Oxford and are closely involved with our children and grandchildren in Edinburgh and Kent. We are Members of NTS and RSPSB, and Friends of Rothiemurchus, National Galleries of Scotland and Eden Court. My main activities are walking, golf, gardening, music, reading, fishing and exploring Scotland.

I am a retired Civil Engineer (FICE). For most of my career I have worked for consulting engineers on projects throughout the UK and in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Far East. I have also spent some 17 years as a lecturer and researcher at Magdalen College and the Engineering Department of Oxford University. I have extensive experience of working with departmental and college committees, as a Director of a specialist consulting company, and as a court expert in a number of legal disputes.

If elected, my long and close association with the area combined with my wide national and international experience would allow me to contribute very usefully to the management of the National Park. My principal areas of interest would be wildlife conservation, access for walkers and cyclists, sporting facilities, local transport and planning/housing/infrastructure, with special regard to the A9 dualling and to keeping our villages as thriving communities.

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Candidate's Statement by Stephen Shaw

I have enjoyed walking, skiing, cycling and canoeing in the Cairngorm area for nearly 40 years. As a Biology teacher and ski instructor in the Highlands, I encouraged adult and youth groups to respect and support the natural environment and to enjoy the excellent outdoor opportunities this area has to offer. As Principal Teacher of Biology in Inverness High School and as Head Teacher of Gairloch High School in Wester Ross, I was also involved in providing environmental education and outdoor activities within the Cairngorm area, particularly in Abernethy Forest.

My wife and I brought up our children in the Highlands before moving to Dundee when I became Head Teacher of Morgan Academy. I continued to provide skiing opportunities there and three years ago we returned to the Highlands to settle in Kingussie where we run a small Guest House in the summer months.

The Cairngorm National Park Authority is vitally important in ensuring a balance is struck between enabling everyone to take advantage of the rich opportunities that this beautiful area provides, while at the same time ensuring we look after this unique environment and the fragile ecosystems it contains.

I would feel privileged to represent the people of this Ward on the Cairngorm National Park Authority. If elected I would work hard within the Authority to help ensure that a balance is maintained between providing opportunities for local people and visitors, at the same time as protecting and conserving this unique area for future generations to enjoy.

Candidate's Statement by Keith Taylor

The Cairngorms National Park has a unique landscape. It has fabulous biodiversity and is home to some of Scotland's most iconic animals. It is also home of those of us who live and work here. It is the voice of these communities and villages that I wish to strengthen.

I'm Keith Taylor, I live in Kincaig. I'm married with two grown up children. I own and operate Loch Morlich Watersports. I'm an enthusiastic skier and enjoy a life spent working in the Outdoor Activity Industry. For four decades, this has been my home and I feel passionate about its future.

I want to represent the residents that live, work and manage this iconic area. It's our culture and heritage that helps make the Cairngorms National Park so special for so many. Our young people are the future of our communities, our customs and traditions.

The National Park has to be a place where our children, and others, can have a career. The National Park has to be a place where future generations want and can afford to live and not just be a destination on a "bucket list."

Businesses in the Cairngorm National Park face challenges and as a director of the Cairngorm Business partnership I understand these issues. It was a presentation at the CBP's conference by the pupils of Kingussie High School that emphasized that to have a successful National Park we need to look at the future and "Make It Ours."
