

# Upper Deeside and Donside Deer Management Group

## Annual Report Year to 31 March 2018



**DMG Chairman:** Angus McNicol  
Email: [angus@invercauld.estate](mailto:angus@invercauld.estate)

**DMG Secretary:** Tom Willis  
Email: [TWillis@savills.com](mailto:TWillis@savills.com)

**DMG Website:** <http://upperdeesidedonsidedmg.deer-management.co.uk>

Prepared by: **Dr Linzi Seivwright** BSc Phd

**Caorann**  
Tel. 07547 676509  
Email: [linzi@caorann.com](mailto:linzi@caorann.com)  
[www.caorann.com](http://www.caorann.com)



## 1. Introduction

1.1 This is the second annual report from the Upper Deeside and Donside Deer Management Group. The purpose of this report is to provide an overall summary of management activities undertaken and progress to date in the delivery of the Upper Deeside and Donside Deer Management Plan (DMP) (<http://egrampiandmg.deer-management.co.uk>)

### 1.2 Key Deliverables of the plan

The following table sets out progress being made with the main deliverables of the Group:

Action	Progress to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018
<b>Action 1:</b> To have implemented management to help Designated Sites to achieve Favourable/ Unfavourable Recovering management status	Collaborative deer management being implemented across the Group to reduce localised deer impacts on Designated sites.
<b>Action 2:</b> To use the Mar Lodge Section 7 review process, the Cross-DMG Working Group and the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (2017-22) (see Part 1 Section 1.3 for details) to review deer movements, review DMG boundaries and implement collaborative deer management to deliver the combined objectives of conservation and the sustainable harvest of deer at a landscape scale	Section 7 agreement concluded early due to ecological targets having been met. Group has expanded boundaries to the east and increased wider membership of the Group. Group continues to harvest deer sustainably whilst reducing impacts across the DMG area.
<b>Action 3:</b> To have implemented DMG wide Habitat Monitoring of Heather Moorland and Blanket Bog to help inform future management	Allargue and Invercauld Estates carried out Habitat Monitoring in 2017. The Group organised for further training of Estate staff in Habitat Impact Assessment for Spring 2018. All properties with deer above 2 deer km <sup>2</sup> will have monitoring in place by 2018.
<b>Action 4:</b> To have conducted two full aerial counts of the population in Winter 2017 & 2020	Helicopter deer count of DMG area and wider Cairngorms completed in winter 2017. Overall deer population across the DMG area estimated to be 5,821 deer (2,566 stags, 2,389 hinds and 866 calves). This represents an overall deer density of 5.97 deer per km <sup>2</sup> over the DMG area which is within the density recommended by the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (2017-22).
<b>Action 5:</b> To have secured additional Funding through ECAF to carry out a review of existing native woodland and explore opportunities for woodland expansion.	ECAF Funding ceased to become available. However, according to the Native Woodland Survey for Scotland <b>81%</b> of native woodlands within the group area are in good condition with regards to herbivore impacts.

## 2. Summary of events and DMG management activities 2017

2.1 During the development of the Deer Management Plan in 2015 and 2016, and the ongoing delivery of the plan, the Deer Management Sector as a whole has been involved in a series of reviews and consultations conducted by the Cairngorms National Park, Scottish Natural Heritage and, latterly, the Scottish Government Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee.

3 April 2017	The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee publish a <a href="#">Review of Deer Management</a> .
April 2017	Publication of <a href="#">Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (2017 - 2021)</a>
14 November 2017	DMG Autumn Meeting

## 3. Summary of activities undertaken by individual DMG Members

3.1 The following table details some of the deer management activities undertaken from April 2017 to March 2018 in the DMG area which contribute to delivering the local public interest identified in the Deer Management Plan.

Management Unit	April 2017- March 2018 Activity Summary Reports
<b>Dinnet Moor</b>	The Tom Wood located near Morven Lodge was felled in 2017 and a substitute area of open moorland North of Balmenach will be managed hereon for the natural regeneration of trees.
<b>Mar Estate</b>	Estate staff trained in Habitat Impact Assessment with the view of commencing assessment in April 2018. Damaged deer fences repaired along River Dee. Estate continue to provide guidance to responsible access takers through Heading for Scottish Hills website and otherwise and continues to engage with the local community, and neighbouring landowners. No DVC issues identified.
<b>Invercauld Gairnshiel</b>	Peatland Restoration project undertaken with SNH funding, school visit, track improvements using Prior Notification procedures, wildlife safaris, facilitating propagation through heather honey production, Estate articles contributed to local newspaper, wader counts undertaken. No known DVC's.
<b>Invercauld Corndavon</b>	Peatland Restoration project undertaken with SNH funding. HIA monitoring continued, conservation students taken out on to hill to explain practical moorland management, track improvements using Prior Notification procedures, representation at Community Council meetings. New Long Term Forest Plan prepared under consultation with FCS. No known DVC's.
<b>Invercauld Baddoch</b>	Information signs on moorland management provided for public benefit, liaison with River Dee Trust, creation of new sheep handling areas, improvements to larder facilities undertaken, site visit provided for SNH local Area Officers. New Long Term Forest Plan prepared in consultation with FCS.
<b>Invercauld Homebeat</b>	Conservation students taken onto hill, Moorland Forum Open Day, HIA monitoring continued, additional tree planting along River Dee undertaken, natural regeneration within deer fenced area has continued to spread, attendance at Community Council meetings. New Long Term Forest Plan prepared in consultation with FCS. No known DVC's.
<b>Invercauld Micras</b>	Expansion of and recording of natural woodland regeneration along moorland edge, road works carried out through Prior Notification procedures, wader counts, Estate contribution of articles to local newspaper, new Long Term Forest Plan prepared in consultation with FCS. No known DVC's.

