

# STRATHTAY DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

## CONSTITUTION (Adopted 2003, amended 2014)

### **Name**

The Group shall be called the "The Strathtay Deer Management Group".

The area covered by the Group is that illustrated in the map appended.

### **Objectives**

The purpose of the Group is the collaborative management of the populations of all deer species in the Group's area in accordance with the Code of Practice on Deer Management and in line with Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance, at levels and in ways that will enable the achievement of sustainable land use objectives. This will include, at least, the following:

- *To safeguard and promote deer welfare;*
- *To achieve a balance between the deer and their habitat; and*
- *To fulfill the sporting and venison production requirements of land managers within the Group's area.*

Membership of the Group will be open to all land owners, occupiers or managers with a significant deer management interest over land within the Strathtay area.

The Group aims to be efficient and effective, while having a relatively informal character and seeking to operate on a consensus basis. Significant changes to its operation and associated arrangements will require the support of a majority of the Members.

The Members of the Group are committed to being represented at the Group's principal meetings and to participating in the related business of the Group.

The working of the Group will be guided by the following principles:

- *We acknowledge what we have in common, namely a shared commitment to a sustainable and economically viable Scottish countryside.*
- *We make a commitment to work together to achieve that.*
- *We accept that we have a diversity of management objectives and respect each other's objectives.*
- *We undertake to communicate openly with all relevant parties.*
- *We commit to negotiate and, where necessary, compromise, in order to accommodate the reasonable land management requirements of neighbours.*
- *Where there are areas of disagreement we undertake to work together to resolve them.*

### **Composition**

Membership shall consist of one voting representative from each estate or other landholder in the Group's area; for this purpose, "estate" shall be interpreted as land managed as a single unit. Such representatives shall be nominated by the owner. An alternate may be nominated by the member to attend and vote at any meeting.

### **Meetings**

The Group shall hold an annual general meeting, at which a receipts and payments account to 31<sup>st</sup> March each year and a budget for the forthcoming year shall be presented. The Group shall meet at such other times as the Chairman may determine.

The Group shall, at least once a year, hold an open meeting to which all concerned with the management of deer in the Group's area shall be invited. At such meetings all matters pertaining to the objective of the Group may be discussed, but all decisions shall be taken by the Group members as defined in 3 above.

Notice of all meetings shall be given by the Secretary at least twenty-one days prior to a meeting. Such notice shall state the time and place of the meeting and list the business to be discussed.

**Administration**

The Office-Bearers shall consist of Chairman and a Secretary who will also act as Treasurer. The Chairman shall be appointed for a three year term.

The Secretary shall be appointed annually.

The Secretary shall be empowered to operate a Bank Account on behalf of the Group.

Annual subscriptions are based on the stag cull in the preceding year, as reported to the Group Secretary.

The current rate is:

£10.00 per stag.

There is a minimum subscription of £20.

Group policy is to retain approx one year's subscription to ADMG as a buffer in the bank account.

Each member of the Group (as defined in 3) above shall have one vote. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting (as defined in d) below) shall have a casting vote in addition to his/her own vote. All decisions shall be by a majority of those present and voting and shall be binding on all members of the Group.

In the event that the Chairman is absent from any meeting, such member as those present may elect for that meeting only.

A representative of:

Scottish Natural Heritage; and

the Association of Deer Management Groups,

(and their successors) shall be invited to attend meetings of the Group but shall not have a vote. The Group may co-opt representatives of other interests or invite such to attend meetings of the Group; such representatives shall not have a vote.

### **Alterations to the Constitution**

Alterations to this Constitution shall be made only at a General Meeting of the members of the Group. The notice calling such a meeting shall state the alterations proposed. Such alterations shall only come into effect by a majority of two-thirds of those members of the Group present and voting.

### **Dispute Resolution**

All Group members are encouraged to deal with disputes in the first instance with those parties concerned, be they other Group members, external parties or Government Agencies.

Failing that, the Chairman of the Group will seek to facilitate an agreement. This may involve the opportunity to air relevant issues at a meeting of the Group. A request to do this should be made in writing at least two weeks prior to any such meeting.

Any dispute involving the Group chairman will be considered by the vice-Chair of the Group.

All Group members are entitled to receive Group support in dealing with such issues.

Strathtay DMG reserves the right to suspend the membership of any member if it is judged that they are working against the interests of the Group as a whole.

The views of ADMG will be sought in any instances where disputes prove to be intractable.

### **Meetings**

The Group hold two principal meetings each year in spring and autumn.

The main business of the Spring meeting will be to undertake a systematic review of the previous season and to indicate sporting/cull requirements for that coming season. This will include:

An analysis of culls achieved against cull targets set at the previous meeting

An analysis of remaining deer numbers, based on spring counts and such indirect monitoring as might be carried out by members

A review of any current problems in the sub-area, based upon evidence gathered from monitoring procedures used by individual members. If necessary, these should be prioritized and a plan of action agreed upon.

The setting of approx. sporting requirements for the coming season.

Members will submit their cull data to the Group in advance of the Spring meeting in the format agreed by the Group.

The main business of the Autumn meeting will be the agreeing of cull targets amongst the membership for the coming winter / spring, taking in to account the results of any recent information that might be relevant. Specifically, all information relating to habitat condition gathered during the previous season will be reviewed and, if applicable, target culls adjusted accordingly.