

PERTH AND KINROSS OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

Minute of meeting of the Perth and Kinross Outdoor Access Forum held in the Board Room, Dewars Centre, Ground Floor, Glover Street, Perth on Thursday 21 May at 6.00pm.

- Present:** Nick Cole, Community (Convener)
 Hugh Anderson, Landowner/Manager
 Heather Baker, Recreation
 Mary Conacher, Recreation
 Councillor Bob Ellis
 Ron Payne, Recreation
 Peter Pearson, Community (Vice-Convener)
 Mark Thomson, Landowner/Manager
- In Attendance:** Dave Stubbs, Countryside Access Officer, and Heledd Rheinallt, Committee Services (both Perth and Kinross Council).
- Observers:** Sue James
 Jennifer Herd
- Apologies:** John Andrews, Recreation; Donald Broad, Landowner/Manager; William Lindsay, Landowner/Manager; Mike Strachan, Agency; Bob Bennet, Centre for Inclusive Living (Observer)

Nick Cole in the Chair.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Nick Cole welcomed Sue James and Jennifer Herd to the meeting as observers pending confirmation of their appointments by a meeting of the Environment Committee. Apologies were noted as above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in terms of the relevant codes of conduct.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of the Perth and Kinross Outdoor Access Forum of 19 February 2015 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Kinclaven Churchyard (Item 3(i) refers)

D Stubbs advised that this is now an item on the Exemptions and Obstructions Report.

**(ii) Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park – “Your Park”
(Item 3(ii) refers)**

Councillor Ellis advised that the consultation is still ongoing and that he is attending a meeting next week to discuss the consultation.

Action:

Councillor Bob Ellis to provide feedback on the consultation at a later meeting of the Forum.

(iii) A9 Dualling Programme (Item 3(iii) refers)

Action:

Members to inform Nick Cole or Francis Berry if they wish to attend any of the meetings.

(iv) North Chesthill Estate

D Stubbs advised that he had written a letter to the Mountaineering Council of Scotland but has not received a reply yet, and that he has drafted signs for Alistair Riddell in line with the SNH template.

Action:

This item be deferred for further information.

(v) British Horse Society (BHS) (Item 11(ii) refers)

H Baker advised that the BHS will be holding a sponsored ride at Blair Atholl on Sunday 7 June 2015.

Action:

D Stubbs to circulate information to members.

5. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015 – CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

The election of Sue James and Jennifer Herd to the forum was noted.

Members discussed the recent lack of public attendance at the AGM, and agreed to consider options from November onwards.

Action:

D Stubbs to submit a report to the Environment Committee meeting of Wednesday 9 September to ratify Sue James, Jennifer Herd and Bob Bennett as members of the OAF.

6. EXEMPTION AND OBSTRUCTIONS REPORT – 21 MAY 2015

There was submitted and noted a report (G/15/32) outlining Exemptions and Obstructions for February 2015.

(i) Pitcastle and Oakbank Road, Blairgowrie – Verbal Update

N Cole advised members that there would be a site visit to Pitcastle Estate in early June. Members agreed that the site visit would be on the morning of 8 June 2015.

Actions:

- (i) Access Officer to provide a letter on legal advice about signage at Pitcastle Estate.
- (ii) N Cole to send email to confirm date and time of site visit. Members to notify N Cole if they wish to attend the site visit.

The Access Officer advised members that a report on Oakbank Road, Blairgowrie would be submitted to the Environment Committee meeting of 3 June 2015. B Ellis added that elected members of the Committee and local elected members had been on a site visit earlier that afternoon.

Action:

Access Officer to circulate the link on the Council website to the Oakbank Road report when it is uploaded.

(ii) Next steps for longstanding unresolved obstructions – Verbal Update

The Access Officer advised that there has been progress in getting obstructions logged since the decision last year to do a process map; more correspondence has also been coming back. More obstructions have been resolved. The process map shows that once all letters have been exhausted, advice from the legal department informs them whether to pursue the issue further or to refer it to the obstructions sub-group to look at all outstanding issues. Advice from the forum and the lawyers is that if following referral, the issue will be pursued further, it is referred to The Environment Service's Senior Management Team.

All issues were closed that need to be closed.

(iii) Exemption Order T in the Park – 9 July to 13 July 2015 (inclusive) in the interests of safety and security and to allow a charge

Agreed:

Members agreed to grant the exemption order in terms of section 11 to the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

7. CORE PATHS UPDATE

(i) Core Paths Implementation Report

There was tabled and noted a report by the Access Officer summarising Core Paths Implementation progress to May 2015.

Actions:

- (i) Access Officer to change the target completion month for Kitty Swanson's Bridge and email members to update them on when this is likely to be complete.
- (ii) Access Officer to talk to Catriona Davies, Tay Landscape Partnership about the pedestrian chicane at the Cottown end of the River Tay path.

(ii) Waymarking over trunk roads

There was submitted a discussion paper (G/15/119) by the Access Officer on core paths and trunk roads. During the discussion, the following points were noted: (i) the current situation is unreasonably anomalous; (ii) roads are not covered under the Land Reform Act 2003; (iii) signs warning of the hazard would be helpful; (iv) on Council maps a gap is left where a path crosses a trunk road.

Action:

Access Officer to explore options for warning or hazard signs before a core path crosses a trunk road.

8. WATER ISSUES

Mary Conacher reported:

- She had attended the meeting of the National Access Forum concerning warning notices besides reservoirs; the meeting had also discussed the Loch Lomond Byelaws which mountaineers, canoeists and ramblers were all opposed to
- The gate for access to the car park at Linn Road, Stanley is being left open according to the times on the sign; there had been one issue which was queried and sorted
- She had attended a meeting at the Loch Leven Nature Reserve; there is a negative attitude towards canoeists at the Reserve

The Forum noted that Scottish National Heritage and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds still have issues with access to the water at the Reserve, although canoeists are allowed to take access to the water, if canoes are launched from specified locations and remain within a certain area on the water.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no other correspondence for consideration.

10. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

(i) Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust – Funding for New Paths

Councillor Ellis advised that he had attended a meeting at Strathardle and Kirkmichael where a path group had been set up. The group has identified all the paths which are covered by the Trust funding and will be carrying out an audit of all the paths. The Access Officer further advised that there are seventeen other path groups across Perth and Kinross which are carrying out similar tasks.

The Forum noted that in terms of third party insurance and liability, some groups organise this themselves, some join the Conservation Volunteers who provide insurance, and the Council insures Community Councils and Bloom Groups. Furthermore, the Council has been writing to path groups to offer them similar insurance on the understanding that they are carrying out similar work.

(ii) Wild Camping

Councillor Ellis advised that there has been a recent spate of wild camping at Loch Tummel, Loch Rannoch and Loch of Cluny outwith the provisions of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Actions:

- (i) N Cole to write to Eddie Smith, Chief Superintendent to ask who the appropriate officer to deal with the issues is, and to set up a meeting with that officer.
- (ii) H Baker to summarise the incident she had with “wild campers” and the police in writing and send to N Cole.

(iii) Scottish Rural Development Grant

Action:

Access Officer to send an invitation to Alan Hendry, Scottish Government to attend a meeting of the Forum to advise members about the Scottish Rural Development Grant.

(iv) Athron Hill

Action:

The possible sale of Athron Hill to be monitored as it may have a bearing on access issues around the site.

(v) Horse Riding Access

The Forum noted that: (1) the Gannochy Trust has provided funding for the Milkboys Walk at Scone which will include a horse bridge; and (2) there will be a meeting at Burrelton on 10 August 2015 with local horse riders to discuss the local path.

(vi) Perth and Kinross Active Travel Strategy

The Forum noted that the Perth and Kinross Active Travel Strategy was released on 28 April 2015 and the lack of cycling proficiency tests for children in schools is being looked at.

11. DATES AND VENUES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS 2015

20 August 2015 – Hay Room, Dewars Centre, Perth.

19 November 2015 – Hay Room Dewars Centre, Perth.