

ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Note of the Meeting of the Angus Local Access Forum held at Angus House, Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar on Monday 11 December 2017

Present: Cathy Stephenson (Chair), James Gray-Cheape, John Hamilton, Lesley Anderson, Fiona Waddell, Antony Gifford, Peter Fiabane, Gill Lawrie, Barbara Thompson, Angus Grey, Alban Houghton

In attendance: Paul Clark, Countryside Access Officer, Angus Council

Apologies: Patricia Harrow, Jill Paterson

1. Welcome and introductions

CS welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were round the table introductions for the benefit of Angus Grey, the new Forestry Commission representative. AG offered to take notes of the meeting.

2. Minute of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of 11 September were recorded as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

It was noted that there was no update regarding Pitnappie Cutting. PC repeated previous advice that the Sidlaw Path Network group should re-approach the landowner over the winter month, and that he would advise the group if required. The Forum agree with CS's suggestion that on-going matters such as this should be listed in the agenda under matters arising rather than being separate agenda items.

4. The Open, Carnoustie – exemption from access rights

PC introduced the proposed exemption from access rights, including proposals for path diversions. The proposals, which involved phased closure of different areas, were similar to those used for other golfing tournaments including the 2007 Open. The timescales were however longer due to the increased scale of the 2018 Open.

There was agreement that the Order was appropriate. The Forum recommended that path diversions should be clearly signposted and that the Council should publicise the proposed Order on social media.

5. Access Issues Update

Old Brechin Road, Forfar – PC advised that there had been a meeting regarding the closed track adjacent to Shepherd Construction, Forfar. There had been agreement that a gate would be installed to enable public access. The gate would be locked when vehicle loading/unloading was underway, as previously agreed. Advisory signage would be installed. The gate had not yet been installed.

Track beside Kinnaber Mill House – The council had received reports of a gate having been locked and wrapped with barbed wire on a track which provided access to the North Esk. By the time PC visited the location the lock and barbed wire had been removed.

Valgreen, Murroes – PC had received complaints of a ‘No Horses’ sign on a track where access rights applied. There had previously been allegations of obstructive behaviour towards riders. The owner was not willing to remove the sign. PC was following this up and seeking its removal.

Turfbeg, Forfar – PC had received an enquiry about a temporary gate which had been installed over a core path. Fences bounding the path had previously been removed, and animals were now being kept in the area. The gate could be opened relatively easily and PC did not consider it an obstruction. It was noted that the area was due to be developed for housing and the arrangement was likely to be temporary.

Pitairlie Plantation – PC had received a complaint about barbed wire fencing which had been installed over a dilapidated gateway. It was claimed that this had been installed to prevent access following an altercation between a dog walker and managers of a shoot. PC circulated photographs for information. The route in question was not well used, and there were alternative routes in the adjacent woodland, but access rights nevertheless applied. PC would be raising this with the land managers.

Thripley – PC had received allegations that people were being deterred from taking access over ground at Thripley. PC believed that the area was excluded from access rights on the grounds of reasonable privacy, but this was not accepted by the person who raised the matter. He circulated photographs for information. It was noted that there were similarities to the situation at Logie that the Forum had recently looked at. It was felt that a visit would be required before the Forum could offer advice.

6. A.O.C.B.

LA advised that Brechin Landward Community Council has received offers of help to replace the Buskhead bridge. They were trying to set up a meeting with the landowners. PC had offered to attend the meeting.

PC advised that Angus Council engineers had looked at the landslip near Edzell made recommendations for a repair, which would involve moving the path onto adjacent land. PC would be discussing this with the landowners.

BT raised questions regarding monitoring of the path on Seaton Cliffs.

JH advised that a core path at Den of Ogil was currently very muddy due to cattle.

7. Date of next meeting : Monday 12 March 2018
Angus House, Orchardbank, Forfar.