

ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Note of the Meeting of the Angus Local Access Forum held at Angus House, Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar on Monday 9 March 2020

Present: Antony Gifford (Chair), John Hamilton, Nick Hamilton, Irene McGugan, John Rhymer, Barbara Thompson, Euan Walker-Munro

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

Apologies: James Gray-Cheape, Alan Hunter, Meg Mearns, Cathy Stevenson, Barbara Thompson, Fiona Waddell

1. Welcome and introductions

AG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minute of Previous Meeting

The minutes were approved as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

Pitnappie cutting – there was no progress with path development proposals. PC had asked the landowner to install a second stile, on the new fence, as previously requested. The owner of the adjacent land had advised that they would not agree to this. PC was investigating whether the parties were jointly responsible for the fence.

Buskhead bridge – no update

Valgreen, Murroes – NH advised that riders were continuing to use the route without challenge.

4. Appointment of Chair/Vice Chair

There was agreement that AG would chair the remainder of the meeting, with NH taking over for the June meeting. Members were asked to consider putting themselves forward for appointment as Vice Chair. This would be an agenda item for the June meeting.

5. Correspondence

Letter received from Inveresk Community Council regarding Edzell riverside path – The Community Council had written to the Forum seeking advice on the on-going situation with the path, which had been affected by a landslip. PC advised that he had had discussions with local Councillor, Bob Myles, who had since had discussions with the landowner about a possible repair on the existing path line. The outcome of these discussions was not yet known. PC was seeking advice from Scotways on the right of members of the public to detour from the original line of a public right of way to avoid an obstruction, and any potential landowner obligations to facilitate this. During further discussions it was noted that the new fence referred to in the correspondence was a replacement for a previous field fence which had temporarily been replaced by site fencing during construction of the nearby housing. AG observed that any temporary diversion provided was liable to end up being used permanently in the absence of an agreed repair solution. IM suggested that a meeting of all interested parties might help the different interests come to an understanding and find a way forward. There was agreement that the LAF should suggest this to the Community Council and help facilitate a meeting.

6. Access issues update

Former Kinpurnie Estate – PC had written to a number of landowners seeking a number of alterations, including re-instatement and modification to gates. He circulated a map of the locations and requested changes.

Inverkeillor Core Path – Agreement from the landowner to install the gate had not been forthcoming to date. PC would be meeting the landowner to discuss this further.

South Lodge, Fotheringham Estate – no progress.

Core Path 004, Glen Esk – no update

Brighty Wood – Discussions over road safety concerns had not yet taken place. PC intended to set up a meeting with the landowner and a representative of the Council's Roads service.

White Hill, Glen Clova – NH had visited the area and taken photographs of the locked gate and stile, which were circulated. There was agreement that the basic vertical stiles were not adequate, and that they were potentially unsafe. PC had spoken to the landowner, who had acknowledged that the current stiles were not suitable. They had advised that the gate was locked due to problems with it being left open. PC understood that the landowner would be installing better quality stiles at more frequent intervals. The location of which would be the subject of further discussion. The preference was for at least one pedestrian gate in addition to stiles. Most of the fence was within Cairngorms National Park, and a matter for discussion between the landowner and Cairngorms National Park Authority. PC had however requested a crossing at the eastern end of the fence, which came within Angus Council's remit.

Benscravie – JH had visited the location of two locked gates on Benscravie, between Glen Moy and Glen Quiech, and had subsequently discussed the matter with the landowner. The landowner had experienced issues with damage to fences and gates in the area, which was an enclosure for farmed deer. JH had suggested that provision of suitable stiles, to enable people to exercise access rights over the hill, would reduce the likelihood of damage occurring. He understood that the landowner would be providing stiles at two key locations. PC advised that he had been consulted on a proposal for a substantial area of new forestry planting near to this location. He had requested retention of a number of accessible routes through the plantation.

Core Path 250, Airlie – no progress.

7. A.O.C.B.

LAF/NAF joint meeting – NH, IM and MM would be attending the meeting on 20th March.

Membership – CS had advised that she was now stepping down from the Forum. JGC and AG were due to step down after the September meeting. BT and FW had also expressed a desire to step down if replacements could be found. There was agreement that a recruitment drive would be required later in the year.

7. Date of next meeting : Monday 8th June 2020.