

**Minutes of the meeting of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Local Access Forum
held on 17th January 2017, 6.30pm at NPA HQ, Balloch.
LAF 01/2017**

Present

Don Milton (C)
Yvonne Boles
Paul Prescott

Bob Ellis (VC)
Will Huckerby

Sue Riches
Grant Dolier

In attendance

Babs Robertson
Guy Keating

Kenny Auld

Bridget Jones

Apologies

Chris Smith

Iain Wilkinson

Welcome and apologies

DM notified members of Kevin Fitzgerald's resignation from the Forum. **DM** to circulate reasons given and see if we can address and improve on current practice.

Invite to be circulated to other potential candidates from within land management NGO sector.

A letter of thanks will be sent to **KF** for his support and input over the years.

ACTION –BJ to write letter and contact land management NGO's.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held in October were approved.

Access Team Update

See update paper provided.

Key points discussed were:

- Expansion of mobility scheme with advancements in types of scooters available and encouraging expanding into other mobility options, such as wheelie boats.
- Placemaking project for Balloch will see WDC submit a community links bid to Sustrans in February and
- Callander placemaking project has appointed Amey, via Stirling Council, and working towards developing proposals to improve active travel links.
- **GK** has made contact with Auchreoch and Ballimore and is hopeful for a resolution to respective access issues.
- Mountains and the People- on track with good progress being made on the upland pathworks programme. Training on low level path surfacing taking place and Woodland Trust also involved with Ben Ledi. Tom Wallace will present at next meeting.
- St Fillans to Lochearnhead link –now working with local equine groups on a retrospective installation of a suitable surface alongside the path for horses.

Callander Landscape Partnership

- Currently have £1.5m funding which they hope to gain match funding up to £2m (of which £0.5m will be access project related). The bid will be resubmitted later in 2017 and the funds received in January 2018.
- Progress is being made on exploring options for a bridge over the Falls of Leny with a design competition being held, this will also raise profile of the project. This will involve Creative Scotland with the main design elements to be progressed during 2018 with possible construction c2019.

WH raised the point that the bridge will be sited close to an exit point for canoeists. This will be taken on board and addressed as part of the project development.

Core Paths Plan Review

The initial review was planned for 2015, but delayed to wait for the review of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and subsequent changes to process; and also for new guidance from Scottish Government. The review process will now entail two stages:

1. Reviewing the current plans provision involving key stakeholders.
2. If changes are required progressing to a formal review and 12 week public consultation on the revised Plan. The timing for the review will be after the National Park Partnership Plan consultation, and will be done at the same time as refreshing the Outdoor Recreation Plan and potentially the Tourism Strategy.

WH asked if a full review is expected. No radical changes are expected but the initial review process will inform this more fully.

BE enquired as to whether this could be tagged onto a future LAF meeting or whether it could be an additional meeting and what costs may be involved. **BJ** confirmed the costs will be much less significant than for the original plans development and that we would use on-line consultation, and the usual digital media channels with a reduced requirement for full print copies.

Drumlean

The sheriff appeal court, consisting of three sheriffs, have made an initial judgement and agreed with the NPA on 2 counts:

- The timing issue (the gate being in place pre 2003) was not relevant
- Original decisions when deciding the main purpose had seen evidence being time restricted and inadmissible. This has been overturned and agreed it should have been taken into account.

The second hearing to consider the main purpose and associated evidence went well and we expect a full judgement in February/March.

National Park Partnership Plan

The consultation for the next Park Partnership Plan has been rescheduled, with the expectation this will take place at the end of April. Work is currently underway on drafting chapters.

NP Paths promotion

Promotion of paths is seeing the development of digital information for use on line including 3D mapping, story maps, use of drone footage and fly through apps alongside Google street view mapping. This is alongside more traditional print form such as tear off path maps, route cards and leaflets). FCS is working with SNH on promotion, with a focus on providing accurate factual information about paths, allowing potential users to make fully informed decisions and choices.

Your Park

BJ gave a presentation on Your Park which showed:

- Camping provision is being developed via the permit areas and new site at Loch Chon is progressing well.
- Improvements are being made to permit area sites at Inveruglas, 3 Lochs Forest Drive and Loch Earn south;
- The online booking system and associated procedures are being completed ready for operation on 1 March..
- The permit scheme will be adjusted over the season as required concluding with an end of season review.
- Costs for permits (£3 per tent/motorhome) and campsite pitches (£7 per adult).
- Signage plans are in place for the camping management zone thresholds and also the permit areas.
- Engagement and education, involving promotion of how and where to camp and continued engagement with young people, groups and a focus on fishing.
- Monitoring—the programme of activity includes fixed point photography, ranger patrol data, visitor and resident surveys and water sampling.
- Reporting to Minsters includes an annual report and a review after 3 years of implementation.

British Horse Society Scotland Conference

This was well attended with a good spread of landowners, local authorities, NPAs and users. It was chaired by Mark Stephen of BBCs Out of Doors.

A variety of issues, both positive and negative were discussed, with a large amount of discussion on obstructions such as locked gates and the significant impact these have on horse-riders. Another highlighted issue was inconsistencies in Access Officer resource and ability to tackle issues. Promotion of opportunities and rider safety are priorities, addressing concerns such as safe parking for horse boxes and a better understanding and awareness of legalities.

NAF/LAF

The next joint meeting will be held on the 17th March. Members to notify **BR** if they would like to represent LLTAF.

AOCB

SR raised concerns about what could be considered 'access charges' due to new car parking charges being implemented in places such as Inveruglas. The Park Authority has charges in place at a limited number of sites but is considering more as pressure on revenue budgets requires income generation options to be progressed in order to retain levels of service. It was highlighted that most public car parks in the National Park are not operated by the Park Authority but by local authorities, Forestry Commission and others such as Sir Walter Scott Trust, with charges in some having been in place for many years. **BJ** offered to provide more information on the Park Authority's position at the next meeting, along with input from **FCS** on their policy.

ACTION –BJ and WH to provide NPA and FCS positions for next meeting.

DM advised members of Out of Doors ongoing series on a comparison of United States NPs and NPs in Scotland, with interviews, reviews and comments on camping.

The programme is available to view on BBC Iplayer.

DONM

BR to issue Doodle Poll to establish the next date of meeting.