



Draft Minutes of Meeting held at 6.30pm on Monday 17 November 2025, John Muir Suite, Balloch

Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Access Forum

Present

Don Milton (DM) (Convenor)
Grant Dolier (GD)
Andrew Clark (AC)
Rachel Taylor (RT)
Emma Sandhu (ES)
Chris Smith (CS) (Vice-Convenor)

In Attendance

Sue Hilder (SH)
Dave Robinson (DR)
Guy Keating (GK)
Mick Foran (MF)
Ayeasha Temple (AT) (Clerk)

Apologies

David Fettes (DF)
Falcon Frost (FF)
Calum Langdale (CL)
Sue Riches (SR)
(No apologies were received from Sheena Foster (SF))

Chris Smith (CS) Joined the meeting during Agenda Item 6

Items and Actions

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Convenor (DM) welcomed everyone to the online meeting of the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Access Forum.

DM welcomed back GK and introduced the new forum members and asked them to give a brief introduction of their backgrounds.

2. Introductions and Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest from Forum Members.

3. Minutes of previous full meeting held on 11 September 2025 and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2025 were discussed and no amendments required.

An update was provided on each of the matters arising as follows:

- 9/25 AP/1 Article appeared in the NFU Scotland Newsletter as part of SF regional update – Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/2 Forum members contact list updated to reflect departure of PP and KS – Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/3 All members continue to give thought to any knowledge gaps within the Forum and to advise DM in order to inform future recruitment. This is now to be taken as an ongoing part of the role of Forum members. Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/4 CS to approach Parklife to offer an article about the Forum by the end of October. Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/5 DF mentioned having something in the local community newspapers and agreed to get a list of contacts by the end of October. Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/6 MF agreed to provide RT with a map by end of September. Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/7 AC to liaise with DR on Kennel Club comments on Conic Hill signage. Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/8 Members were invited to provide comments on level of detail required in minutes. Action complete.
- 9/25 AP/9 DM to raise the issue of a Cross-Party Working Group on Access at the NAF-LAF meeting on 22 October. Action complete.
- AP 9/25-10 RT to share parliamentary question with the Forum and will raise the subject at the next Scotways Legal and Access Sub-Committee meeting. Action complete.
- AP 9/25-11 SH/MF to follow up with DF about responsibilities for Great Trossachs Path. Action complete.
- AP 9/25-12 DS to issue Doodle poll for 2026 meeting dates. Action complete.
- AP 9/25-13 Live streaming/recording of future LTLAF meetings, no demand has been identified – Action complete

Additionally, DM asked for an update on recruitment for the replacement Digital Communications Manager. SH advised that Charlotte's replacement will be starting on 9th October. *Post-meeting note* - role has been filled by Lesley Clark. Action complete.

4. Profile and Independence Update

DM advised that a few articles have already been accepted for publication. He also noted that between them DM and RT had attended all five Visitor Management Action Groups meetings (albeit one had no attendees so was cancelled at the start).

DM thanked RT for writing an aide-memoir about the LLTAF that will be included with the minutes of all the VMAG meetings.

5. Access Team Update + Q&A

SH presented the Access Team update paper and gave an update on team news, highlighting

- a recent visit to the Lake District National Park to attend a gathering of access staff from all the UK National Parks, to share good practice and matters of mutual interest. The 2-day event featured several site visits which allowed attendees to discuss different techniques and methodologies on the ground.
- Attendance at the SOAN Conference in November, celebrating 20 years of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. A range of speakers from within and outwith Scotland attended. SH noted that Anna Grunden from the Swedish Environment Agency talking about Allemansrätten (the Swedish right of public access). SH advised It was interesting to hear that despite the right being so well embedded in Swedish culture, they still experience similar issues with anti-social or inappropriate behaviour etc.
- SH shared a slide used at the conference which illustrated the contextual trends in professional capability, public interest, political interest, available resources and access issues.

Gouk Hill / Three Lochs Way

GK welcomed the progress made by MF on Gouk Hill including that the core path was re-opened around April after a long closure due to trees blocking the path. MF has been working with the forest manager to specify the rebuild of the path. Scottish Woodlands have also informed that they are intending to commence harvesting in the area, but that post-harvesting clean up should be completed by mid-January 2026.

Glen Fruin, Luss Estates

- DM asked for an update on Luss Estates. MF advised there has been no progress in the last 3 months despite several emails and phone calls to the Estate, and he will now take this up with the CEO.

Auchreoch Estate

- SH advised new signs have been installed at Auchreoch Estate.

Strone High Road core path

- GK gave an update on Strone High Road core path. He reported a dangerous building notice has been served on Dunselma Castle stables (listed building) due to its current condition, and the owner has fenced off the building including Strone High Road (a core path), due to health and safety issues. This action therefore prevents cars and pedestrians/cyclists from using the unadopted road/core path and has caused local consternation, community council involvement and questions from the local MSP. A short local path diversion exists via woodland and the closed Strone Primary School – this has been temporarily waymarked by the NPA and is being used by residents to bypass the closure. A&B Council and NPA Planning colleagues are working with the landowner to resolve the H&S issues associated with the stables building.

Borland Hill core path, Gartmore

- DR provided an update on Borland Hill core path near Gartmore. Gates have still to be put in and obstructions removed despite continued attempts to try and arrange a meeting with the landowner (at his request) since late August. No response has been forthcoming and no meeting has taken place, as of yet. A deadline has been set for the end of the month, after which the landowner will simply be notified of the date when NPA staff will carry out the work to re-open the core path.

West Highland Way Improvements: Burn of Mar to Conic Hill East

- DR advised there had been two tender submissions for this contract, and it has been awarded to Hamiltons Environmental Ltd. Due to tight timescales, work will be split the contract over this year and 2026-27. The intention is to complete all the side ditching work and reinstatement of the washed-out section this financial year (approx. cost £90,000) and the replacement of pitching and timber steps on the steep slope out of the Burn of Mar in the first quarter of 2026-27 (approx. cost of £40,000). Path restoration work will not start until after

15-16 January 2026 when the stone and aggregate will be flown onto site.

Aber Bridge

- DM advised Aber Bridge had been discussed at VMAG, with positive statements given on how things are going.
- SH advised that Friends of Loch Lomond (FoLL) has applied to the NPA for funding both to carry out the bridge repairs and also for some additional path work. The NPA has agreed to provide a contribution for the bridge work, but not the pathwork as it is considered unnecessary. FoLL has contracted the landowner himself to carry out the bridge work on the condition that he also takes on maintenance in perpetuity. The work is subject to planning consent.

Rowardennan to Rowchoish (WHW Low Path)

- MF advised the planning application has been submitted, hoping to go to tender in the next week with returns in the early new year. A lot of background work to be carried out due to this being a conservation area.

The Forum had a discussion re reported problems caused by speeding cyclists in the Loch Katrine north shore road; DM to provide the complainant with the access team email address for further discussion.

Action 11/25 AP1 DR to provide access team email address to complainant. Target 24 Nov 25

6. Assessment of Diversion, Glen Buckie

- DR shared a map of the area and provided the following update. He advised that this is a long-standing case previously reported to the forum throughout 2024 noting that initially letters of intent to serve notice had been sent to the landowner requiring the removal of padlocks on two gates on an access track through his land which had previously be used by walkers and cyclists. Side gates were also offered as an alternative.
- The landowner refused to open the gates, stating concerns over livestock management and public safety. A diversion route was agreed to allow access to the upper reaches of Gleann Dubh and the Allt Fathan Glinne. The diversion would be for a trial period of 12 months.
- The diversion signs were installed in October 2024, and 31 October 2025 was set as the end date of the trial period. The landowner was informed of this and that a review of the trial period would then take place, and that this review would consider any complaints received

during that time (there have been four). DR has since informed the landowner of the end of this trial period and that we will begin a review process.

- DR asked for the involvement of the LAF in this process, to plan and agree the scope and timeframe of the review, provide an independent assessment of the diversion route and to recommend the most appropriate way forward. It is proposed to convene a small working group of 4-5 Forum members to assist with this, ideally with land management representation on the group.
- DM confirmed he is happy to volunteer for the working group along with SR, GD, DF, RT, CS and AC. SF or FF were suggested as land management reps – to be confirmed.
- SH reminded the forum they can seek specialist help in this situation, e.g. SLE could be approached.
- DR confirmed this would include a site visit and the timescale would be a few months from now.

Action 11/25 AP2 DM to contact Simon Ovenden (SLE) to confirm if the farmer is an SLE member, also to ask if they would be interested in joining the working group to provide advice. Target 24 Nov 25

Action 11/25 AP3 DM to contact SF to confirm if she is able to join the sub-group. Target 24 Nov 25

Action 11/25 AP4 DM to contact FF on deer management input. Target 24 Nov 25

Action 11/25 AP5 DM to discuss with DF his position in relation to his Board and LLTAF membership (with reference to joining the sub-group) Target 24 Nov 25

Action 11/25 AP 6 DR to follow up with DM on the progress of the interaction with the landowner.

- CS joined the meeting during this discussion

7. Training needs and site visit planning

DM advised there has been a poor response for this, and nothing has been proposed since the last meeting. DM reminded members to advise him of any new training suggestions, including site visits, as and when required.

8. Any Other Business

The following business was discussed:

- CL asked for it to be noted there has been no National Park Mobility Partnership Stakeholder Insights Group meeting since the last LAF meeting.

9. Date of Next Meeting

- The Forum discussed the next meeting dates and potential 'off-site' venues with a view to potential interest from members of the public.

Action 11/25 AP 7 AT to send round 4 doodle polls within the following week requesting a response from members within 2 weeks. Dates to be set by 5 Dec 25.

Action 11/25 AP 8 AT to upload 2026 dates to the NPA website. Target 19 Dec 25.

ACTIONS TABLE

Action number	Description	By whom	By when
<i>Minutes of Previous Full meeting held on 11 September 2025 and Matters Arising</i>			
	All actions complete.		
<i>Access Team Update + Q&A</i>			
AP 11/25-1	DR to provide access team email address to complainant.	DR	24/11/25
<i>Assessment of Diversion, Glen Buckie</i>			
AP 11/25-2	DM to contact Simon Ovenden (SLE) to confirm if the farmer is an SLE member, also to ask if they would be interested in joining the working group to provide advice.	DM	24/11/25

AP 11/25-3	DM to contact SF to confirm if she is able to join the sub-group.	DM	24/11/25
AP 11/25-4	DM to contact FF on deer management input.	DM	24/11/25
AP 11/25-5	DM to discuss with DF his position in relation to his Board and LLTAF membership (with reference to joining the sub-group)	DM	24/11/25
AP 11/25-6	DR to follow up with DM on the progress of the interaction with the landowner.	DR	February '26.
<i>Date of Next Meeting</i>			
AP 11/25-7	AT to send round 4 doodle polls within the following week requesting a response from members within 2 weeks. Dates to be set by 5 Dec 25.	AT	05/12/25
AP 11/25-8	AT to upload 2026 dates to the NPA website.	AT	19/12/25