



Minutes of Meeting Held at 18:30pm on 25 November 2024 in HQ and Virtual

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs Access Forum

25/11/2024

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Present

Don Milton (DM) Convenor
Chris Smith (CS) Vice-Convenor
Sue Riches (SR)
Paul Prescott (PP)
Andrew Clark (AC)
Grant Dolier (GD)
Falcon Frost (FF)
Rachel Taylor (RT)
Calum Langdale (CL)
Sheena Foster (SF)?
In Attendance – National Park Authority staff
Sue Hilder (SH)
Dave Robinson (DR)
Apologies
Kira Samide (KS)
Emma Sandhu (ES)
David Fettes (DF)
Ayeasha Temple (AT)
Guy Keating (GK)

Items and Actions

Item 1: Welcome and apologies

DM welcomed all and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Apologies received from David Fettes and Guy Keating.

Item 2: Introductions and any Declarations

Round table introductions with a brief description of each person's background for the benefit of members who had not met all the other members.

There were no declarations of interest relating to the meeting agenda.

Item 3: Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising/actions

Minutes approved subject to minor updates.

Actions:

Members to advise SH/AT on their preferred time for site visits, evening or afternoon. **ACTION AP/1** No further feedback has been received but future feedback welcome as routine business. **Action closed**

Matt Buckland offered to email round a blanked-out work plan to members. No Action number in draft minutes so now taken as **ACTION AP/2** Sent to Convenor on 20/8/24. **Action Ongoing**

DM/SH – to prepare a few paragraphs and send to SF – **ACTION AP/2**(now AP/3) **Action Ongoing**

DM requested that future action numbering have a meeting identifier, meeting a NPA meeting protocol for meeting minutes if appropriate, so that actions could be more easily tracked, especially for actions which were ongoing and not closed at the subsequent meeting.

Item 4: Quick Quiz/Access Discussion

DM invited members to identify where access rights apply. There was a discussion of what is stated in the Act, SOAC and what information should be taken into consideration. Members were asked if they wished a short discussion on access topics at future meetings. It was concluded that this could be beneficial.

Item 5: Access team update

SH and DR introduced this item referring to the previously circulated update paper.

Item 6: Gartmore core path obstructions - procedure and LLTAF input

SH described the history of this issue, where it might lead and what input the LLTAF might have for each of the options as matters progressed. At this stage, no LLTAF input was required and members would be updated as the issue developed.

Item 7: Gravelfoyle inter-user conflict

SH described for members an incident that took place in the Trossachs where a horse rider was thrown when her horse was spooked by cyclists coming round a blind bend at speed and passing beside her horse. The rider was hospitalised for several days with spinal and other injuries. The rider had complained to the NPA and FLS, who sit on the steering group for the Gravelfoyle project, but was unsatisfied by the response and had lodged a stage 2 formal complaint which was being addressed.

Members discussed the problems associated with multiuse tracks and paths, the general increase of access users and the specific increase of “gravel riding” among cyclists. The Aberfoyle area was seen as a specific focus of gravel riding because of the promotion of “Gravelfoyle” by Bike Trossachs. A Gravelfoyle website exists and, echoing the complainant, DM raised a concern that safety and recognition of other access users was not prominent or well covered and that some parts could be considered as promoting competitive use of the tracks. SH reported that the website had been reviewed and had been updated to better indicate the need to be considerate of other users and have safety as a key point. Additionally, onsite signage would be reviewed with a focus on sharing routes safely.

It was confirmed that there was no awareness of similar, gravel-related incidents having been reported in Scotland, and that the Aberfoyle area is one of the main locations for this type of cycle use. Mountain-biking had similar risks and was wider spread over Scotland. The LLTAF agreed that as this appeared to be the only serious incident of this type identified in Scotland that it did not need to be reported to the NAF as an issue of National concern and should continue to be addressed locally.

Item 8: Training needs and site visit planning

DM reported that the BHS access training notified at the last meeting had taken place with members from several LAFs and a number of Access Officers in attendance. The training was well received.

The training package being developed by SOAN, and also mentioned at the last meeting, is progressing and will be available in 2025 although no exact date is available.

It was agreed that the timing and location of a future site visit would be determined by the possible requirements of the NPA for a “formal” site visit and the arrival of better weather with extended evening daylight.

A suggested topic for future training was about how access rights are suspended through the Section 11 Order process. **Action (AP1/May24)**

Members were again requested to identify any other training needs felt necessary to SH in addition to what had been agreed at Agenda Item 4.

Item 9: Any Other Business

While a programme of LLTAF meetings had been discussed previously, there were no confirmed meeting dates. SH agreed to take an Action to review the NPA programme for availability of access staff and meeting room and propose potential dates against a nominal 4 meetings per year.

SH touched on an issue whereby an estate had erected a large sign restricting access for stalking purposes. FF has contact with the landowner through the Deer Management Group, so SH to discuss with him offline. **Action (AP2/May24)**

SH to identify potential meeting dates for 2025. **Action (AP3/May24)**

Signed

Dom Milton, Chair

Actions

AP1/May24 SH to plan training on S.11 Order process

AP2/May24 SH to contact FF (completed).

AP3/May24 SH to identify potential meeting dates for 2025.