

**Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum**

**MINUTES OF THE FORTIETH MEETING  
Prince Albert Hall, Ballater**

**Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

**Summary of Action points arising from meeting**

**API – Members to forward contact information for potential new recruits to the LOAF.**

**AP2 - LOAF members to consider whether any further discussion over casework and in response to issue raised by DL is necessary.**

**AP3 – Active Cairngorms activity timeline to be forwarded to LOAF members.**

**AP4 – Views sought from LOAF on the key access issues, opportunities, challenges and priorities to consider in preparation of Active Cairngorms. (to be communicated directly to David Clyne).**

**Forum members in attendance:**

Nick Cole	David Lyle
Dave Craig	Eric Baird
Peter Holden	Malcolm MacIntyre
Paul Webster	Hebe Carus
Peter Mackay	Vicky Hilton

**Others in attendance:**

Justin Prigmore, CNPA	David Clyne, CNPA
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**Item 2 - Apologies**

Ian Hill	Ruaridh Ormiston
Nigel Williams	Gordon Riddler
Richard Gledson	Jeremy Usher Smith

**Item 3 - Minutes of the last meeting – approval and matters arising not otherwise appearing on the agenda.**

The minutes were agreed with no amendments.

**Action points arising from the last meeting**

- API-** Discharged.
- AP2-** Discharged.
- AP3-** Action subject of 40th meeting.
- AP4-** Action subject of 40th meeting.

#### **Item 4 Membership Update:**

The Convener updated members of those retiring from the LOAF due to reaching the end of a maximum term. Thanks were offered from Convener and CNPA staff. New members were also introduced along with thanks to those members who have agreed to serve a further term.

#### **API – Members to forward contact information for potential new recruits to the LOAF.**

#### **Item 5 2014 Team budget and priorities:**

1. David Clyne updated the LOAF of the 2014-15 access team budget which is significantly lower than previous years. The development priorities for 2014-15 were noted as:
  - a. Deliver a new outdoor access strategy for the Cairngorms National Park: *Active Cairngorms*.
  - b. Speyside Way (SSW) extension:
    - Construct route from Aviemore to Speybank (in partnership with COAT).
    - Prepare a project delivery plan for extending the route to Newtonmore.
  - c. Deliver an improvement plan for existing Speyside Way.
  - d. The CNPA is responsible for and will continue to assert, protect and promote outdoor access (as per legislative requirements).
2. DC asked whether things are now fully in place to allow construction of the SSW extension to go ahead. This was confirmed by DCL. DC also asked if the SSW is a core path in its entirety in the NP and stated he felt it should, where the opportunity arises, follow disused railway, going on to mention a number of locations where he thought this was appropriate. These locations were noted.
3. DC stated that he considered the existing SSW to be in relatively poor condition and requiring more focussed maintenance effort. He explained he felt the SSW should be similar to the West Highland Way in ambition and opportunity. This was noted by DCL.
4. DCL stated that the CNPA would also, in line with statutory duties, continue to assert, protect and promote outdoor access.
5. Regarding 4 (above) DL stated he considered there to have been a degree of failure by CNPA (and access authorities generally) to tackle landowners creating impediments to access rights. It was pointed out by DCL and DS that a primary intention of CNPA is always to seek amicable agreement over access matters and where this had not been possible formal measures have been considered and where necessary employed - two cases being cited (MacDonald Hotels and Speyside Way extension).

6. Further discussion ensued with an agreement amongst members, guided by the Convenor, that the assertion by DL would require an evidential basis to allow suitable discussion to continue. The matter was left open.

**AP1 – LOAF members to consider whether any further discussion over casework in response to issue raised by DL is necessary.**

### **Item 6 Active Cairngorms - timescales and process**

7. David Clyne informed the LOAF of proposals for an updated outdoor access strategy 'Active Cairngorms' to follow on from the existing (now out of date) 'Enjoying the Cairngorms' document. DCL explained that Active Cairngorms would follow a review of the existing strategy and would incorporate existing objectives which remain relevant.
8. PM asked whether the new strategy would be constrained by further budgetary limitations. DCL confirmed that this was not the case and the strategy would be aspirational seeking to identify objectives based on key priorities (rather than resourcing) in the first instance.
9. DL confirmed he had contacted DCL independently over a matter relating to Active Cairngorms. This was noted.
10. HC said she welcomed the new strategy and stated that it should contain reference to bird species priorities where conflict is a problem such as: breeding waders, ground nesting species and ospreys. DCL confirmed that this would be the case.
11. EB asked about the timescales for preparation of Active Cairngorms, DCL confirmed that an activity timeline would be communicated to LOAF members.
12. A member of the LOAF was invited to join monthly project management meetings (held at CNPA Grantown on Spey office on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 1400-1600). Vicky Hilton agreed to attend. Peter Mackay also expressed an interest however he later said he may not be to make all meetings.

**AP2 Active Cairngorms activity timeline to be forwarded to LOAF members.**

**AP3 Views sought from LOAF on the key access issues, opportunities, challenges and priorities to consider in preparation of Active Cairngorms. (to be communicated directly)**

### **Item 7 Capercaillie Framework update – presentation**

13. Justin Prigmore updated the LOAF on preparation of the Capercaillie Framework. JP outlined the key principles now developing within the framework and illustrated these with maps and

text in a Powerpoint presentation. A series of draft outline recommendations were presented and discussed.

14. Group discussion that took place following JP's presentation is summarised under headings relevant to the presentation in Appendix I attached to these minutes.

### **Item 8 Outdoor Access Casework**

15. DS updated members of casework arising since the last meeting, he explained that casework was now being dealt with as per agreed protocols and referred to the casework spreadsheet. He also explained that a reduction in team capacity to undertake casework will remain until late 2014 when Adam Streeter-Smith will revert fully to the access team.
16. DS described each of the new cases arising and members noted each and discussion ensued as follows:
- a. Case 15 – there was agreement that the approach taken by the landowner was overly restrictive however it was noted that the nature of the estate meant it could be difficult to offer alternative routes.
  - b. Case 18 – DC (reporter of issue) confirmed that he had made direct enquiries and was satisfied that the matter would not impact access to the Spey for paddlers.
17. HC asked how closed cases were cross referenced to take account of scenarios where previously resolved complaints re-occurred. DS explained that casework protocols are followed and where relevant, previously logged complaints would be reviewed by an Access Officer at the time of investigation.
18. EB asked how a 'case' is deemed to be within the scope of the CNPA's duties. DS explained that this is being tightened up in order to ensure that only cases relating directly to LR(S)A duties were handled. He said this is a function of an initial case assessment by the relevant Access Officer.

### **Item 9 Update & Forward Look**

19. DS introduced this item, the following matters were highlighted:
- a. Sustrans funding of £115,000 for the Speyside Way extension.
  - b. A new path leaflet has been produced for local paths in Grantown on Spey.
  - c. Aviemore Park Project is now complete (subject of £85,000 grant from CNPA)
  - d. Options appraisal for Deeside Way extension has been completed and is under discussion with stakeholders.
20. PH stated that community action planning was underway at Braemar and that this process should tie in with discussions relating to the Deeside Way extension proposals. This was noted.

21. PM asked for clarification over CNPA role in determining cycle path options in respect of the A9 dualling proposal. DCL responded explaining that off-line options are limited by land take therefore it had been appropriate to pursue provision within the road corridor.

**Item 10 AOCB**

22. EB asked members to ensure they respond punctually to requests for confirmation of attendance at LOAF meetings. This will help reduce food wastage and associated costs.

23. DS reminded members of the forthcoming Rock and Road bike festival event at Tomintoul.

**Item 11 - Date of next meeting**

To be held Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at Tomintoul