
CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

- Title:** Update on casework volumes and types over 2019-2022 calendar years.
- Prepared by:** Douglas Stewart, Outdoor Access Officer.
- Purpose:**
1. To update members on casework handling of all types including monthly breakdowns and summary of key types by volume.
 2. To consider findings and any relevant issues arising.

Background

1. The National Park Authority has a number of duties and responsibilities requiring provision of advice to internal colleagues and key partners alongside responding to both general enquiries from the public and also complaints over obstructions to and/or interference with the exercise of statutory access rights.
2. In order to both monitor and process these tasks a casework record is maintained. This 'log' records numbers and types of casework including dates, handling times and a record of contacts made during processing.

Casework Handling

3. Management of casework workload is an ongoing consideration with the present system allocating casework on the basis of a 50:50 split between the two Outdoor Access Officers in post. Depending on the complexity or nature of any given case collaboration and discussion often takes place towards ensuring balanced decision making. Processing, recording and allocation is supported by an admin support officer.

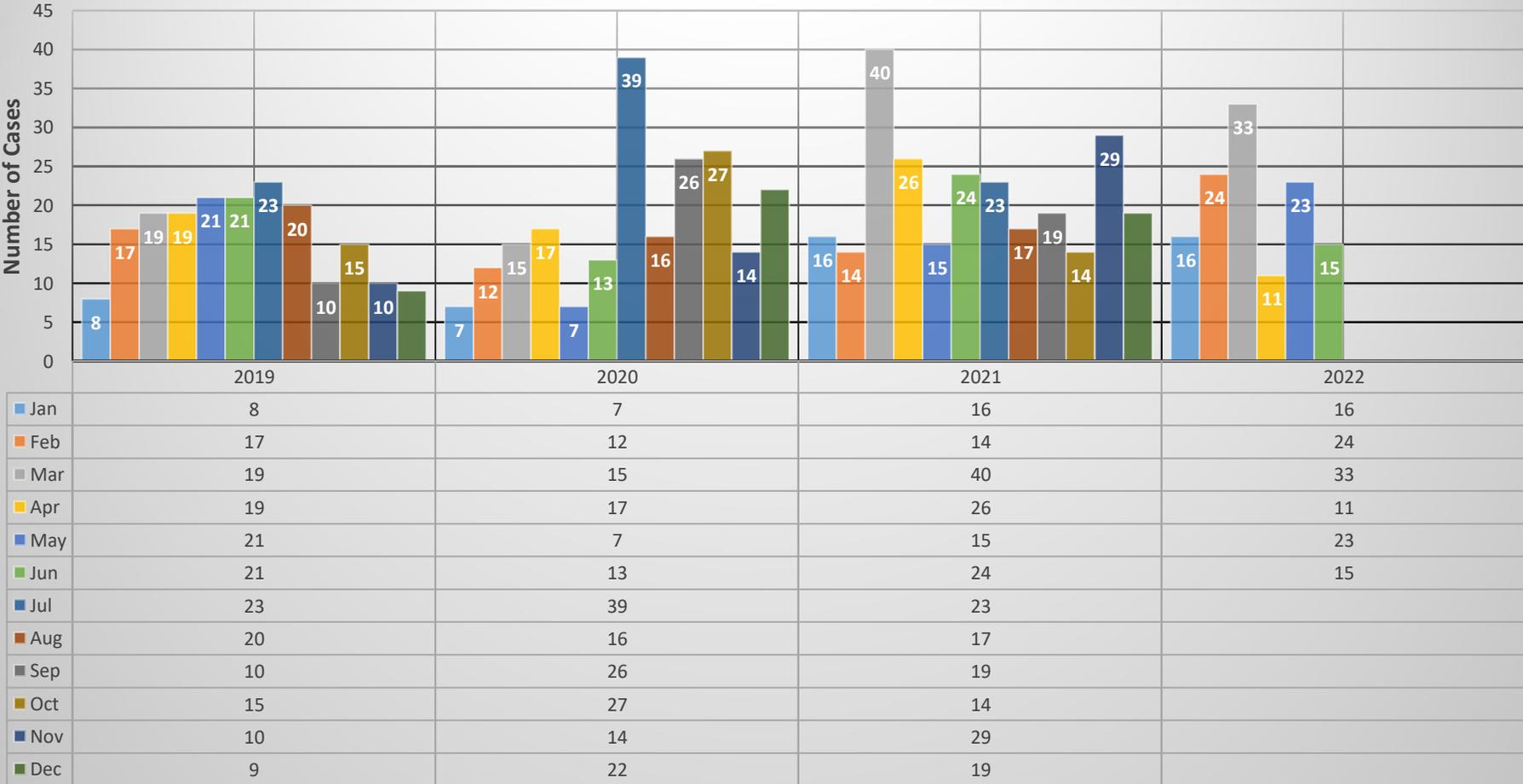
Analysis of Annual Records

4. The current record shows a relative decrease in casework for the 6 month review period (Q1 & Q2) over 2021 figures however maintains an overall upward trend over the same period since 2019. The increase since 2019 amounts to 16%.
5. Records for the **6 month review period** compare as follows noting breakdown of figures for 2022 Q1 & Q2 vs 2019 baseline :

- 2022 – **122** cases = 16% over Q1 & Q2
 - 2021 – **259** cases = 35% over baseline
 - 2020 – **215** cases = 12% over baseline
 - 2019 – **192** cases = baseline (Q1 & Q2 = 105 cases)
6. It is probable that first half of 2022 maintains a higher number (compare pre-pandemic) of UK residents holidaying at home (i.e. within the UK) due to pandemic related issues continuing to affect international travel with these higher numbers seen feeding into the levels of external casework experienced. Whether this will continue is unclear as there are a multitude of relevant factors however cost of living increases may further bolster domestic holidays vs foreign. There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest the number of campervans and mobile homes being used has seen a sustained increase since the pre-pandemic period and this may persist.
7. Both Planning and Forestry consultations are showing a gradual uptick in numbers with a distinct spike in Planning casework evident during March.
8. Casework handling capacity and procedures have proven resilient to fluctuations in numbers and types of issues overall although the sustained upward trend requires monitoring in respect of staff capacity. Casework is reactive and tends to limit capacity elsewhere when an increase in caseload is evident.
9. Notable cases over the period are as follows:
- **Case 802, Restriction of access to land at Dellmore, Kingussie**
Transport Scotland fenced off a large area of land for development as wildlife habitat as mitigation for the A9 dualling without recognising the need to maintain public access.
 - **Case 895, Non-compliant signage at Carrbridge**
Local resident has challenged the compliance of the Capercaillie signage and dogs signage around Carrbridge.
 - **Case 815, Dalwhinnie rail crossing closure**
There has been little movement on this issue over the past 6 months so Xander McDade the CNPA Board Convener has written to the Chairman of Network Rail to press for further action on the issues.

D. Stewart
08/08/22

Casework Totals by Month/Year: all Categories

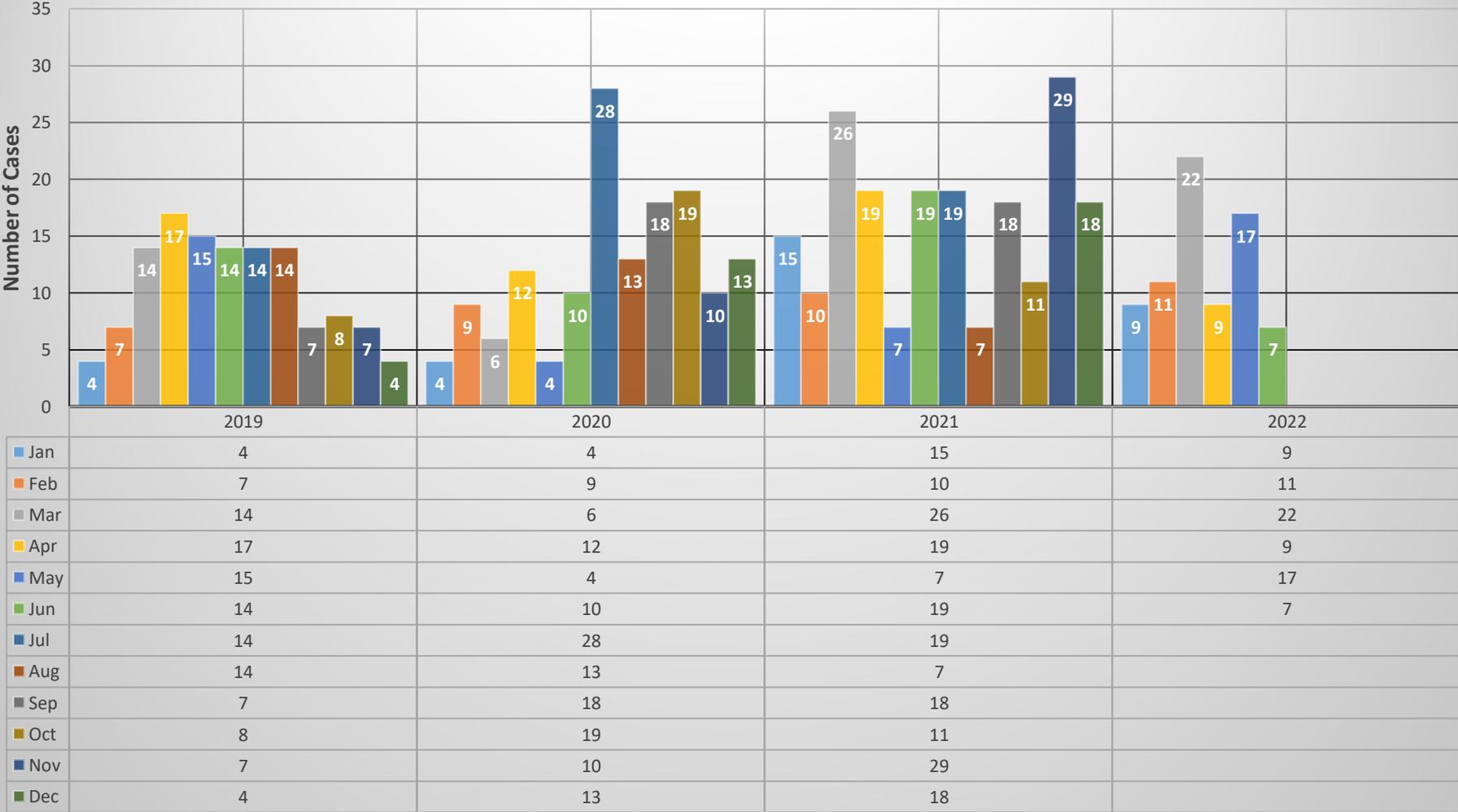


Month	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jan	8	7	16	16
Feb	17	12	14	24
Mar	19	15	40	33
Apr	19	17	26	11
May	21	7	15	23
Jun	21	13	24	15
Jul	23	39	23	
Aug	20	16	17	
Sep	10	26	19	
Oct	15	27	14	
Nov	10	14	29	
Dec	9	22	19	

Month & Year

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

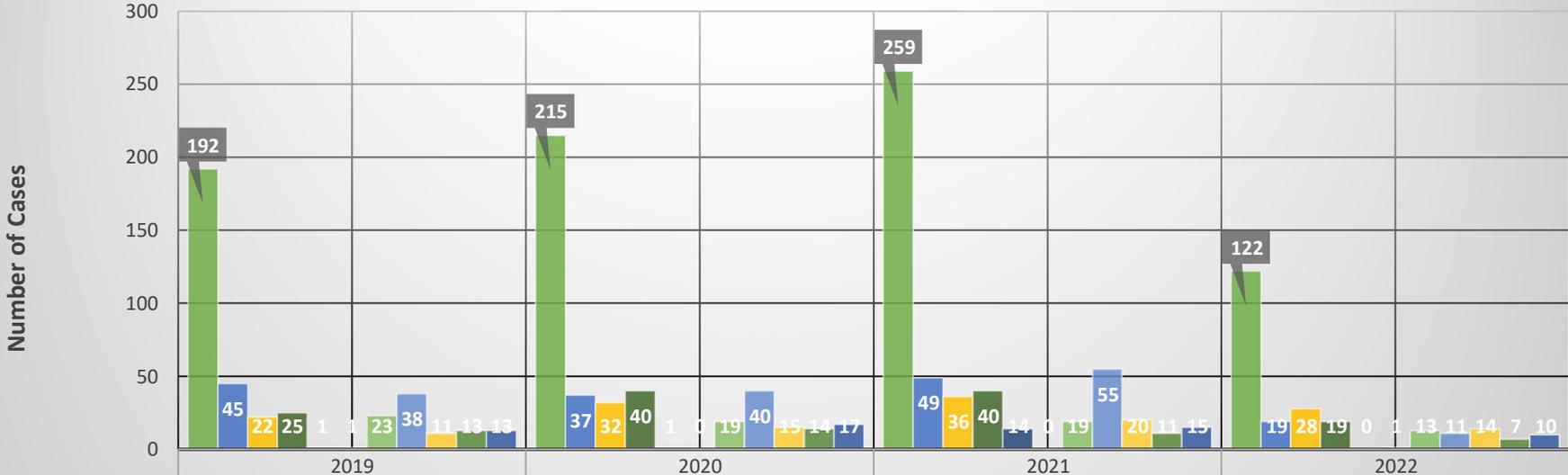
Casework Totals by Month/Year: all Categories ex. Planning & Forestry



Month & Year

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Casework Totals by Year/Category



Grand Total for Year	192	215	259	122
Planning Consultns	45	37	49	19
Forestry Consultns	22	32	36	28
Access Rights	25	40	40	19
Funding	1	1	14	0
Land Ownership	1	0	0	1
Obstruction	23	19	19	13
Other	38	40	55	11
Path Maintenance	11	15	20	14
Signage	13	14	11	7
Tourism	13	17	15	10

Legend: Grand Total for Year (Green), Planning Consultns (Blue), Forestry Consultns (Yellow), Access Rights (Dark Green), Funding (Dark Blue), Land Ownership (Brown), Obstruction (Light Green), Other (Light Blue), Path Maintenance (Orange), Signage (Light Green), Tourism (Dark Blue)