

Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum

MINUTES OF THE THIRTY THIRD MEETING Lonach Hall, Strathdon

Tuesday 21st of August 2012

Summary of Action points arising from meeting

AP1 – AQSS to invite Graeme Prest to the meeting in November.

AP2- AQSS to present a paper on proposed amendments to the Core Paths Plan.

AP4-BG to provide feedback to the Forum on the potential development of path maintenance volunteering.

AP5- AQSS to write to Andy Dunn thanking him for his time and input into the Forum.

Forum members in attendance

Paul Corrigan (Convener)	Peter Holden
Hebe Carus	Catriona Rowan
Nic Cole	David Lyle
Richard Wallace	Jeremy Usher Smith
Robbie Nicol	Nigel Williams
Ian Hill	Paul Webster
Thomas MacDonell	Malcolm McIntyre

Others in attendance:	
Bob Grant, CNPA	Ian Cox
Liz Dinnie, James Hutton Institute	
Adam Streeter-Smith, CNPA	

Item 1 – Welcome

1. Paul Corrigan the Convener thanked everyone for coming especially welcoming Liz Dinnie of the James Hutton Institute who was there to observe the meeting. Special thanks went also to the caterers for the soup and sandwiches. Thanks went also to Jeremy Usher Smith for taking the time to write a detailed report on community concerns surrounding car park charges on Forestry Commission sites.
2. The Convener highlighted that since the last meeting the National Park Partnership Plan has been published and that a Land Reform Review Group is being set up to explore and advise Ministers on the matters relating to land reform.
3. Lastly he also highlighted the interesting and informative site visit before the meeting and reminded members of the value of such events.

Item 2 - Apologies

Gordon Riddler	Dave Craig
Andy Dunn	Richard Gledson
Graeme Prest- Forestry Commission	

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

4. The minutes were agreed.

Action points arising from the last meeting

- API - Discharged.**
- AP2 - Discharged.**
- AP3 - Discharged.**
- AP4 - Discharged.**
- AP5 - Discharged.**

Matters arising

5. Bob Grant highlighted the “Do the ride thing” project was being launched shortly by the Minister and thanked members for input into the guidance.

Item 4 – Forestry Commission- car parking

6. The Convener introduced this item highlighting that Graeme Prest Forest District Manager for the Highlands had unfortunately tendered his apologies. Keen to invite him to the next meeting he asked Forum members consider what questions they wanted to raise which could then be sent back to FCS.
7. Richard Wallace highlighted that national policy was the driver behind this change in management but it has been accepted by Graeme, who is new to the post, that its implementation could have perhaps been done differently. Accepting that it will always be controversial it is important to note that still has to go ahead.
8. Members highlighted that to date communication between communities and the FCS has been very poor especially in addressing such concerns as displaced parking which is increasingly been seen. This is evident in Glenmore and Feshiebridge. Likewise for commercial operators and public sector outdoor activity providers no apparent system is in place for annual charging.
9. Members voiced concerns about the public’s perceptions of charging both on FCS sites and neighbouring estates. Broadly supportive of donations for parking members did question should estates who are in receipt of public subsidy legitimate charge for management.

10. Finally members questioned if the national policy wasn't at odds with the delivery of the well being targets set down by the Scottish Government. Would charging, or lack of consistency in charging, not put off those who are first venturing out into the outdoors. In response Richard Wallace said the best person to discuss this with was Kevin Lafferty at FCS head office.

API – AQSS to invite Graeme Prest to the meeting in November.

Item 5- Cycling in the outdoors

11. Bob Grant introduced this item firstly by highlighting that one of the key work packages in the new Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan is to develop the cycling product. This encompasses both on and off road cycling and delivers both health and economic benefits. He also highlighted that whilst the current Outdoor Access Strategy reflected a need to develop cycling it needed to be reviewed to reflect the likes of cycling in the uplands.
12. As a topic cycling has already been discussed at a number of Forum meetings and informal site visits as well as at the Sustainable Tourism Forum and Upland Path Advisory Group. The question to the LOAF was had all of the issues been captured?
13. A large part of the discussion focused on the need through education to manage expectations within all camps. In particular education for other path users that responsible cyclists are welcome and expected on paths, likewise the cyclists need to accept that path management on sensitive sites is for managing impact not addressing one group's requirements. Liz Dinnie highlighted that the Dundee Access Forum are looking at shared use issues and there are potential lessons to learn from that.
14. Members also highlighted that the action plan needed to be clear that mountain biking isn't just about trail centres. There are numerous classic rides that should be recognised. Likewise BMX, dirt jumping and urban street style disciplines should to be considered.
15. BG highlighted the next steps will be a cycling workshop organised by the CNPA in partnership with the Business Partnership and Sport Scotland at Glenmore Lodge to flesh out the Action Plan. This Action Plan will also feed into the review of the OAS.

Item 6 Outdoor Access Casework

16. Adam Streeter-Smith introduced this item highlighting that since the last meeting 18 cases have been recorded of which 16 have been resolved and will be closed pending any comments from the Forum. Highlighting a number of closed cases in Ballater, Strathdon and Badencoh AQSS reported that many were easily resolved with support and signage.

Item 7 Core Paths Plan Review Update

17. AQSS introduced this item highlighting that since the last meeting the community council planning representatives had been sent maps as part of the informal consultation on the local plan. These maps are due back at the end of September when staff will consider the comments against the revised objectives and present options for amendments to the Forum in November.

AP2- AQSS to present a paper on proposed amendments to the Core Paths Plan.

Item 8 National Access Forum Update

18. The Convener introduced this item highlighting that he is unable to attend the joint meeting of the LOAF's and NAF on the 2nd of October in Edinburgh. He asked for volunteers.

AP3- Forum members to volunteer to attend the joint conference.

19. BG highlighted that recently the NAF had been reviewing its sector membership. He also highlighted that the NAF Convener is standing down and nominations are open till the end of September.

Item 9 Update and forward look

20. BG highlighted that the notice to make a path order for the Speyside Way extension had been approved and now works on the planning permission can take place. With this significant hurdle behind efforts can now be focused on funding and planning.

21. BG drew attention to the Boat of Garten Caperciallie Ranger Scott Henderson who is doing a lot to educate and illuminate the special qualities of Boat woods to visitors and residents alike. So far this project has been very successful and a similar model may be developed for other sensitive sites.

22. AQSS also highlighted that works will be taking place to replace finger posts in Kingussie and Braemar. He also highlighted the Outdoor Access Team are developing a greater web presence through social media to allow them to engage with key stakeholders.

Item 10 Ideas for future meetings

23. Members highlighted that not a lot was being done to create volunteering opportunities for path works in a low ground setting. They felt that there must be a significant bank of people out there willing to give up some time to undertake small tasks such as clearing drains and pruning trees. Much of the core path network isn't being managed and these volunteers could fill that gap.

AP4-BG to provide feedback to the Forum on the potential development of path maintenance volunteering.

Item 11 AOCB

24. AQSS highlighted that this was the last meeting for Andy Dunn and long serving member of the Forum. In discussion with the Convener and Vice Convener he proposed that the candidate at the top of the reserve list from the last round of recruitment be offered the position. This was accepted by all members.

AP5- AQSS to write to Andy Dunn thanking him for his time and input into the Forum.

Item 14 - Date of next meeting

25. **Tuesday 6th November, Tomintoul**