



CLACKMANNANSHIRE

COUNCIL



The Clackmannanshire Access Forum

Minute of meeting held on 28th November 2007
in Room 3, Greenfield, Alloa

Action

Present

Landowners/Land Managers: Sir Robert Stewart, Brian Poett, James Cullens

Agency representatives: Councillor Harry McLaren, Alistair Lawson

Advisors: Mike Shepherd

Community group representatives: Caroline Crawford, Jane Coull

User group representatives: Francis McKay, Linda Howson, Drew Michie

Council officers: Martin Dean, Niall Urquhart

1.0 Apologies

Agency representatives: Councillor Walter McAdam

Advisors: Colin Ward

Community group representatives: Dick Clark

User group representatives: Robin Kelsall

2.0 Approval of minutes of 5th September 2007

2.1 Councillor McLaren reported that contrary to the minutes, he had not been at the meeting of 5th September.

2.2 With the above exception, the minutes were approved by Drew and seconded by Jane.

3.0 Matters arising

3.1.1 Hardy's Link Alistair reported that the possibility of the Clackmannan Heritage Trust part funding the bridge had not been raised at a recent meeting. Niall agreed to ensure it was raised at the next meeting.

NU

3.1.2 Martin reported that a scheduled meeting with Audrey Morrison (of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Environmental Trust) to discuss the possibility of landfill tax monies funding a new bridge had been postponed.

MD

3.1.3 Alistair suggested it would be interesting to hear more about the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Environmental Trust and that Audrey should be invited to give a presentation about it at a future meeting of the Forum.

MD

3.2.1 Motorbikes Councillor McLaren reported that he had discussed the possibility of elected members hearing about the measures that had been taken to address motorbikes in South Lanarkshire, but that there was no space for a presentation until well into the new year.

3.2.2 Alistair reported that he had recently encountered 3 motorbikes in Inglewood and commented that we need to know what the nature of the problem is before we can begin to address it.

3.2.3 Councillor McLaren advised that the paths in the Backwoods at Clackmannan had deteriorated because of motorbike use. He also reported that some motorcyclists had had their motorbikes confiscated for repeatedly using paths without permission.

3.2.4 Jane reported that a motorbike regularly travelled the paths between Clackmannan and Coalsnaughton. She suggested producing a newspaper article on the run-up to Christmas to highlight the problem and to discourage the giving of motorbikes as presents.

3.2.5 Drew said that he thought Christmas was too close for publicity discouraging the giving of motorbikes as presents to be effective and suggested establishing a Working Group (involving the police and Community Wardens) to look at the problem.

3.2.6 Brian commented that nobody wanted motorbikes on their land, stating that such motorbike use was illegal and advising that the Forum should not get involved.

3.2.7 Alistair commented that he felt motorbikes were an issue for the Forum because they use paths used by others.

3.2.8 Linda supported this view and referred to an incident involving a motorbike and a horse rider.

3.2.9 Caroline highlighted the role of education in addressing the issue.

3.2.10 Francis asked for volunteers to form a Working Group. Alistair, Jane and Councillor McLaren volunteered.

**AL, JC,
HM**

3.3.1 Alva horse access Linda requested an update on the situation from Martin.

3.3.2 Martin reported that horse riders leaving the stables to the south of the new academy had previously been able to ride in an easterly direction and out through the Industrial Estate. This route is under threat from a barrier which requires to be built over a culvert and which will extend over the access route taken by the horse riders. A request has been made for the designers of the barrier to incorporate a gap for horse riders and others to use, but they have as yet, not been able to come up with an acceptable design. A further request has been made for them to incorporate a gap into the design.

3.3.3 Linda requested that Martin provide her with details of the designer so that she can forward ideas and information to them.

MD, LH

3.4 Clacksweb A list of the organisations which make up the Access Forum, their representatives names and e mail addresses have been posted on the Council website.

3.5 Access Forum meeting A meeting of the Forum was arranged on 20th September 2007 to look at the Candidate Core Paths maps.

4.0 Core Paths Plan – update on second round of consultations

4.1 Martin reported that the second round of consultations had commenced on Tuesday, 9th October 2007 and that they were due to end on Friday, 30th November. They comprised of 9 afternoon/evening consultations and 3 Saturday morning consultations which visited all major communities. The consultations had been advertised on Clacksweb, in the Alloa Advertiser, in libraries, on paths in and around communities and by e mail to community councils, clubs etc. Attendance was variable, but had been particularly good in Dollar.

4.2 Martin also reported that maps showing candidate core paths (together with comments forms) had been posted on Clacksweb, were available in all of Clackmannanshire's libraries and were delivered to the NFU Office in Stirling.

4.3 Mike enquired whether there will be a Council approval

process for the Core Paths Plan. Niall advised that it would, but that the date for this still had to be determined.

4.4 Francis asked whether a Forum meeting could be arranged to have sight of the Plan before the formal consultation. Niall agreed that this is desirable and suggested that the date of the next Forum meeting should be set with this in mind.

MD

4.5 Brian expressed the view that it was more important to produce a good plan than meet a deadline. He then enquired whether comments forms that were submitted late would be accepted. Niall advised that a few days leeway will be given, especially since the consultation in Menstrie was only taking place the day before the closing date.

4.6 Sir Robert enquired whether the rights of way between Tillicoultry and Blackford and Dollar and Glen Devon were shown as candidate core paths. Francis reported that they were, adding that the majority of people at the consultations were not in favour of other paths in the Ochils being designated as core paths. Brian highlighted erosion of hill paths as a problem, referring to scarring of Beinn A'Ghlo. Mike advised that Perth and Kinross Council were only marking hill paths as core paths if it was a made-up path. James commented that the inconsistencies between local authorities were worrying.

4.7 Brian commented that core paths should be the routes which are regularly used between settlements. Martin referred to the "Further guidance on Core Paths Plans" produced by the Scottish Executive, Scottish Natural Heritage and Paths For All Partnership which highlighted that "sufficiency around settlements should be a priority."

4.8 Linda highlighted the need for horse riders to have reasonable access. Jane advised that the British Horse Society records show 526 horses in Clackmannanshire. Martin reported that the plan as a whole should cater for the needs of all legitimate users.

5.0 SEA

5.1 Martin reported that the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Core Paths Plan comprised of 3 steps. The first was the Screening Report which had been completed. Work was currently underway on the second (Scoping) Report and funding had been found to employ consultants to undertake the third (Environmental) Report.

5.2 Niall advised that the Environmental Report should make recommendations on the most environmentally sustainable options.

6.0 National Cycle Route - Cambus

6.1 Martin reported that the negotiator appointed to liaise with

Diageo over upgrading a section of existing path and also creating a new path, had received verbal permission to upgrade the existing path - to the east of Cambus. This permission is on the condition that drainage works are included, any damage to adjacent fences repaired and legal costs covered. He also advised that the works are required to be completed by mid March and that they would be project managed by a Roads Officer.

6.2 Niall reiterated the need for the Council to spend the grant aid it had received from Sustrans and that consideration had been given to spending any surplus monies on other strategic paths.

6.3 Linda voiced concern over tarring paths used by horse riders. Martin referred to a short section of path that had been tarred and dusted at Dollar and asked if Linda could provide feedback on its suitability for horse riders.

LH

7.0 Update on other groups

7.1.1 Ochils Landscape Partnership Martin distributed a Progress Report which provided some background on the Partnership. It also outlined that a Steering Group, comprising local and other organisations, had been formed; and that a Working Group, comprising local authority personnel, had also been formed. Community consultations had recently taken place (in tandem with the Core Path Planning consultations) and an Audience Development Plan will be written.

7.1.2 Access Forum members on the Steering Group include Brian, Mike and Caroline. Alistair was nominated to represent the Access Forum on the Steering Group, but had found its meetings clashed with others and so had not been able to attend.

7.1.3 Mike suggested that some of the projects the Partnership will undertake could be linked with access.

7.1.4 Martin referred to a forthcoming visit to a Landscape Partnership at Sulwarth in South West Scotland and invited Forum members who may be interested in going to contact the Landscape Partnership Planning Officer.

7.2.1 Clackmannanshire Trail Martin reported that the Trail had been initiated by an elected member and that it related to the Tourism Strategy. He further reported that 6 days of walks had been identified and that in lowland Clackmannanshire, these followed existing promoted paths.

7.2.2 Alistair expressed some reservation about a Trail whilst Drew highlighted the need for the Trail to link with core paths where possible.

8.0 Election of Chair/Vice Chair

8.1 Sir Robert proposed Alistair.

8.2 Alistair nominated Drew.

8.3 Niall reported that the Partnership Agreement contained a clause that a representative should not be in post for more than 3 years and that since many members of the Forum had been in post for longer than this, there was a need to “regularise things” to ensure the Forum operates within its guidelines. In light of this, he suggested that nominations for the posts of Chair and Vice Chair be postponed until the next meeting of the Access Forum.

8.4 Francis stated that many members of the Forum had been in post for 5 years.

8.5 Drew asked for the Partnership Agreement to be circulated around Forum members and noted that the Forum needed 3 of the 4 stakeholder groups to be present, to be quorate.

NU

8.6 Francis suggested that the Chair should rotate around the stakeholder groups. He also reported that the original group had been too big and that the current Forum had been borne from the Core Group.

8.7 Alistair reminded the Forum that members represented their wider stakeholder group.

8.8 Mike highlighted the need for consultation with the wider group when appointments are being made.

8.9 Francis resigned as Chair.

8.10 Sir Robert and Niall acknowledged the work that Francis has done as Chair and thanked him for his hard work.

9.0 Any other business

9.1.1 Right of way at Sterling Mills Jane reported that the riverside path at Sterling Mills had been closed and that the diversion took horse riders into the car park which was not ideal.

9.1.2 Martin reported that the path was at the top of the riverbank and that it had been closed following bank erosion. He advised that a planning application had been submitted but refused and that the applicants were intending to make amendments to their proposals and then resubmit the application. He also pointed out that there was another path to the north of Sterling Mills which provided a suitable link for horse riders between the Mixed Leisure Route and the Devonway.

9.2.1 Lade Bridge Jane reported that the bridge on the right of way at the west end of the Lade had been vandalised some time ago and that the right of way was subsequently diverted. She queried whether this had been formalised.

9.2.2 Martin reported that the diversion had not been formalised. Drew questioned whether it needed to be. Alistair advised that it did not and offered to liaise with Martin over the necessary procedures.

AL, MD

9.3 SPP11 – Open Space and Physical Activity The Scottish Government has just published SPP11 which amongst other

things, confirms that access rights and core path plans are material considerations in determining planning applications, that an access strategy is expected to be prepared, and that there should be compatibility between the open space strategy and other plans.

9.4 Big Green Challenge Event Martin reported that the Big Green Challenge provided opportunities for communities to claim funding for environmental projects.

9.5 Sustainable travel Drew reported that some Council staff were now using bikes to undertake their business and suggested that Forum members might want to consider their use.

10.0 Date of next meeting

10.1 The next meeting of The Clackmannanshire Access Forum will be at 2:00pm on Wednesday, 6th February 2008 in Room 3, Greenfield.