

**MORAY LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM
INAUGURAL MEETING**

MINUTES

**Eight Acres Hotel, Elgin
Tuesday 28th March 2006
7.00pm- 9.00pm**

PRESENT

Cllr Bob Wilson (Moray Council),
Ian Douglas (Moray Council- Moray Access Manager),
Garry Morrison (Moray Council- Support Services Manager),
Claire Bell (Moray Council- Path Project Officer),

Members:

Simon Jacyna- MEAG (Outdoor Access User),
J.R. MacLean- Westfield Farms (Landowner),
Alasdair Laing- Logie Estate (Landowner),
Iain Green-NFUS (Landowner),
Peter Graham-SRPBA (Landowner),
Duncan McConnell- Dyke & Landward Community Council (Community Groups),
Allan Fraser - Buckie Community Council (Community Groups),
Toby Metcalfe –Smiths Gore (Landowner),
Jean Oliver- Speyside Paths Network Group (Community Groups),
Watson Bell (Outdoor Access User),
Rita Marks- Moray Tourism Forum (Outdoor Access User)
Kelley Miller- SNH (Public Agencies)
Franziska Smith- HIE Moray (Public Agencies)
Jenny Gate- Glenlivet & Inverarvon Community Association (Community Groups)
Cllr Linda Gorn- Moray Council (Public Agencies)

Apologies

John Fleming, Adam Streeter-Smith, Barbara Stearn, Janet Trythall,
Honor Third/ Iain Stephen, Ian D. Bruce, Philip Whitefield

Item		Action
1.0	Introduction and Welcome This first meeting was chaired by Councillor Bob Wilson. A brief introduction was made by all present.	
2.0	Draft Procedures & Conduct	
2.1	<u>Draft Document</u> A copy of this draft document had been previously distributed to all members. Ian Douglas explained these have been derived from the Highland Outdoor Access Forum. These are to be considered for possible adoption by the Forum and will act as the draft working version until formally agreed by the Forum.	
2.2	<u>Clerking</u> Ian Douglas confirmed that Moray Council will provide the clerking services for the meetings. Claire Bell will act as temporary Clerk until further notice. The Forum agreed that a permanent named Clerk be appointed asap.	Moray Council

<p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p> <p>2.5</p>	<p><u>Comments on Procedures</u> Peter Graham queried whether there will be a standardisation of procedure for Local Outdoor Access Forums across Scotland. Ian Douglas confirmed that it has been left up to the individual forums to evolve their own procedures.</p> <p>Bob Wilson suggested that there could be some consultation between the neighbouring Outdoor Access Forums and that he would be willing to arrange a meeting with the Cairngorm National Park Outdoor Access Forum in the future if the Moray Forum members request this.</p> <p><u>Meetings</u> The Forum agreed that evening meetings are preferred.</p> <p><u>Structure of Meeting</u> The Convener is to be notified prior to the meeting by members on any AOCB to be included on the agenda.</p>	
<p>3.0</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p>	<p>Draft Operating Principles</p> <p><u>Travel Expenses</u> Ian Douglas noted that the members are entitled to claim for travel expenses from Moray Council. Members are to keep a record of their expenses for the next meeting. A claim form and instructions will be issued to members.</p> <p><u>Members of Press/Public</u> The draft Procedures for Conduct (bullet point 7 in document) require that the Forum meetings are quasi-public. The public may only attend in an observational capacity with prior notice given to allow the agenda to be agreed.</p> <p>Ian Douglas noted that the public will be kept informed of meeting dates, agendas and minutes via the website which will be up and running within the next few weeks.</p> <p>Jean Oliver suggested that the public should be informed of future meetings using local press articles. This was agreed by the Forum.</p> <p><u>Press Release</u> The methods of reporting to the press will be an issue for the Forum to decide. Until a Convenor is elected this will be carried out by Bob Wilson. A press release shall be issued reporting that the first Local Outdoor Access Forum Meeting has been held.</p> <p><u>Reselection of Members</u> The Operating Principles require new membership/re-election of Core Forum Members after 3 years. Bullet point 3 on the draft requires to be amended to reflect the re-selection of members in 3 years will be by election and not appointed by the Council..</p>	<p>Ian Douglas</p> <p>Cllr B. Wilson</p> <p>Ian Douglas</p>
<p>4.0</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p>Draft Aims & Objectives</p> <p>Last line of item 1 in the Draft Aims & Objectives document should read ‘advice’ not ‘advise’.</p>	

<p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p>	<p><u>Minutes of Meetings- procedure</u> It was agreed that minutes are to be distributed to members by email for comment and confirmed as a true record at the next meeting prior to being made available to the public on the council website.</p> <p>Rita Marks and Jean Oliver noted that they will require a paper copies as their emails are not operational for printing. Large files are to be avoided when sending emails to other members (ie heading logos to be omitted). Both a paper copy and email copy of the final minutes will be sent to all members, unless otherwise requested.</p> <p><u>Working Group</u> <i>A working Group will be set up to formalise the Draft Procedures & Conduct, Draft Operating Principles and Draft Aims & Objectives documents.</i> <i>Until these documents are formalised the Forum agrees that these will operate as working drafts.</i></p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>All Members</p>
<p>5.0</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Finance</p> <p>The issue of available budgets was raised. Jean Oliver noted that it was her understanding that the Scottish Executive have assigned each council with a budget for Outdoor Access. Garry Morrison confirmed that this is the case but that the money has not been ring fenced. As a result, there is not yet an identified budget for the Forum and other outdoor access duties. This will be addressed in due course and reported back to the Forum.</p> <p>Councillor Gorn undertook to investigate and report back to meeting.</p> <p>The council will undertake to cover meeting arrangements and travel expenses for the Forum.</p>	<p>Cllr Gorn</p> <p>Moray Council</p>
<p>6.0</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p>Member's Training Requirements</p> <p><u>Training</u> Members are to consider what training they require and report back at next meeting. A list of requirements can be formulated and a programme developed.</p> <p>As there is a diverse representation of users, landowners and community groups within the Forum, it was agreed that members themselves should share their knowledge. Peter Graham suggested that this might be done by individual members carrying out presentations and organising role change exercises, as a way of illustrating some of the access problems and issues often faced. It was agreed that these type of exercises would be beneficial but should be representative of the peer groups as a whole not just as individuals.</p> <p><u>Funding</u> Bob Wilson noted that although it is inherent that the council will cover training costs as already agreed by committee, these should be 'reasonable'.</p>	<p>All Members</p>

<p>7.0</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p>	<p>Friend's Scheme</p> <p>Ian Douglas explained that there are currently around 60-70 members of the Friends Scheme. The Friend's Scheme provides a source for consultation, and 'Friends' will be able to contact the Forum through the website. Enquiries or responses on the website are to be reported at every Forum meeting.</p> <p>Duncan McConnell queried if there will be any financial implications that might detract from the Forum. Ian Douglas confirmed that the running costs for the Friend's Scheme are to be absorbed by the council, and to keep costs down correspondence will be carried out using Email.</p> <p>Ian Douglas noted that anyone is welcome to join the scheme- as long as they have an Email address. Membership forms are available from Ian Douglas or from the future Website.</p> <p>Ian Douglas is to send copies of the Friend's Scheme application forms to the management in charge of the Community Planning Neighbourhood Forums with a view to encouraging additional members.</p> <p>Cllr Bob Wilson is to mention the Friend's Scheme within the press release.</p>	<p>Ian Douglas</p> <p>Ian Douglas</p> <p>Cllr B. Wilson</p>
<p>8.0</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p> <p>8.5</p>	<p>Some Future Challenges for the Forum</p> <p>A paper listing the challenges for the Forum had been issued prior to the meeting and some of the main points discussed.</p> <p><u>Moray's Local Outdoor Access Strategy</u> The Forum asked if the current Outdoor Access Strategy document is available. Ian Douglas agreed to provide copies to all members by the next meeting, but notes that the document now predates the new access legislation. The Forum will be required to help in the review of this document.</p> <p>T. Metcalfe enquired whether the current Moray paths network is fully mapped. Ian Douglas explained that there is not a full GIS format, but that this will be one of the first tasks for the Core Path Planning process.</p> <p><u>Core Path Plans</u> A copy of Core Paths Plan- A Guide to Good Practice by SNH/ Paths For All Partnership was issued to all present. The Access Forum will be involved with the future consultation process for the Core path Planning Exercise. Ian Douglas will advise on the timescale and input required in due course.</p> <p><u>Marketing of Moray Outdoor Access</u> Ian Douglas reported that a website and CD Rom is being developed through the Moray Quality of Life Paths Project to feature walks & outdoor access opportunities in Moray. This will include linkages to other relevant Access and tourism sites. The Forum's input will be sought.</p> <p><u>Outdoor Access Disputes</u> Ian Douglas to provide to the next meeting a draft paper outlining the Forum's procedure for dealing with outdoor access disputes.</p>	<p>Ian Douglas</p> <p>Ian Douglas</p> <p>Ian Douglas</p> <p>Ian Douglas</p>

8.6	<p>He noted that there will be three ways for the public to contact the Forum: a/ via Moray Council, by contacting Ian Douglas b/ via the council website under Outdoor Access (www.moray.gov.uk) c/ via elected members</p> <p><u>Legal Issues</u> Various members of the Forum raised concerns that there should be indemnity insurance provided to cover individuals on advice given. Moray Council to liaise with their Legal Department on this matter. The Forum requested that a member of the council's legal staff be present at the next meeting and at meetings thereafter as required.</p>	<p>Ian Douglas/ Ian Bruce</p> <p>M. C. Legal</p>
9.0	<p>National Access Forum</p> <p>9.1 Ian Douglas explained that the NAF is intended to look at outdoor access from a strategic policy level, and that the Scottish Executive have not yet concluded how the local Forums are to be linked to the national level. ID will advise of any updates.</p>	<p>Ian Douglas</p>
10.0	<p>AOCB</p> <p>10.1 <u>Website</u> Ian Douglas reported that the council access Website should be running within the next 2-3 weeks. www.moray.gov.uk under 'Leisure/ Outdoor Access/ Moray Local Outdoor Access Forum', or through the 'A-Z'. Ian Douglas to email all members once the site is ready.</p> <p>10.2 <u>Access Enquiry- Access with Pony & Trap</u> A copy of a letter was submitted to members at the meeting. The letter from Bidwells Property Consultants dated 19th January 2006 to Moray Council, requested clarification from the Forum on a matter of access with pony and trap through a gate at the Mannoeh Road.</p> <p>The estate have now resolved the matter of the locked gate by agreeing with the user that the gate will be left open on prior arrangement with the estate factor.</p> <p>The Forum supported the resolution between the pony and trap user(s) and the estate. The Estate will review the matter in time depending on the number and frequency of the users. It was agreed that this is a fairly unique resolution, and that it will not set the precedent regarding other access issues on gates.</p> <p>10.3 Peter Graham suggested such cases could be resolved in future by drawing on the experience of Forum Members to diffuse the situation and allow both parties to talk.</p>	<p>Ian Douglas</p>
11.0	<p>Location & Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Next meeting to be held Tuesday 2nd May 2006 at 7.00pm, at Moray Council Headquarters, High Street, Elgin.</p> <p>Provisional dates for future meetings: 27th June, 19th September, 19th December.</p>	

NOTE

Following representation from the Forum members on the draft minutes the following changes have been made:

- Item 4.2- Minutes are to be agreed at the following meeting prior to being made available on the council website.
- The minutes had had two Items 5.0, which have now been renumbered accordingly.
- Item 5.1- An action has been added for Cllr Gorn to investigate and report back regarding finance of the forum.
- Item 8.5- A third method for the public to contact the Forum has now been noted as being via elected members.
- Item 10.3- note regarding Peter Graham's suggestion changed to exclude mention of a working group.