

**MORAY LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM
TWELTH MEETING**

MINUTES

5TH August 2008, Elgin Town Hall Lounge Room, 4pm

Present

Ian Douglas (Moray Council Access Manager)
Ann Dunn (minute taker)
Rona Gibb (Paths for All Partnership)
Dave Craig (Scottish Canoe Association)

Members Present

P. Graham, I Green, D McConnell, J Trythall, F Smith, F Murdoch, J Gate, T Metcalfe, J Oliver, A Laing, W Bell

Apologies

R Marks, J Fleming, A McLeod, S Jacyna, S Reid, SNH

Non Attendees

J MacLean, I Stephen

Vacant Positions

R Brunby, K Miller, P Whitfield

Item		Action
1.0	Welcome The meeting was chaired by Convener, Peter Graham	
2.0	Accuracy of Previous Minutes	
2.1	The previous meeting minutes were agreed as being true and accurate subject to two spelling changes	
3.0	Matters Arising	
3.1	All matters arising from previous meeting are dealt with in the agenda.	
4.0	Talk by David Craig, SCA	
4.1	David Craig was welcomed as the SCA advisor for the River Spey. He explained his role in promoting harmony between all the users of the Spey and the formation of the Spey Users Group to facilitate this.	

Item		Action
4.2	<p>He is the author of the Guide to the River Spey (www.speyguide.co.uk) , which includes all access and egress points from Laggan to Tugnet, information on campsites, bothies and accommodation along the river. Guidelines that he has written for both anglers and paddlers have been printed in the Spey Fisheries Board monthly briefing publication and well circulated.</p>	
4.3	<p>He explained that the River Spey is the most paddled river in Scotland for full descents due to its safety and rurality. As such it should be designated a Core Path. The main paddled area is between Ballindalloch and Knockando, not many venture beyond Aberlour. If the River Spey were designated as a Core Path he considers that would mean that more funding would be available to tackle the erosion on the riverbank at places and also to provide more facilities for paddlers.</p>	
4.4	<p>There followed a discussion where the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paddlers need more facilities along the River such as car parks, toilets, changing facilities, campsites and outside taps • More lay-bys are required for mini-buses at sites where there is easy access to the water • If more facilities were made available downstream of Aberlour, then paddlers would make use of them and relieve congestion on the Ballindalloch – Knockando stretch, although this is the most popular stretch and will always remain so because of the nature of the river at this point • Rafting only really occurs between Ballindalloch and Knockando which is a very small stretch of the Spey. In order to navigate a raft, it is necessary to jump into the water, which is not always understood by anglers. • The Moray Plan has identified access/egress points to the Spey as Core Paths and has focussed on these as where the main access issues are that could be tackled by Core Path designation tree felling and grass strimming. The River has not been identified as a Core Path although there is still a formal consultation stage where it could be considered. 	
4.5	<p>The Convenor thanked David Craig for his interesting and informative talk.</p>	

Item		Action
5.0	Appointment of new member to replace Roy Brumby	
5.1	4 submissions have been received; R McPherson – Keith Heritage Group H Mackintosh – Community Councillor Lossiemouth J Barron – Moray Mountain Bike Club R Boardman – Outfit Moray (circulated at meeting)	
5.2	I Douglas reminded the Forum that Ray Brumby had been a “Community” member and that should be born in mind when considering his replacement. Since there was also no representation from Keith, Buckie or Elgin on the Forum, it was unanimously decided to invite R McPherson onto the Forum.	I Douglas
5.3	It was agreed that there was no strong “User” representation on the Forum apart from walking, so it was decided to write to R Boardman and J Barron explaining the situation and asking permission to hold their applications for future consideration.	I Douglas
6.0	Resignation of SNH & FCS Representatives	
6.1	I Douglas has approached both SNH and FCS regarding replacement representatives for Kelley Miller and Phil Whitfield. He is still awaiting response from his initial contact and has a perception that SNH is withdrawing from local Forums. The Convenor suggested that if there has been no response by 1 st September, that the matter should be taken “higher up” within the national agencies. I Douglas is to approach the agencies again requesting named local representatives. If this is not successful, then further action will need to be taken, possibly involving P Graham contacting Richard Lochhead MSP	I Douglas
7.0	Options for selection of new Forum members	
7.1	It was decided to form a sub group to consider options for inclusion of new Forum members. Sub group members are J Gate, J Trythall, P Graham and I Douglas. Sub group meeting on 29 th September, 6pm at Thomshill. I Douglas to circulate information on current Forum Members and constitution papers prior to the meeting. Sub group to report back to next whole Forum meeting.	I Douglas

Item		Action
8.0	Glennfiddich Estate – training opportunities - J Oliver -	
8.1	The landowner on Glenfiddich Estate has objected to a Core Path being identified on his land. There have also been historical problems of access on the estate.	
8.2	A windfarm is proposed to be built on the part of the estate containing the Core Paths. The promoters Pendragon along with the site manager, have invited the Forum to attend a site meeting as a training event on 11 th September. The landowner is not involved in this.	
8.3	Discussion followed on the need to be cautious about the agenda for the day, as it could simply be a PR exercise for Pendragon rather than a true training day. The access issues cover the whole estate, not just the windfarm, and discussions must involve the landowner.	
8.4	Decision taken that the Core Paths sub group would attend on the 11 th , rather than the whole Forum, just to discuss the issue of the 2 Core Paths. Sub group to then report back to the whole Forum.	CP Sub group
9.0	National Access Forum/Local Access Forum annual meeting Wednesday 12th September, Ayr	
9.1	I Douglas will attend with J Oliver with report back to next meeting of the whole Forum.	I Douglas/ J Oliver
10.0	Core Paths Planning	
A	Final Draft Plan, maps and Core Paths list and attributes were all completed and circulated prior to the meeting. Core Path FB15 – landowner had objected and the Core Paths sub group had remitted I Douglas to consult with the community and canvas opinion. Response suggested two alternatives to the current route i.e. Option 1 – alternative route through the Deer Park round the back of Gordon Castle Farm, following the track to join FB15. This route is already on the ground. Option 2 - Extend FB16 through the Deer Park to join path to Tynet. This route is not all on the ground at present. Decision taken to agree option 1 as the new line for FB15. I Douglas to amend map accordingly.	I Douglas

Item		Action
<p>B</p> <p>C</p> <p>D</p>	<p>J Oliver suggested that all paths in Dufftown should start at the Square, where there are toilets and car parking. It was agreed to add in “features” list that car parking and toilets are available in the Square for all Dufftown paths. I Douglas to amend paths attributes lists accordingly</p> <p>There being no other comments, the Plans were approved and signed off. R. Gibb commended the work done as the most comprehensive she has seen.</p> <p>CP Sub Group’s recommendations on responses 2nd Landowners Consultation were agreed and signed off subject to FB15 changes</p> <p>Final Draft Plan will go before Moray Council Committee 14th October 2008 for approval, followed by the launch of the formal public consultation from 31st October. To date landowners will have been consulted 4 times in all.</p> <p>SEA Update – Consultants have produced a scoping report. SEA Consultation and Final Draft Core Paths plan public consultation will be done together.</p>	<p>I Douglas</p>
<p>11.0</p> <p>A</p>	<p>Access Issues</p> <p><u>GM 55 right of way, Duffus</u> Although the Council were prepared to pay for the instillation of kissing gates to resolve the issue, the landowner was not persuaded to agree. It is not an issue which can be resolved by enforcement due to the constantly changing circumstances. The long term solution will be achieved when the path is designated as a Core Path, where the Council will then be able to do the works without the landowner’s permission.</p>	
<p>B</p>	<p><u>River Spey</u> I Douglas has responded to the correspondence from Craigellachie Fishings, backing up the letter from D Craig of the SCA. Any activity to impede the boats would be criminal. Hopefully, the issue is now resolved and the owner will no ttake any action to obstruct access rights. Raft use at Ballindalloch is being dealt with. 3 of the larger commercial organisations have been contacted by I Douglas and asked to liaise with each other to avoid all of them turning up at the same time, which caused the problem on 14 May.</p>	

C	<p><u>Horse damage to track at Stonehouse, Teindland</u> I Douglas and K Smith visited the Bodmans and a letter outlining that access rights apply was sent to the Bodmans and MEAG. MEAG were asked to contact the stables operator to consider using other tracks to minimise winter damage. The situation is now resolved.</p>	
<p>12.0</p> <p>12.1</p> <p>12.2</p>	<p>AOCB</p> <p>Framework agreement for rafting activities on the River Tay was circulated for information.</p> <p>T Metcalfe suggested inviting a representative from SUSTRANS to attend the next Forum meeting. This was agreed.</p>	I Douglas
13.0	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>13th November, 6pm in Elgin Town Hall.</p>	