

**MORAY LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM
13TH MEETING**

MINUTES

13th November 2008, Elgin Town Hall Lounge Room, 4pm

Present

Ian Douglas (Moray Council Access Manager)

Ann Dun (Minute Taker)

G Morrison (Moray Council)

A Howard (Moray Council)

Members Present

S Reid, P Graham, J Trythall, J Oliver, R McPherson, J Fleming, J Maclean,

J Gate, R Marks, F Murdoch, I Green, D McConnell, T Metcalfe

Apologies

I Stephen, S Jacyna, M Young, F Smith, I D Bruce, A MacLeod

Non Attendees

A Laing

Item		Action
1.0	Welcome The meeting was chaired by Convener, Peter Graham. Welcome was extended to new members Shirley Reid (SNH), Matt Young (forestry Commission) and Roy McPherson (Community Group representative). Following the resignation of Watson Bell, the Convener thanked him for his contributions.	
2.0 2.1	Accuracy of Previous Minutes Previous meeting minutes were agreed as being true and accurate. Proposed by J Trythall, seconded by D McConnell	
3.0 3.1	Matters Arising All matters arising from previous meeting are dealt with in the agenda.	
4.0 4.1	Talk by Amanda Howard, Planning Officer, Moray Council Amanda Howard was welcomed as Lead Officer for Open Space within Moray Council. She explained her role in developing and producing the Open Space Strategy for Moray, to meet the new statutory requirement for Local Authorities.	

Item		Action
4.2	<p>'Open Space' is defined as including;</p> <p><i>Greenspace</i> – any vegetated land or structure, water, path or geological feature within and on the edges of settlements and</p> <p><i>Civic Space</i> – squares, market places and other paved or hard landscape areas with a civic function</p> <p>(Planning Advice Note 65)</p>	
4.3	<p>A Steering group has been formed as a partnership to produce the Strategy, chaired by Councillor Murdoch. The Strategy will focus on local objectives and priorities for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to ensure joined up thinking and co-ordinated approach to open space provision and management - to ensure that local community aspirations are reflected in the way open space is provided and managed - to ensure appropriate investment in open space in Moray. <p>Outcomes of the Strategy could include producing specific open space, planning guidelines for future developments, with more informed priorities for developer contributions.</p>	
4.4	<p>The strategy process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Desktop audit – gathering all the information already known using GIS database 2. Quality audit – assessment of open spaces to fixed criteria. Greenspace Scotland has provided guidance which Moray Council is using. This involves on-site assessments and community engagement using 'Planning for Real' techniques to identify ideas, needs, wants and gaps in provision. 3. Draft Strategy, adoption and review every 5 years. <p>Implementation and monitoring of an Action Plan will be ongoing with possible annual auditing of sites.</p>	
4.5	<p>A questionnaire has been sent out to all known stakeholders and responses to date have identified the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More diversity required, different types of open space - Management issues e.g. need for better maintenance regimes - Establishing value of open space - More funding and support for open space projects - Anti-social and illegal behaviour in open spaces 	

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4.6	The Open Space audit will concentrate on the five main towns to begin with due to limited resources. The pilot is in Forres, dovetailing with the Forres Woodlands Community Trust public consultation exercise.	
4.7	<p>Forum discussion focussed on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - annual review of sites may be very optimistic (PG) - Woodland around settlements would be considered on an individual basis. The Local Plan is guiding whether it is classed as Open Space (RM) - The Open Space strategy should be seen as a necessity not a luxury, linking the civic open space to the Core Path network (TM) - The audit may lead to restriction of development. If Planning Officers have enough information about the community aspirations, current use and value etc, they can make more informed decisions. It will reinforce and strengthen the Local Plan (DM). 	
4.8	S Reid explained that Scottish Government has Single Outcome Agreements with Local Authorities, with fifteen national priority outcomes. Open Space issues link to many of these priorities, such as health and transport. The Strategy will be planning for the future.	
4.9	It was agreed that the Access Forum should be involved in the consultation process, possibly through running a 'planning for real' exercise at the Forum's May 2009 meeting	Full Access Forum
5.0	Glenfiddich Estate – feedback on 11th September visit by Core Paths Sub Group	
5.1	And the Forum representatives were able to suggest a range of potential access improvements that could be accommodated if the windfarm was approved. I M Douglas to monitor and report back on progress regarding any ideas that were suggested	IMD
6.0	Future Training	
6.1	A representative from Sustrans is to be invited to the next meeting. It was agreed that the Forum needs to encourage Moray Council to provide safe routes for cycling and walking and school and workplaces in built up areas. This would reduce car usage and promote cycling and walking, as other areas have done, e.g. York.	IMD

Item		Action
6.2	Chris Thompson, Active Travel Co-ordinator for Moray Council to be invited to a future meeting to talk about the Council's plans for sustainable transport.	IMD
<p>7.0</p> <p>7.1</p>	<p>Future Membership Review</p> <p>Policy Sub Group produced a paper and table that was discussed at the meeting. The following elements from the paper were agreed.</p> <p>A Revised membership balance: 5 – statutory bodies: SNH, FC, MC, HIE, NHS Grampian 4 – landowners/land managers/farmers 3 – leg access users (walkers and cyclists) 3 – other access users including angling and paddling 5 – community groups NFU representative should be a guaranteed place on the landowners group</p> <p>B Members should serve no longer than three years to ensure new members can be appointed.</p> <p>C Landowner Group – currently has five members which must come down to four. J Maclean agreed to stand down immediately, all thanked him for his contribution. T Metcalfe volunteered to stand down end 2009, P Graham end 2010, A Laing end 2011</p> <p>D Access User Group – R Boardman and J Barron to be invited as paddling and cycling representatives. I Stephen retains a place. I Douglas to work with other three to fill two places and work out a rotation for standing down (S Jacyna, R Marks and J Trythall). I Douglas to advertise for a fishing representative possible through Roger Knight.</p> <p>E Community Group – Roy McPherson retains a place. J Fleming volunteered to stand down end 2009, D McConnell end 2009, J Gate end 2010, J Oliver end 2011.</p>	IMD
<p>8.0</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p>Core Paths Plan</p> <p>The Forum thanked I Douglas for producing the final draft of the Core Paths Plan. They are available for public inspection through a range of methods throughout Moray. Strategic Environmental Assessment reports are also available. Consultation finishes 6th February 2009. Objections must be made in writing and there will follow a three month period once objections have been processed to negotiate any objections. A Local Enquiry will follow if objections persist.</p>	

Item		Action
8.2	I Douglas will be sending a formal letter to P Graham asking for Access Forum's approval for the Core Paths Plan. It was agreed that P Graham should respond favourably.	IMD
8.3	It was agreed that we should follow Highland Council's policy concerning the River Spey and continue to propose the access and egress points as core paths, not the River itself.	
9.0	National Access Forum	
9.1	It was reported by Jean Oliver that the National Access Forum in September was not very inspiring. They will take any issues forward to the Scottish Executive and have a contact officer for Local Outdoor Access Forums.	
	<p>Access Issues</p> <p>Rafting on the Spey Ballindalloch – I Douglas has written to all involved rafting companies access takers to encourage them to work together and avoid future cumulative impacts. There has been no further problems reported.</p> <p>Carron – I Douglas has written to the company concerned to persuade them to park vehicles away from the bridge at the car park in Carron.</p> <p>Fochabers Bypass – proposed underpass at Mosstodloch. Long underpass would be undesirable, bridge much preferred. This is to be communicated to the Scottish Government in writing.</p>	P Graham

11.0	A O C B	
11.1	J Oliver asked that someone be invited to speak to SRDP. It seems to be very complicated and is putting people off. IMD to invite an appropriate person to speak on this during 2009.	IMD
11.2	New publication from SNH – ‘Brief Guide to Laws relevant to Outdoor Access in Scotland’ Identified as a very useful publication. IMD has copies if anyone interested.	
11.3	Ramblers Scotland hosting Local Access Forum training on 22 nd November in Stirling, in association with BCU, Scotways, Scottish ROW Society, MCOS, CCT and SUSTRANS	
12.0	Dates for meetings in 2009 Tuesday 17 th February Thursday 14 th May (Open Space Audit ‘ planning for real exercise’ Tuesday 11 th August Thursday 12 th November	