

ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Note of the Meeting of the Angus Local Access Forum held on 15 January 2024 at Angus House, Forfar

Present: Nick Hamilton, Irene McGugan, Norma Lyall, Andrew Matthews (Chair)

In attendance: Paul Clark, Countryside Access Officer, Angus Council

Apologies: Euan Walker-Munro, John Hamilton, Jonathan Dymock

1. Minute of Previous Meeting

The minute of 9th October 2023 was approved.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

AM did however point out an error in the online core path mapping that he discovered whilst looking up a core path that was referenced in the minutes. The path information in the online map contained a link to the wrong PDF map. PC noted the error.

3. Glen Clova woodland creation – further consultation

The forestry consultant had sent updated recreation and fencing maps to PC, taking into account previous feedback. There was consensus that there generally appeared to be a good distribution of gates and stiles, but that it was nevertheless important to communicate the locations to access takers. The maps also showed a good network of proposed access routes. There were some concerns over long term maintenance of stiles, which if not maintained were more likely to have safety and liability implications than gates. There was some discussion on the location of proposed pedestrian gates in relation to proposed vehicle gates, some of which were quite close together. As a general principle it would be better to install pedestrian gates alongside vehicle gates at the outset, as this would minimise future problems and avoid the need to expensively retrofit gates if it became necessary to lock vehicle gates.

On a related matter, IM highlighted concerns over a Scottish Government proposal to reduce budget for tree planting by 41% which had implications for net zero targets.

4. Feedback from online SORA LAF workshop

IM had circulated a note on the workshop, which she had attended. Common issues nationally were resourcing for forums including officer support, and recruitment. Angus LAF was in a better position than many. SORA encouraged better links with councillors and/or more senior officers. Sora could provide an induction for new LAF members to aid familiarisation with legislation etc.

5. Access issues update

Ferry Road, Monifieth – PC advised that the Council was continuing to push for a resolution of the issue. NH observed that no work had yet commenced on site.

Newbigging, Tealing – The Council had extended the deadline for completion of questionnaires until the new year to allow the matter to be highlighted in a community newsletter.

Panmure Golf Course, Barry, Carnoustie – PC briefly outlined a recent case regarding a locked gate. He would be following the matter up further with the landowners and may wish to seek advice from the Forum in due course.

6. Membership and recruitment

PC had recently spoken to Scottish Land and Estates' regional manager, who had agreed to make local members aware of the requirement for new members. There was discussion of the possibility of publicising the Forum by sharing a stand at the Angus Show with other organisations including SLE, Angus moorland Forum and Esk Rivers Trust. AM suggested that the National Access Forum could ask member organisations to highlight NAFs through their individual member newsletters. IM agreed to put the suggestion to the LAF rep on the NAF.

7. AOCB.

There was no other business.

8. 2024 meeting dates

The proposed meeting dates, that had been circulated with the agenda, were agreed.
Next meeting, Monday 15 April 2024