

**Summary Note:  
National Access Forum and Local Access Forums  
Annual Joint Meeting 2017**

***Promoting the Benefits of Access- Making Responsible Access Happen***

**Battleby Centre, Perth - 17th March 2017**

***Chair: David Henderson Howat (Convenor, National Access Forum)***

**Opening** – David introduced himself as the new convenor, and welcomed everyone. In a brief introductory exercise, delegates chatted and noted their key topic of interest for the day. These are recorded in annex 2 below.

**Morning theme: Enjoying the Outdoors with Dogs**

Speakers - Stephen Jenkinson, Kennel Club Access and Countryside Advisor -  
'Promoting the good: minimising the bad'

Dr Fiona Fylan, Brainbox Research Ltd. -  
'Getting dog owners (and their dogs) more active in woodlands'

Theresa Kewell, SNH -  
'Promoting responsible dog walking on National Nature Reserves –  
a project researching ideas, trialling practical solutions and training  
Followed by discussion on dogs in the outdoors.

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New "Outdoor Access Design Guide" launch – John Duffy, Paths for All - revised version of the design guide on outdoor infrastructure like gates, boardwalks, ramps, fences, seats, etc.  
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**Afternoon theme – recognising successes for all on the ground**

Quick-fire reports on real-life positive initiatives around Scotland:

- St. Fillan's Group - Kenny Auld LLTNP
- Community Paths Groups - Roxanne Kerr, Paths for All
- Kinneil Estate cycling routes – Angus Duncan
- Smarter Choices Smarter Places – Andrea Partridge, PfA

Copies of any of the above presentation powerpoints can be emailed on request to the NAF Secretary.

**Open Issues group sessions** – small group discussion sessions to share participants' queries and interests (see annex 2). Key points reported -

a) **Dogs:** all about turning difficulties into opportunities / material on SNH website / lack of knowledge over picking up and disposing of dog poo / dog-friendly tourism.

b) **Networking:** lots of opportunities, how do you make connections and find people? / networking events / community planning, community groups / swapping emails addresses for longer term contacts / use local councillors, as conduits in both directions / Community Sports Hubs / Town Centre re-generation groups / links within Council departments.

c) **Promotion:** SOAC possibly a bit dry? / re-boot, using social media / resources - more hand-out materials needed / use partnerships and events / run safety days in schools / run training events eg. on John Muir, and on SOAC / work via target groups.

d) **Legal** – discussion on s14 notices, how to phrase, which parties to serve on / how to deal with landowner refusals (but that can be their prerogative) / s27 Guidance is currently being updated, due for public consultation shortly / a consensus view that it is perfectly valid to use s11 orders over non-motorised events, eg large orienteering or mountain bike events.

e) **Funding** – needs a higher level national push for resources from health and transport to be applied eg. to core paths, possibly as a statutory duty? / promote the benefits of the access officer functions / make the annual returns data on activities more widely published and distributed – possibly through NAF?

In closing, convenor thanked all the speakers and those who had helped organise a successful and positive day.

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**Annex 1 - Attenders:**

Name		Area / organisation
Bridget	Freeman	Aberdeenshire AO north
Marsaili	Aspinall	Aberdeenshire AO south
Hamish	Booth	Aberdeenshire LAF
Paul	Clark	Angus AO
Gill	Lawrie	Angus LAF
Don	Milton	BHS Scotland NAF
Helene	Mauchlen	BHS Scotland NAF
Dick	Clark	Clackmannanshire LAF chair
Paul	Timms	Cycling UK Scotland NAF
Bryan	Scott	Dumfries and Galloway - AO
Peter	Ross	Dumfries and Galloway LAF chair
Alistair	Kyle	East Dunbartonshire AO
Jim	Lawson	East Dunbartonshire LAF
Eric	Gotts	East Dunbartonshire LAF chair (CIlr)
Christopher	Spencer	East Lothian LAF
Keith	Griffiths	Edinburgh City - LAF
Martin	Duncan	Edinburgh City Council - AO
Angus	Duncan	Falkirk AO NAF
Alison	Irvine	Fife AO
Beryl	Leatherland	Fife LAF
Ian	Wilkinson	Fife LAF chair
Kevin	Lafferty	Forestry Commission Sc NAF

Fiona	Fylan	FCS / Brainbox Reseach
Jim	Riddell	Glasgow City LAF
Sue	Hilder	Glasgow City Council - AO
Kenny	Auld	Loch Lomond &TNP AO
Bob	Ellis	Loch Lomond &TNP LAF
John	Pope	Midlothian LAF
Ian	Douglas	Moray AO
Jean	Oliver	Moray LAF
Chris	Todd	Mountaineering Scotland NAF
James	Orpwood	Mountaineering Scotland NAF
David	Henderson	NAF Convenor
	Howat	
Rob	Garner	NAF Sec, SNH
Anne	Gascoigne	Orkney LAF vice-chair
Rona	Gibb	Paths for All NAF
John	Duffy	Paths for All NAF
Roxanne	Kerr	Paths for All NAF
Andrea	Partridge	Paths for All NAF
Hugh	Anderson	Perth & Kinross LAF
John	Andrews	Perth & Kinross LAF
Bob	Bennet	P&K Ctr for Inclusive Living
Kirsty	Niven	P&K Ctr for Inclusive Living
Helen	Todd	Ramblers Scotland NAF
Douglas	Wright	Scottish Borders LAF
William	Davidson	Scottish Borders LAF
Carolyn	Hedley	Scottish Golf Env Manager NAF
Gareth	Heavisides	Scottish Government NAF
Stephen	Jenkinson	Scottish Kennel Club NAF
Karen	Ramoo	Scottish Land & Estates NAF
Colin	Matheson	Scottish Orienteering Assoc NAF
Karen	Inkster	Scotways NAF
Kevin	Serginson	Shetland Islands Council - AO
Theresa	Kewell	SNH
Alan	Macpherson	SNH NAF
Rachel	Shiple	South Ayrshire AO
Alan	Bannister	South Lanarkshire Council - AO
Bill	Lindsay	South Lanarkshire Council - LAF
Roddy	Ross	Stirling LAF
Simon	Pilpel	Sth Lanarkshire Council - AO NAF
Darren	Crumpton	West Lothian Ranger

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**Annex 2 - Main topics of interest** as posted at outset: (Grouped into 6 discussion groups)

<b>Topic Group</b>	<b>Entries as written on Post-It Notes -</b>
<b>Multiple Use:</b>	Multi-functional golf courses
	Equestrian access – on esp Livestock Farmland
	Horse users damaging paths and making them inaccessible to other users
	Pedestrians v. cyclists
	Conflict of use of paths by access users
	Genuinely multi-use access
	Alert others if your presence – ring bell / call out
	Bikes/cyclists – little regard for other users more to encourage bells on bikes
	Equestrian access conflicts
	Parking for roadside access
	Connecting national path network
	Facilities – walking routes
	Wild camping in National Park
	Responsible camping- relationship with landowners / managers and dog walkers
	Multi-use routes – sharing – respect – Erosion, prevent damage / when not to use – surfaces important but don't want all tarred.
<b>Networking:</b>	Community Paths groups
	Encouraging community engagement with LAFs
	Finding out what other groups are doing
	Listen to and Share experiences
	Info on case studies
	Networking with other sports/land-use organisations
	Community sports hubs
	What is general health of LAFs across Scotland
	How do all the different organisations 'gel' together?
	Get an understanding of common themes at local level
<b>Promotion:</b>	More promotion of Outdoor Access Code
	Increasing path usage
	Knowledge on funding for leaflets for accessible walks
	Better encouraging young people to enjoy the outdoor environment responsibly – promoted in schools?
<b>Dogs:</b>	Glean advice on dealing with dog issues
	What is the long-term vision and goals for dog ownership?
	Dog fouling
	Dog poo – what are we going to do!
	Dog fouling on farm land – infections risk to cattle/sheep, need wider/hard hitting publicity promotions – on TV?
	Dog walking industry – conflict
	Dogs in woodland? Since LRA passed, no birdsong in woods – sad!

	Engaging with commercial dog walkers – dog control
	Changing perceptions of dog owners that they need to keep them on a lead now and again
<b>Funding:</b>	Erosion of access authority including lack of capacity + potential solutions
	What burning issues do access staff/rangers have? What do you want to do and what's stopping you?
	How to deal with access issues when there are hardly any access officers
	Diminishing resources- both staff and funding in access authorities
	Why do local authorities struggle to deal with simple problems?
	Mapping updates
	Local access forums are stagnant, no-one wants to chair, no new members
	Local bridge over Clyde demolished – core path, historic usage, new housing scheme – no LAF – how to discuss, how to fix/renew ?
	A9 project: consultants appear to be giving NMUs good access routes. Will this survive the costing stage, spread over 25 years? Watchful waiting needed!
	Path maintenance – who? – overuse ?
	Best practice to get people to maintain the existing path network
	Funding for local access officers
	Local government funding in decline
<b>Legal:</b>	NAF needs to explore a better way of resolving access issues without recourse to court action: these cost £50K+ each; LAs are strapped for cash and if they don't act, the country will close down
	No statutory obligation to maintain core paths
	Section 14 orders
	Wording on Section 14 notice to ensure <u>continued</u> access
	Enduro cycling and S11
	Solutions around landowner refusal of organised events (unreasonable grounds?)
	Legal fees for access issues
	What are genuine landowner concerns around 'environmental damage'? – eg. capercaillie. Needs well-evidenced argument
	Complications around rights of way vis a vis core paths