

National Access Forum Update – May 2016

Summary of main topics - National Access Forum meeting 18th May 2016

Police Scotland –

The meeting received an informative update from two representatives from Police Scotland. Gerry McMenemy (Community Inspector Forth Valley Division) described the new briefing note on the Act and Code for police officers, which has been prepared in consultation with the Forum. This 'Outdoor Access Guide' for police has now been loaded onto the Police Scotland intranet, so it can be easily referred to by police officers and police control room staff, using a range of key-words and topic names to access the information. It includes brief information on responsible access rights, key topics, hyper-links to the SOAC website and to the contacts list of access officers and authorities. Gerry McMenemy also acts as a national co-ordinator to the network of local community inspectors across Scotland, who are probably the best point of contact for non-emergency local police matters, and your local contact can be searched at <http://www.scotland.police.uk/your-community/communities> .

Inspector Jane Donaldson, National Rural Crime Co-ordinator, described the recent work of SPARC, the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime, since it was formed in 2015 involving partners such as NFUS, Scottish Land and Estates, NFU Mutual insurers, Neighbourhood Watch, the Scottish Fire Service, and a wider correspondence network including SNH – see <http://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/home-and-personal-property/rural-crime> . SPARC has produced guidance over taking care over security, avoiding theft of all sorts, and operating a Rural Watch scheme, and it led on the successful partnership campaign March-May 2016 to tackle sheep-worrying through education, advice and improved case reporting.

Communications: Shared Communication Calendar –

Marion Mulholland (SNH) provided update information on the shared forward calendar of planned communications activities created on Knowledge Hub, which now includes a range of bodies such as FCS, Ramblers and Paths for All, and remains open to further participants. It is easy for all interested organisations to join and use the calendar to directly access and edit, as follows :

1. Click on <https://khub.net/home> and register for free.
2. You should receive an e-mail from Khub. Click to confirm your registration.
3. Log in, agree to Terms of Use, and fill in (or skip) Profile information.
4. Search for the group 'Scottish Outdoor Access Code Communications', and click on this group.
5. Give a brief reason for joining request and click on 'Apply to join'.
6. Once approved you will be able to fully access the group, and amend the Planner.
7. The Planner is located on the Wiki page, click on 'Edit' to amend, and 'Publish' once finalised.

The group page can also be used to post forthcoming events, contribute to discussions on the forum, write a blog or upload documents. (If you have any queries please contact Theresa.Kewell@snh.gov.uk in the first instance).

Marion also described the communications campaign on responsible camping which is planned for 2016 and next year.

National Access Forum Guidance documents -

The re-formatted NAF Guidance documents on Lighting fires and on Stalking Communication are now available on the Code website at <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/The-Act-and-the-Code/Guidance-documents>. The guidance on summary messages on good signage practice has been re-formatted, and the meeting discussed suggestions for similarly updating the guidance on managing informal camping, including the glossary of definitions as a new annex.

SRDP – Improving Public Access scheme –

The meeting heard that the first round of IPA applications had been decided, at a multi-agency meeting which was attended by the NAF Convenor as observer. Some 18 applications were approved with a total value of approx. £930,000, from many parts of Scotland and from a variety of types of applicant, and contracts are currently being issued. The second round of the IPA scheme is open for applications until 31st May 2016.

Supporting Upland Paths –

A report from SNH explained how a range of interested organisations had met in November to look at how to support paths work in upland areas. Several lines of action arose from the meeting, from gathering better information on costs, and surveying user opinions, to meeting with economic and tourism agencies, and a small steering group is taking matters forward. There was discussion on other potential funding sources, like the energy sector, and on the need for national survey data.

Mapping Core Paths –

The paper from Scottish Government described forthcoming improvements to shared mapping in the Local Government 'Spatial Hub', bringing together and publishing a number of additional national geographic data-sets. One of those data-sets is to be the core paths mapping. There are no current plans for core paths being shown on OS mapping, but this is to be investigated further.

Nomination of next Convenor -

With John Thomson's convenorship concluding at the end of 2016, nominations for a successor are invited from Full and Corresponding member organisations, to be submitted to the Secretary before 19th August, to enable selection at the next Forum meeting.

Future NAF meetings in 2016 –

The next Forum meetings will take place at Battleby on Wednesday **28th September 2016**, and subsequently on 8th February 2017.

For more information, or to contribute views on any of the above topics, please contact the NAF Secretary - Rob Garner (robgarner.NAFsec@snh.gov.uk ; 0131 316 2682). Further information can be found on the National Access Forum pages at <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/access-forum/>.