

NOTE OF STIRLING AREA LOCAL ACCESS FORUM TRAINING MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VIEWFORTH, STIRLING, on THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2006 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:-

Cheryl Campbell, Paul Davison, Councillor Tony Ffinch, Michael Gray, Simon Hart, Linda Howson, Duncan McEwen, David Petch, John Pitt, Roderick Ross, Graham Taylor, Councillor Gillie Thomson and Robert Sparkes.

Officers:-

Donald Balsille, Manager, Environment Services
Richard Barron, Senior Access Officer, Environment Services
Ann Dromgoole, Committee Officer, Corporate Services
Robert Hunter, Countryside Development Officer, Environment Services
Penny Stoddard, Access Officer, Environment Services
Alison Perry, Community Access Officer, Environment Services

Apologies for absence were received from Niall Bowser and John Campbell.

INTRODUCTION

Richard Barron welcomed everyone and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to advise Members what was expected of them as Forum Members. Members were introduced to each other. It was noted that some Members had links with other Access Forums.

The meeting received Presentations from Officers of Environment Services that covered the following topics:-

History of Countryside Access at Stirling Council
Volunteers, the Volunteers and the Countryside Service
How we deal with Access Issues
Core Path Plans

Members were then given the opportunity to ask questions on points of the Presentations as follows:-

- The vision to develop CAMS to link with other areas of Council Services to enable the system to be accessed Council wide;
- Core Paths will act as a constraint on Developer's Plans;
- Some Footpaths are used so little that they are not identified in the Core Plans;
- That consultation will take place with local communities regarding the Core paths;
- The issue of how the Forum will deal with Access issues will be considered at a future meeting;
- Concern regarding litigation against farmers etc arising from the public accessing the countryside;
- The linkage between the Council's Access Officers and Officers within Planning Services.

Following the first Presentation Members were split into small Groups and asked to respond to the following Questions: -

What do you think of the Council's Access work to date? (responses requested on an individual basis);

What do you think of the Council's Access work? (responses provided on a Group basis);

What do you think the Countryside Access Team Do? (responses given on an Individual and Group Basis)

The responses to the Questions were as undernoted: -

INDIVIDUAL		
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE COUNCIL'S ACCESS WORK TO DATE?		
POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	NO IDEA
Council has been active in Access matters for a long time	Negative – could do more	No idea
Positive	Slow to realise implications	No idea
Good to date	Poor	
Positive	Slow to get off the ground	
Good preparation that will hopefully lead to improvement on the ground. Not much yet in the west		

AS A GROUP		
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE COUNCIL'S ACCESS WORK TO DATE?		
POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	NO IDEA
Need more resources (Users)	Not enough communication between Groups and Council. More joined up thinking needed by all Groups.	No idea
	Prepare information before development (Carron Dam, Cambusbarron)	Access work – no consensus

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS TEAM DO?	
INDIVIDUAL	GROUP
Sign-posting paths, catalogue paths system, resolve disputes, uphold access legislation	
Work hard, solve path issues, plan new paths & community path network, Access Forum, they need more money	Group, Access, Not sure
Not sure	Car parking
Not sure	Not sure
Encourage responsible access to the countryside	Joined up thinking
Develop paths and plans for improvements; apply for resources	Develop community paths network, do what they can, maintain catalogue of path networks, handle disputes and problems, organise Forum
Resurface/improve routes and improve signage, involve communities in ID local plan network	

A map identifying the area within the control of the Forum was displayed and a copy of A Brief Guide to Occupiers' Legal Liabilities in Scotland was included in the Briefing Pack, which had been issued to all Members.

A Quiz on the Countryside was also held. The Answers to the Quiz would be circulated to all Members.

It was also agreed that a Contact List of SALA Forum Members be circulated to all Members on the understanding that no details of any Member may be divulged to members of the public without the express permission of the person concerned.

DATE OF FIRST MEETING

Members agreed that their First meeting take place in April 2006 and that the Clerk confirm with them the date of the Meeting. An Evaluation Sheet on the evening would be issued to Members for completion and return to Ann Dromgoole.

Members were thanked for their attendance and the Meeting was closed at 7.50 p.m.