

Scottish Borders Access Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 24 July 2012 (2-4pm)

Scottish Borders Council,
Committee Room 1,
Council HQ,
Newtown St Boswells.

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
W Davidson (National Farmers Union Scotland) – Chair; David Langworth (Melrose Paths Group); Cllr Ron Smith (Economic Development Executive Group), Andy Millar (SBC, Built and Natural Heritage Manager), Trevor Bryant (Cycling Representative); Douglas Wright (Central Tweeddale Paths), Neil Mackay (SBC, Senior Access Officer)
2. **Apologies / Absent**
I Aitchison (Scottish Land Estates); Cllr Stuart Bell (Economic Development Executive Group)
3. **Minutes of last meeting of Access Forum**
Correct, unless any comments are sent electronically
4. **Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda**
Public Access to Outdoor Access Forum. Debate was had around a meeting to which Public attendance was invited. A theme to entice people with relevant speakers was agreed. AM suggested that Graham Johnston could come and discuss the Peebles Path Engineering Project. Other suggestions were Alistair Lawson of Scotways, Neil Ramsay of Heritage Paths. Location needs to be accessible and perhaps could tie in with the Walking Festival later in that year. NM suggested early spring 2013, all agreed and an evening meeting and Old Gala House was accepted as a good central location. All suggestions to be submitted to NM prior to the next Forum Meeting.
5. **Core Path Planning Update**
Not due to be updated until 2014, however out of the 1000km of Core Paths, 850km are now sign posted and the five SBC officers continue to work on the plan. Flooding this year has caused many issues.
6. **Paths to Health Update**
Denise Carmichael attended the meeting to give an update on the Walk It Project. Key Elements were:
Project has been running since 2005 when there were 5 Walk It Groups in the Borders
There are currently 22 active Walk It Walks in Borders Town
Project is run by Volunteer Walk Leaders who are recruited and trained by the Project
Project is funded by SBC and NHS so is a good example of cross organisational working
Project also runs key initiatives to promote Walking for Health: such as the Borders Disability Forum Walking Group and various Day Centre Walking Groups
Project awarded funding this Year to develop and publish an Easy Access to the Countryside Publication which will be done in 2012

7. A.O.B

1. AM talked about the Bridges Audit which was underway for 252 bridges, this would perhaps provide a systematic approach to maintenance.
2. Douglas Wright raised a specific question about Old Manor Bridge and AM gave an update. This Bridge was B listed bridge in 102. Poor conditions have led to the Bridge being closed to vehicle traffic. Heritage Lottery funding is not available for this Bridge, nor is SRDP so at the moment discussion is ongoing about what can be done on any maintenance and who has responsibility for this.
3. NM gave a brief update on the St Cuthbert's Way project. Leader funding will end next year for this project.
4. Discussion was held around charging at Cardrona Forest car park. NM to ask Bill Coombes for statement on Forestry Commission strategy for car parking fees.
5. Discussion was held around production of a questionnaire for attendees of the next forum about what they hoped the Forum could and would achieve. NM to take on this point.

8. Date of next meeting

Tuesday November 27th at 6.30pm at SBC