

Scottish Borders Access Forum

Tuesday 19 February 2013 2pm

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

1. Welcome and Introductions
W Davidson (Chair); Neil Mackay (SBC - Senior Access Officer); B Masson (BHS); D Langworth (Melrose Paths Group); I Aitkinson (Scottish Land & Estates); Keith Robeson (SBC - Senior Countryside Ranger) J Hall (SBC - Outdoor Education); D Wright (Scotways / Central Tweed Paths Group); Cllr R Smith (SBC - Executive Member for Planning & Environment).
2. Apologies / Absent
W Douglas (NFUS)
3. Minutes of last meeting of Access Forum
Correct, unless any comments are sent electronically
4. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda
NM advised that Mr Thomson from Nenthorn CC should be attending regarding a dispute near Nenthorn. Chair advised in the absence of Mr Thomson, we should delay until such time as Mr Thomson arrives and discuss in AOB.
5. Planning for Open Access Forum Meeting
NM to arrange venue for Open Access Meeting in Galashiels (e.g. Heriot Watt). Noted A Fraser will attend to present a short presentation. Other presentation ideas include; Core Paths, Core Path Plan review, Walking Festival, presentations from other organisations (e.g. Borders Search & Rescue, Forestry Commission, Canoeing, Kirk Yetholm Hostel. Proposed start time 6.30 venue open – 7pm start. It was also suggested that there could be two rooms: one for organisation's stands, the other for presentations. Forum agreed to have Open LAF meeting and a separate 'business' meeting.
6. Core Path Planning Update
Core Path Planning Review is proposed to commence 2013/14. In the meantime the Access Team continue to develop the network through improvements and signposting.
Possible surface repairs required on Dere Street (Pennymuir Section) – NM to investigate.
7. Paths to Health Update
D Carmichael to circulate update – NM to Action
8. A.O.B
LAF noted that the Scottish National Trail was promoted by Cameron

McNeish which starts in Kirk Yetholm, using largely the SCW and SUW. Whitehaugh, Peebles – new route created through developer contributions.

South of Scotland Countryside Trails – reprint required. NM advised this was a SUP project and reprints are not the responsibility of SBC.

NM advised the Forum of an access issue in Nenthorn which Mr Thomson from Nenthorn CC was to attend (no attendance). NM explained the Council's legal opinion. The Forum discussed the issue, that no evidence of use had been submitted, and the Council's statutory duties (Land Reform [Scotland] Act 2003) regarding the situation. Accounting for the Duty (S.13) "It is the duty of the local authority to assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment any route, waterway or other means by which access rights may reasonably be exercised" and that no route is recorded (and no evidence to suggest existence of a route) the Forum agreed with the contents of the Legal Dept.

Oxton Riders Group – New group formed in Oxton to discuss the creation / improvement of path network surrounding the village for all access.

New publications due 2013/14 – Easy Access; Paths Around Abbotsford; Paths Around Innerleithen.

Reports of conflicts between riders and cyclists on Peebles – Innerleithen Railway route, EN to investigate.

Upper Tweed Railway Paths are undertaking a feasibility study to link Peebles – Symington – Broughton – Talla.

8. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 4 June 2pm

Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells

Committee Room 4