

Scottish Borders Access Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held online on Wednesday 26th October 2022

Present:

William Davidson (Chair)
Walter Douglas (NFU)
Keith Robeson (SBC Senior Ranger)
David Langworth (Melrose Paths Group)
Trevor Bryant, (Cycling)
Beryl Masson (British Horse Society)
Ben McCallum (SBC Access Ranger West)
Denise Brydon (SBC Access and Transport Assistant)

Apologies

Andy Pearson (Water Access)
Katie Jarvis
Douglas Wright

Introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting especially Ben McCallum who has joined the Access Team as Access Ranger West.

Minutes of last meeting of the Access Forum

The minutes of 25th May 2022 were accepted as a true reflection and will now be posted to the SBC website.

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/378/minutes_of_local_access_forum

Matters arising

Will be dealt with as agenda items. BM noted that some items had been carried forward to discuss with KJ who had sent apologies. It was agreed that this should be followed up by email. KR gave an update on Craik and it was agreed that SBC access team would continue action on signage.

SBC Access Rangers Update

KR presented a summary of the Access Rangers report – a copy will be circulated with these minutes. It was noted that in addition to normal maintenance, bridge repairs and age related deterioration of bridges continues to impact on the team workload and budgets. BMcC provided an update on Craw Wood, Peebles signage issue. WD congratulated KR and the Team on a comprehensive report again.

Other Interest Updates

Cycling

DB presented a summary of the cycling update – a copy will be circulated with these minutes. Current projects were detailed including construction of the Eddleston Water Path. TB expressed an interest in joining the opening event – DB to arrange. KR recorded appreciation of the work done by DB at Eddleston.

Equestrian

BM reported on post Storm Arwen issues particularly at Venlaw and it was agreed that this should also be passed to Katie Jarvis with the outstanding issues from the matters arising.

BM agreed to pass on BMcC details to Lesley Muirden to review the ROW to Hamilton Hill.

BM and KR also reported on the access issues mainly for horses at Lamberton and a full discussion was held. It was noted that this is ongoing and KR thanked BM for her support.

Paths to Health report

KR presented a summary of the Walk It update provided by Denise Carmichael – a copy will be circulated with these minutes. The Forum welcomed the Walk It project and noted that it continues to expand. KR recorded that the management of the Walk It programme by DC is exceptional and the Forum recorded appreciation of the Walk It programme and the work of DC ongoing.

Water Access

AP represents water access on the Forum but had provided KR with an update as he was unable to attend the meeting. AP had advised that there are few issues and overall the situation is very positive. AP is reviewing, along with the Scottish Canoe Association, an access issue regarding a commercial business at St Mary's Loch.

Walking Festival update

Plans are underway to hold the Scottish Borders Walking Festival in Kelso in 2023.

Access issues updates

KR provided an overview of current access issues. Parking at Bowhill and Abbotsford was reviewed. Darnick, Lennel, Heiton and Westruther issues were fully discussed.

Any Other Business

Forum Membership and format of meetings

Meeting format – this was discussed and it was agreed given the poll of members that the January meeting will be held online. The summer meeting will be arranged on site and Bowhill was suggested as a possible outdoor venue.

John Buchan Way

DW had asked for this to be raised in his absence. Noted BMcC is working on the SBC response and will circulate the proposals to the Forum and update at the next meeting.

Captains Road

KR and DL provided an update on this ROW issue which has been resolved.

National Access Forum

Agreed to review the BAF representation at the next meeting with DW. Noted that the NAF minutes are sent to all members of the BAF. KR suggested that the Craik issues could be raised with the NAF if appropriate.

Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held online on Tuesday 24th January 2023 at 2pm. A hold the date invite will be issued now.