

## **Scottish Borders Access Forum**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held online on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

#### **Present:**

William Davidson (Chair)  
Beryl Masson (British Horse Society)  
Douglas Wright, (Central Tweeddale Paths and Scottish Rights of Way Society)  
Keith Robeson (SBC Senior Ranger)  
Trevor Bryant, (Cycling)  
PC Nick Walker (Police Scotland)  
David Langworth (Melrose Paths Group) – audio only  
Susan Gray, (SBC Access Ranger)  
Denise Brydon (SBC Access and Transport Assistant)

#### **Attending:**

Emily Farquharson (Cycling UK) part meeting

#### **Apologies**

Councillor Mark Rowley (Executive Member for Community Planning)  
Walter Douglas (NFU Scotland)  
Michael Paton, (Bowhill)  
Katie Jarvis (Forestry & Land Scotland)

#### **Introduction**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair invited Emily Farquharson to present an update of her role for Cycling UK in the Scottish Borders area for the two current projects. EF provided an insight into the Rural Communities and SHIFT projects. EF also provided her contact email [emily.a.farquhar@cyclingsuk.org](mailto:emily.a.farquhar@cyclingsuk.org) – DW asked for details of etiquette on shared use paths. EF updated on education and support. BM asked about habituation training and advice for horses and cyclists. EF offered support to BHS if required. WD recorded thanks to EF for attending and providing this update.

#### **Minutes of last meeting of the Access Forum**

The minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021 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](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/378/minutes_of_local_access_forum)

#### **Matters arising**

Will be dealt with as agenda items except Membership of the Forum - Representation from other groups. It was noted that additional NFU representation will be requested via Walter Douglas. No replies for the Water Access representative requests have been received although the details were widely circulated – TB will contact some individuals. KR reported that there is still no nomination for a representative for Scottish Land and Estates. DW suggested Scotways may have water access representatives who might be interested. NW suggested SBPARC NFU representatives to contact.

### **SBC Access Rangers Update**

KR presented a summary of the Access Rangers report – a copy will be circulated with these minutes. In summary, it continues to be a busy and challenging period for the Access Team due to Covid-19 restrictions and a reduction in staff resource. The Team is still working from home.

SG provided an update on Dere Street path improvement works at Whitton Edge. BM thanked SG for organising these works. SG advised on the project and on the budget implications of other potential works along Dere Street. KR also advised on the Dere Street Soutra section works and on the HES approvals required.

SG provided an update on water access points and Leaderfoot access issue.

A full discussion on bridges and issues was held and KR updated on the Roxburgh Viaduct low level footbridge refurbishment.

WD recorded thanks and noted appreciation of the format and content of the Access Rangers Report which was agreed as appropriate and informative by the Forum.

### **Other Interest Updates**

#### **Cycling**

DB presented a summary of the cycling update – a copy will be circulated with these minutes. Current projects were detailed and it was noted that the Eddleston Water Path construction funding is in place and it is hoped that construction will start in November 2021.

TB advised on progress on the cycling directory app being developed and it was agreed that TB/ KR and DB will meet to review the entry for the Access Forum and Team.

DW asked for details on the definition of “wheeling” in Sustrans publications and communications – DB updated that this can mean prams, and wheelchairs etc as well as bicycles.

#### **Equestrian**

BM provided a report on equestrian issues. There had been a recent Scottish Endurance Championship event at Ancrum which had been popular. SG asked to see the routes covered and BM will send.

### **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 update and noted that it was very interesting to see the projects developing. DL asked about Walk Leader liability and SG advised that this is covered through Paths for All.

W Davidson recorded appreciation of the Walk It programme and the work of the Co-ordinator ongoing.

### **Walking Festival update**

Galashiels Weekend Walking Festival – KR reported on the mini festival in Galashiels which had been held from 10-12 September 2021. It is planned that the full Festival will return to Galashiels in 2022 and then Kelso will host in 2023. KR advised that there will be a review of the Scottish Borders Walking Festival website.

WD welcomed this report for the Festivals.

### **Access issues updates**

KR provided an overview of current issues.

The SEPA fencing of water courses was raised and WD agreed to discuss the consultation process at national level. It was also noted that it would be beneficial to remind Land Agents of Access legislation. The timing of the registration process for agricultural land would be investigated.

### **Any Other Business**

### **Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next online meeting would be held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 2pm.