

# Minutes of the meeting of Orkney Local Access Forum and Countryside Committee

Wednesday 16 July 2014 at 8pm  
Firth Church, Finstown

## Present:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Brenda Blunn      | Orkney Ramblers Club   |
| Stephen Jenkinson | Scottish Kennel Club/Chair                                       |
| Roddy Mackay      | Orkney Islands Council   |
| Simon Treasure    | Orkney Tourism Group   |
| Ian Wilkins       | Orkney Islands Council   |
| Paul Vickers      | Orkney Islands Council   |
| Alan Muir         | Orkney Islands Council   |
| James Green       | Orkney Islands Council   |
| Ken Lawson        | Scottish Government's Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate |
| Sandra Miller     | Orkney History Society   |
| Anne Gascoigne    | Orkney Field Club/Vice Chair                                     |
| Victor Muir       | National Farmers Union   |
| Elaine Clarke     | HS Ranger Service  |
| Barbara Scollay   | Secretary  |

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Liz Dennison, Gavin Barr, Caroline Wickham-Jones, Alan Leitch, Rod Thorne, Hugh Halcro-Johnston and Sandy Firth.

## **2. Adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 April 2014**

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Ken Lawson, seconded by Elaine Clarke.

## **3. Matters Arising**

None

## **4. National Access Forum Update**

Stephen attends NAF meetings as part of the Kennel Club and reported briefly on discussions that took place on 7 May; level crossings, the SRDP scheme, the improved navigation on the SNH website and core path planning (a national database is planned along with a digest of sheriff court decisions and circulation of potential sources of funding for the setting up of core paths). The Land Reform Group noted generally that access is working well with some issues of interpretation. Points noted were on blocked accesses, dog fouling, wild camping and damage by horses and bikes. Stephen noted that rights of access over sea water was discussed in relation to whether it should come within access rights legislation and this will be an interesting thread to follow.

The secretary will distribute the link to the NAF update document.

## **5. Regular Update on Core Path Maintenance**

Ian distributed copies of his report to the meeting (copy attached to the minutes) and Stephen voiced appreciation of the helpfulness of having a document including maps to refer to. Ian aims to complete the surveying of the core path network by the end of 2015, at which point the process will start again, although it will be quicker as measurements etc have already been taken. It was noted that the unexpected requirement to carry out an otter survey had delayed some works at Newark in Deerness. A question was raised on fairness to all areas or communities and Ian explained that Papay Community Council had asked for money to repair some furniture and the Council had been happy to provide this. The Council will be trialling a Community Empowerment Pilot in Papay and Stronsay and this may lead to further works in these islands.

A further work is that of the footbridge at Rackwick, with the Council's engineering team looking at the most appropriate crossing point for the new footbridge. It is hoped will be completed within this financial year.

## **6. Update on Core Path Plan Review/Outdoor Access in Orkney Workshop with Elected Members and OLAF**

James explained the processes that had been carried out so far in the CPP review and stated that at a recent Member/Officer Working Group several of the Elected Members felt that it was important that the full council understood the issues and aspirations of OLAF. To that end an opportunity for OLAF members to meet with Elected Members has been arranged for Monday 15 September 2014 in the form of a workshop at the Kirkwall and St Ola Community Centre and Town Hall. It is intended that this will include presentations on access strategy and the CPP review, and work group discussions. The review of the CPP will resume after the workshop.

The workshop should be a good opportunity to engage with Elected Members and it is believed to be the first time for OLAF to do so. James hoped that a member or members of OLAF would be willing to do a presentation, perhaps on OLAF's vision of access in Orkney. Stephen noted appreciation for the opportunity to meet and hoped that members would be keen to get involved, with the chance to push individual messages on tourism, health, SRDP etc across and use their enthusiasm for good practice.

The secretary will recirculate the joint response from OLAF members to the CPP review and ask OLAF members to pick out their top three points they would like to see discussed. James and Alan will put together a set of questions to OLAF and Stephen will work with them on structuring the workshop.

## **7. Right of Way Dispute in South Ronaldsay**

This matter was discussed in confidence and minuted separately.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

A Doodle poll will be issued by the secretary to identify a suitable date in the autumn.

Thanking everyone for their attendance the Chair closed the meeting at 10pm.