

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

Wednesday 13 February 2019  
St Magnus Centre

## Present:

Hugh Halcro-Johnston	Scottish Land and Estates
Ken Lawson	Scottish Government's Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate
Ross Irvine	Orkney Islands Council (Deputising for the Chair)
Ian Wilkins	Orkney Islands Council
Simon Treasure	Destination Orkney
Victor Muir	National Farmers Union of Scotland
Jan Blatchford	Orkney Archaeology Society
Ian Robertson	Orkney Ramblers
Iain Talbot	Orkney Ramblers
Sian Evans	Historic Environment Scotland
Ann Marwick	Orkney Heritage Society
Carolyn Griffiths	Orkney Access Panel
Barbara Scollay	Secretary

## **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Sankey, Liz Dennison, Sian Evans, Anne Gascoigne, Mary Connolly, Jessica Jones, Emma Neave-Webb, Sarah Wilkins, Ken Lawson

## **2. Adoption of the minutes from 3 October 2018**

The minutes of the previous meeting were adopted, being proposed by Hugh Halcro-Johnston and seconded by Ian Wilkins.

## **3. Matters arising**

*Conference* – the conference was arranged and went ahead on 30 November with around 30 attendees and a range of interesting speakers. One point noted was that speakers were in agreement that the 'right to roam' is often incorrectly used and there is a need to correct this where possible.

*Invite rep from St Magnus Way to discuss maintenance* – hopefully available for the next meeting

## **4. Maintenance update**

Ian Wilkins has met with the Orkney Ramblers and passed out maps, and the Ramblers are going to submit feedback to Ian on paths that they take.

The Muddisdale path has had problems with the recent heavy rainfall and the Kitchener's Memorial path has suffered similarly.

## **5. Outdoor Access Strategy Workplan/Core Path Plan Review**

Ross reported that the revised Core Path Plan was adopted by the Council in November and subsequently accepted by the Scottish Government. On the council's website there is more interactive mapping available with better detail, and the Plan is now available to read from the website. Ross is happy to take feedback on the way the materials are presented.

Ross is looking to produce a Core Paths leaflet as a media that someone arriving in Orkney could use, in an attractive presentation as an A5 booklet, available from travel centres and the airport, and possibly hotels/B&B's. The leaflet is with a designer now and Ross would like feedback from OLAF members. Suggestions were made that it be available to download/view via Orkney.com, and that the Orkney Tour Guiding Association might be interested in distributing/using. It was also suggested that this leaflet would be an opportunity to highlight responsible access; and that there might be an opportunity to advertise it within the Destination Orkney Bedroom Folders.

Ross explained that the council have applied for funding and are looking to put in a few more sections of boardwalk at Mull Head to alleviate the problems of muddy areas and launch an interpretation app, where users will get information about history, nature etc at different spots along the route. At Happy Valley, a new recycled plastic boardwalk through the wet field below the car park is intended to create a circular path at the site. Carolyn suggested that the Access Panel be contacted to get feedback on the plans for the sites.

**Action:** Circulate draft leaflet for comment once available

## 6. Orkney Native Wildlife Project

Further update at next meeting.

## 7. NAF meeting papers for 30 Jan 2019 and Joint NAF/LAF meeting, 5 April 2019

A representative from OLAF has been asked to give a 10-15 minutes presentation on a suitable topic of their choice at the upcoming Joint NAF/LAF meeting on 5 April and Anne Gascoigne is happy to attend. Those present were happy to suggest the St Magnus Way as a topic for Anne to present, and Ross will speak to David McNeish to see if he is happy to provide Anne with information.

Of the NAF meetings papers for 30 Jan circulated, the Mapping Scotland's Paths paper was discussed, as well as rights of way and the way in which people use land over a period of time.

## 8. AOCB

- Depute representative from National Farmers Union of Scotland  
Victor noted he has arranged a depute for meetings he cannot attend and will pass on details.
- Path Managers Guide to Grading  
Ross explained he has a copy of the Path Managers Guide to Grading in Scotland produced by Paths for All which promotes a consistent grading system. It is an aspiration for Orkney at the present time as it would involve a huge amount of work to survey all paths and allocate gradings.

**Action:** Circulate guide

## 9. Date of next meeting

TBC