



CORPORATE RESOURCES

MIDLOTHIAN ACCESS FORUM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 MAY 2011 AT THE MVA ROOM, WHITE HART STREET, DALKEITH

PRESENT:

John Pope (JPo)	Chair Scotways
David Wardrope-White (DWW)	Sustrans, Cycling Touring Club, SPOKES
James Innes (JI)	Ramblers Association
Kate Duthie (KD)	Esk Valley Trust
Barbara Howie (BH)	Disability Representative
Gilbert Scott (GS)	Federation of Community Councils
Constance Newbould (CN)	British Horse Society
James Kinch (JK)	Midlothian Council, Land and Countryside
John Park (JPa)	Midlothian Council, Land and Countryside – Minutes and Secretary
Justin Venton (JV)	Midlothian Council, Land and Countryside - Observer

ITEM	MINUTE	ACTION
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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUBSTITUTES

- JPo welcomed the Forum members attending. It was noted that there were no substitutes.

2.0 APOLOGIES AND OTHER ABSENCES

- Councillor Wilma Chalmers – Midlothian Council – apologies received.
- Keith Morton – National Farmers Union – apologies received
- John O’Keefe – SNH – apologies received
- Ed Dunbar – SRPBA – apologies received
- Dave Kenny – Cycling Officer from Roads, Midlothian Council – apologies received.

3.0 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

These were accepted as a true record. Item 4.2.5 had been taken away and would be discussed under Item 8.

4.0 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

JPo reported that he had written to the Chief Executive, thanking him for allowing Jo Cooke to address the Forum and saying we had been impressed. He since received a nice reply.

He reported that he had a letter published in the Advertiser regarding sheep worrying, and another article regarding responsible access for dog owners at lambing time. He had also had a letter published in TGO regarding access.

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	He reported that he had emailed the chairman of the EVT asking for a meeting to discuss progress on the Esk Valley Way.	ALL NOTE
5.0	CORE PATH PLAN UPDATE	
	JPa provided an update on the roll out programme for signage installation.	
	Maps 1 and 6 (which includes Danderhall, Dalkeith, Easthouses, Newtongrange, Eskbank and Lasswade) had now been completed.	
	The signage for Map 10 (Penicuik) has been delivered and would be installed over the next few months.	
	The signage for Map 6 (Bonnyrigg, Loanhead, Bilston and Roslin) had now been planned.	ALL NOTE
6.0	DISPUTED ROUTES UPDATE	
	JK went over the "List of Access Disputes and Issues" which had been distributed prior to the meeting. After discussion the following amendments were agreed:	
6.1	The list should be rearranged to show most recent issues at the top of the front page and where issues had been completed for several months then these items should be removed from the list.	JPa ALL NOTE
6.2	<u>Item 1 Huntley Cot</u>	
	A Section 14 notice had not yet been issued as the landowner had not received the previous letter due to it being wrongly addressed. On a recent inspection it was noted that one of the two non compliant signs had been removed. A follow up letter had now been sent.	JPa
6.3	<u>Item 4</u>	
	Dalhousie Chesters had now been completed in that the BHS were satisfied with the barrier system.	ALL NOTE
6.4	<u>Item 2D West Lodge Entrance to High Drive, Melville Estate</u>	
	JPo reported that an old sign still existed which stated "Trespassers will be Prosecuted". JPa would investigate and carry out action required for the signs removal.	JPa

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6.5	<u>Field Next to Pentland Nursery, Bilston</u>	
	<p>CN was unhappy with the (verbal) report that the route from Pentland Farm to Bilston was unsuitable for horses. JPo said he had looked at the route along with the BHS Deputy (Rhona Matthews, who attended the October 2010 meeting of Forum) on 21 November. They decided that north of the field which is to be built on, the ground is too wet for horses, most of the time; in addition, the farmer is not happy to extend its use from purely pedestrian to horse use. To the south, between the telephone exchange and The Monklands (JPo's home) the path is too narrow for horses, and the sight lines are not good. Both these points were disputed by CN. JPo pointed out that a stile had been in position for at least 31 years; it became decrepit for a 2-3 year period, during which (commercial) use by horses occurred, which had led to problems. The farmer replaced the stile of his own accord.</p>	
7.0	STRATEGIC ROUTES, LOCAL PATH INITIATIVES	
	<p>JK went over the list of Access Initiatives which had been distributed prior to the meeting. The following comments were made:</p>	
7.1	<u>Item 9 Loanhead to Shawfair Cycleway</u>	
	<p>This was 95% complete with signage and some fencing in Loanhead to be completed.</p>	DK/DWW
7.2	<u>Item 10 Esk Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme</u>	
	<p>It was suggested that as Ian Whitehead had left, the project name be changed to give more clarity as to what the project was about. JK to suggest to CSGN.</p>	JK
7.3	<u>Item 29 Bush Estate, Remote Cycleway</u>	
	<p>CN reported that the signage did not show that horse riders could use the path, now that the legal classification of the route has been changed. BHS should write to DK regarding this issue.</p>	CN
7.4	<u>Item 32 Penicuik to Dalkeith Cycle/Footway</u>	
	<p>CN reported that the grass verge along the recently completed tarred section to Rosewell had not yet been completed to meet the needs of the horse riders. JPa to examine.</p>	JPa
7.5	<u>Item 36 Hewan Wood, Pathwork and Landscape Works</u>	
	<p>KD reported that this work was now completed.</p>	ALL NOTE

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7.6	<u>Item 38 Waverley Cycling and Walking Paths at Newbattle</u>	
	Now 95% complete. Some works regarding gate and fencing to be completed.	DK
	In addition to the pathwork done by Midlothian Council it was noted that extensive path refurbishment work had been done in Lord Ancrum Woods by the Forestry Commission. JPa agreed to write to Forestry Commission thanking them for this excellent work.	JPa
7.7	<u>Item 41 Access to Pentland Hills – Feasibility Study</u>	
	The draft report commissioned by the Pentland Hills Regional Park and funded by Central Scotland Green Network had now been completed, however it had been noted that the Access Forum had not been consulted to input to the report.	
	JPo would write to Alan McGregor, Pentland Hills Park Manager expressing his concern over this issue. In particular the concern was over the route from Penicuik through Coates Farm and how this could be improved both outwith and within the Park boundary.	JPo
8.0	FEEDBACK FROM OPEN MEETING IN JANUARY	
	JPo distributed a summary note of the meeting and also a list of key points made on the feedback forms by the people who attended the meeting. Discussion took place and it was agreed that the best way forward was to form a working group consisting of JPo, JPa, DWW and GS where they would examine what the Access Forum should concentrate their efforts on. The output from their findings should then be presented to the Forum at the August meeting.	JPo/JPa/ DWW/ GS
9.0	AOB	
9.1	<u>Initiatives to Encourage Access</u>	
	DWW raised this issue. It was agreed that this should be incorporated into the objectives of the working party as per Item 8.0 above.	
9.2	<u>Oatslie – The Cleugh – Kirkettle Route</u>	
	CN raised the issue of horse riders being prevented from access through the farm. Apparently horse riders had been allowed to access in the past. JPa pointed out that this was not a Right of Way or Core Path and with a farm yard there were safety issues. JPo pointed out that he had researched the history of use of the route several years ago, when Chairman of Community Council. According to a native of Roslin, now deceased, he could not recall the route ever having been used in his lifetime. It may well have been an old drove road, but its existence as a right of way is time expired. JPa agreed to examine.	JPa

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9.3	<u>Seafield Road, Bilston – Housing Development</u>	
	<p>CN stated that she was concerned that the horse rider access through the land currently used, would no longer exist with the new development. As CN had written to the Planning Authority during the consultation period expressing her concerns, JK stated that CN was to continue to communicate with the Planning Authority regarding this issue.</p>	CN
9.4	<u>Waverley Railway Line Project and the Impact on the Existing Path Network between Sheriffhall and Hardengreen</u>	
	<p>KD pointed out that it was still not clear on the changes which would take place. JPa pointed out that the final decisions had not yet been taken but from his discussions with Douglas Muir that the plan was that the current path links would be maintained. Where there was to be a slight diversion the new link would be completed before the old link was removed. The project was currently being priced on this basis.</p>	
	<p>KD suggested it might be an idea to write to Douglas Muir inviting him back to discuss the latest developments. JPa to speak to Douglas Muir.</p>	JPa
9.5	<u>Midlothian Walk of the Month Published in the Midlothian Advertiser by Susan Goldwyre</u>	
	<p>KD stated that the walk along the Dalkeith Penicuik walkway was inaccurate and should not have been printed to which there were several objections by the Forum. DWW suggested that the article was positive initiative and the criticism was not constructive and to this point there were no objections.</p>	
9.6	<u>Recently Installed Traffic Light Crossing, Seafield Moor Road, Bilston</u>	
	<p>CN reported that horse riders were having difficulty with these lights. JPa to inform DK.</p>	JPa
10.0	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<p>Monday 22 August 2011 10am – 12.30pm in the Dalkeith Arts Centre, White Hart Street, Dalkeith</p>	

Distribution

John Pope (JPo)	Chair Scotways
David Wardrope-White (DWW)	Sustrans, Cycling Touring Club, SPOKES
Dave Kenny (DK)	Midlothian Council, Cycling Officer, Roads
James Innes (JI)	Rambles Association
Ed Dunbar (ED)	SPRBA
Kate Duthie (KD)	Esk Valley Trust
Jo Cooke (JC)	Midlothian Council, Ranger Service
James Kinch (JK)	Midlothian Council, Land and Countryside
John Park (JPa)	Midlothian Council, Land and Countryside – Minutes and Secretary
Councillor Wilma Chalmers (WC)	Midlothian Council
Shelagh Jenkins (SJ)	Esk Valley Trust
Ian Brown (IB)	Scotways
Constance Newbould (CN)	British Horse Society
Barbara Howie (BH)	Disabled Representative
John O'Keefe (JOK)	SNH
Keith Morton (MK)	National Farmers Union
Stewart Renwick (SR)	Bonnryigg & Lasswade Community Council
Justin Venton (JV)	Midlothian Council, Land and Countryside

JP/LJM
25 May 2011