

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Minute of Falkirk Countryside Access Forum

Thursday 21 September 2006

Present John Davidson, Scotways Jim Bell, Community Safety Officer, Central Scotland Police John Angell, Transport Planning Manager, Falkirk Council Hugh Lyons, CTC Shelia Hall, BHS, FARAG Horse group representative Bob Smith, Airth Community Council Stuart McAllister, Bo'ness Community Council Mandy Brown, Access Officer, Falkirk Council	Apologies Guy Wedderburn, SRPBA & Callendar Estate Angus Duncan, CSFT Colin Peacock, Forestry Commission Scotland John Ferguson, Ramblers Association Richard Millar, British Waterways Scotland
Also Attending	Not Present

Item				
1.	Present and Apologies	Noted.		
2.	Minutes of Last Meeting	The last meeting held in June was a site visit to Skinflats path network to discuss access/conservation issues. Minutes of previous meeting (30 March 2006) were agreed.		
3.	Falkirk Council Access Team – staffing update	Interviews were held last week for the Outdoor Access Team: 1 Team Leader, 2 Outdoor Access Rangers and 1 Biodiversity Ranger. Subject to references, the new team members should be in post in 4-6 weeks.		
4.	Partner update	<u>Angus Duncan, CSFT</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper circulated detailing CSFT projects in Falkirk Council area. <u>Sheila Hall, FARAG</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FET has approved a grant for 3 FARAG-led projects (path linking onto Maddiston-Blackbraes path, Candie Railway, and Slamannan Railway link). Falkirk Council will carry out tendering process for these. 		

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4.	Partner update (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round the Forth – Falkirk Council is leading SESTRANS Round the Forth project to complete the ‘missing link’ in the sustrans route. Priorities are Blackness to Bo’ness and Falkirk to Grangemouth. • Various road improvement projects are being developed which will include cycle tracks <p><u>Hugh Lyons, CTC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BW chicane gates: 60-70% now improved on Forth/Clyde and Union Canals. <p><u>Bob Smith, Airth Community Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airth paths are very popular with further developments required to improve the network. E.g. issue with vegetation on Foreshore walks; requirement for bridge over burn between Airth and Dunmore; negotiations required to continue the path from Dunmore to South Alloa. • Paths leaflets have been developed by the local community. • Dunmore Woods felling has been completed and the roads/paths reinstated. Horse riders have been asked to keep off these temporarily to allow the surface to settle in. The logs preventing vehicular use have been removed but they may go back. MB asked that sufficient gaps be left to allow wheelchair access. • Path to Bowtrees – This is currently part of a feasibility study by Transport Planning Unit. Negotiation with landowners is ongoing. • Dunmore planning application needs to be resubmitted due to objections received. However, the development will not affect access in the area. <p><u>John Davidson, Scotways</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimistic about future of access/Land Reform Act – foreseen problems have largely not materialised. <p><u>Mandy Brown, Access Officer, Falkirk Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor Access Strategy circulated. • Bo’ness/Blackness Path Network – project prioritisation with the local community completed. 3 projects are in the process of being drawn up. • Braes Path Network Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FARAG projects have been passed to Landscape Officer to put out to tender. 		

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4.	Partner update (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shieldhill – WIAT scheme (Westquarterburn path) contract let for path works; Wester Pirleyhill path has been passed to Landscape Officer to put out to tender. - Avonbridge, Standburn and Slamannan projects – priority projects are being drawn up by Bell Ingram. • River Avon Heritage Trail was officially opened by CSFT in August. Leaflets currently being distributed by West Lothian Council and Falkirk Council. 		
5.	Core Path Planning	<p>Second round of informal consultation is underway.</p> <p>Bell Ingram was commissioned to run 4 land manager consultation workshops. In addition letters and maps with comments sheets were sent out to all known landowners/farmers. Follow-up site visits/meetings have taken place with some farmers. This process will be on-going throughout the public consultation period.</p> <p>Maps with comments forms were circulated to all councillors, community councils and area forums. MB will attend meetings on request to discuss the proposed core paths network with these groups.</p> <p>Community consultation will take place with the general public and with user groups between now and June 07.</p>		
6.	AOB	<p>Information circulated regarding a workshop for recreation user group representatives of Local Access Forums. This workshop will take place on 11 November in Stirling</p> <p>BS highlighted some problems in Airth with Land Reform and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Airth has absorbed a lot of new people not generally aware of countryside issues. Education of this may help resolve some problems</p>	<p>Workshop information circulated to user group reps</p> <p>Rangers may be able to run some education events focussing on responsible access/ countryside issues</p>	MB
7.	DONM & Venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 14 December 2006, 2pm, Abbotsford House, David's Loan, Falkirk - Training Room 		