

National Access Forum Update – February 2016

Summary of main topics - National Access Forum meeting 3rd February 2016

Communications: Shared Communication Calendar –

Progress on providing a shared forward calendar of planned communications activities was presented at the meeting by Marion Mulholland (SNH). It will enable SNH and all other NAF partners to collectively record their individual and joint proposed media and communications projects, so that everyone is better sighted on upcoming publications, broadcasts, online and social media projects, and so able to co-ordinate more effectively. The calendar has now been created on Knowledge Hub, so that it is easy for all interested organisations to directly access and edit.

To join and use the calendar, please follow the instructions:

1. Click on <https://khub.net/home> and register for free.
2. You should receive an e-mail from Khub. Click to confirm your registration.
3. Log in, agree to Terms of Use, and fill in (or skip) Profile information.
4. Search for the group 'Scottish Outdoor Access Code Communications', and click on this group.
5. Give a brief reason for joining request and click on 'Apply to join'.
6. Once approved you will be able to fully access the group, and amend the Planner.
7. The Planner is located on the Wiki page, click on 'Edit' to amend, and 'Publish' once finalised.

This group page can also be used to post forthcoming events, contribute to discussions on the forum, write a blog or upload documents. If you have any queries please contact Theresa.Kewell@snh.gov.uk in the first instance

National Access Forum Guidance documents -

The meeting approved the re-formatting of two existing NAF Guidance documents (on Lighting fires and on Stalking Communication), as part of a process to provide a fresh appearance and updating of any web-links etc. They can be viewed at <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/The-Act-and-the-Code/Guidance-documents>. Approval was given to proceed to re-format all the other guidance notes in a similar style.

Glossary of definitions over types of camping –

This paper drafted a number of clarifying definitions on various types of camping, and it was generally welcomed and subjected to useful discussion, with suggestions for re-numbering and other clarifications. A revised draft will be circulated shortly as an annex within the context of the re-drafted camping guidance paper, for further comment and development.

New outdoor pursuits and access – electric bikes, and drones

There was interesting discussion of this paper, which provided information on two relatively new and developing outdoor pursuits, and outlined the relevant regulations and guidance that apply to each of them, with some commentary on how that relates to the access rights

(while recognising that this was simply a discussion, and that only the courts are able to provide a definitive position).

Access-related issues in Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park

a) Camping Bye-laws :

It had been announced the previous week that Environment Minister Aileen McLeod has approved new camping management byelaws as part of plans to invest in better camping places and introduce measures to manage camping in four key areas. The byelaws will be modified from those submitted so as to come into effect on March 1, 2017, and to allow the initial provision of 300 camping places as part of the Park's longer-term camping development plans. Bridget Jones (LLTNP) explained that the byelaws will be concluded and published shortly, with the normal public notices, and practical design and preparatory work is underway. A Camping Development Plan is already drafted, and key interest groups are being invited to discuss implementation. Forum discussions showed there were clearly differing views on the byelaws, with several members expressed serious disappointment in the byelaws, the preparatory process and the principles and practicalities of permits, while others welcomed the positive aspects of the byelaws. In discussion, it was clarified that the 300 camping spaces includes the permit numbers, and that camp site provision will develop over time, with the permits enabling flexibility in managing development.

b) Recent sheriff court case :

Bridget Jones also described a recent judgement from the Stirling Sherriff Court over a case relating to Drumlean estate near Aberfoyle, on which the NPA has lodged an appeal to the Court of Session. The case concerned a section 14 notice over three locked gates and a 'Danger Wild Boar' sign, and the issues included aspects of retrospectivity. The judgement has not been published on the Sheriff Courts' website as yet, but contact me (as below) if you require a copy.

Topic Updates -

National Walking Strategy –

The Action Plan for the strategy has been in development over recent months and is due to be released from 3rd March after a meeting at the Scottish Parliament. The delivery forum will also have their second meeting in March. Rona Gibb also noted that the National Transport Strategy has been refreshed and re-published.

SRDP – Improving Public Access scheme –

There were twenty-eight applications for the first round of the IPA scheme, with a total value of £1.8m, and these are currently being assessed within SNH, with decisions due to be made in March. The second round of the IPA scheme will be open for applications between 21st March and 31st May 2016.

Future NAF meetings in 2016 –

The next Forum meetings will take place at Battleby on Wednesday **18th May 2016**, and subsequently on 28th September 2016.

For more information, or to contribute views on any of the above topics, please contact the NAF Secretary - Rob Garner (robgarner.NAFsec@snh.gov.uk ; 0131 316 2682). Further information can be found on the National Access Forum pages at <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/access-forum/>.