

EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY SERVICES

Minutes of the meeting of the **EAST LoTHIAN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**
held on **25th April 2018** in the Saltire Rooms, John Muir House, Haddington.

PRESENT:

James Wyllie (Chair) .. NFUS	Keith Burns.....Cycling UK
Paul Chandler..... NTS	Jane Henderson.....ELC Councillor
John McMillan..... ELC Councillor	Constance Newbould...BHSS
Thomas Stanley..... Landowners	Jon Swift.....AELCC

ATTENDING:

Neil Clark..... ELC Countryside	Nick Morgan.....ELC Countryside
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APOLOGIES:

Erik Bigland..... Ramblers	Elaine Carmichael.....ELC Economic Dev.
Eamon John..... ELC SCL Manager	Jill MackayELC Communications
Liz Poulson FCS	Ken ReidIndependent co-optee

ACTION

On behalf of the Forum the Chairman expressed disappointment that Jennifer had left the post of Access Officer, but said he was delighted she was still with ELC. He wished her well in her new post and said that as there was now less Access staff he was willing to help out where he can with any access issues.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 24th January 2018.

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting, proposed by Thomas and seconded by Jon.

2. MATTERS ARISING.

- 2.1 Thomas has re-written his article and e-mailed it to Nick. Nick will pass this on to Jill Mackay and ask her advice on the best place to publish it. **NM**
- 2.2 Nick has sent a note of the responsibilities of land managers and the public to the members of the Forum, along with advice sheets from SLE. BASC have advice, but it covers English access legislation. Nick has offered his help if they want to produce guidance for the Scottish legislation.
- 2.3 Jon has been in touch with David Afleck about the production of a leaflet for the Robert Noble Centenary Walk. This seems to have been delayed for various reasons, although funding has been obtained for it. Jon has offered his help with it.
- 2.4 The Provost's Reception for Path Wardens was held on the 19th March after their monthly Team Task. The Chair expressed his thanks to the Provost for arranging the lunch and also his gratitude for the continuing work of the Path Wardens.

- 2.5 Nick had sent the link to the Path Warden facebook page about the award they won to Ken, but it was felt that it was too late to promote it then. James has sent Ken a picture taken during the Provost's Reception, of the Path Wardens with the award, so the award will be mentioned in the post about the reception.
- 2.6 There was much discussion about the Drem to Gullane Path. There had been a meeting on 20th February in which the consultant informed the stakeholders about his feasibility study and conclusions for the section of the route from Drem to the Peffer Burn. The Forum's considered view was that they were keen to ensure that once over the Peffer Burn there is a good walking connection west to the existing core paths into Gullane. The cycle path will probably be taken as far as the entrance into Fenton Barns where there will be various options for cyclists to continue their journey. The Chair will write to Eamon and Councillor Goodfellow (copying in Councillor McMillan) with a formal view from the Forum that there should be an east-west route connecting the proposed cycle path to the existing core paths through Luffness. **JW**
- 2.7 Nick will send details of any new path projects to Ken when they are completed. **NM**
- 2.8 Jennifer has produced the Section 11 Orders for the Golf Open championships at Gullane. They will be going to the Cabinet meeting on 8th May for approval. After that the official orders will be produced by ELC's Legal Team and they will then be promoted. Nick will send details to Ken for the facebook page when they are ready. **NM**
- 2.9 Nick will contact Jill Mackay to ask if she has been in touch with Economic Development to discuss the production of a number of walks articles in specialist magazines. **NM**
- 2.10 The Chair is keen that ELC keep the pressure on Dalkeith Estate over the locked gates and public access. Neil will be writing to them. **NC**
- 2.11 Paul would be happy to hold a future meeting at Newhailes, but is concerned that the estate is in the middle of a big refurbishment at present, so may not be available for the July meeting. Nick and Paul will keep in touch about this.
PC/NM
- 2.12 The Chair also raised his concerns about the proposed diversion of the core path at Newhailes. His, and other members' understanding was that the core path would be diverted along the route of the ha-ha. The NTS are proposing to upgrade a path that is further away. It was suggested that the route along the ha-ha may be more likely to gain public approval for the diversion.
- 2.13 Councillor McMillan praised the new play area at Newhailes. He recently spoke to a developer who was so impressed that he has commissioned the designer to produce something similar for his development.
- 2.14 The Chair is keen that the Forestry Commission's short video on Lyme Disease be shown at a future Forum meeting. This may not be appropriate if the next meeting is at Newhailes, but should be remembered for a future meeting. **NM**
- 2.15 The Chair asked to leave the invitation open for members to suggest someone from their organisation to speak at a future meeting. **All**

3. FUTURE-PROOFING MUSSELBURGH'S INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL.

- 3.1 The Chair expressed his disappointment that the consultant had not come to the meeting. He and Nick explained the project.
- 3.2 There are a considerable number of new housing developments planned for the Musselburgh area, including in Edinburgh and Midlothian. The study is to consider how to reduce the reliance on the car by offering sustainable travel options.
- 3.3 The consultant has identified nine strategic routes through Musselburgh and adjoining areas which have the highest potential to provide improvements to encourage walking and cycling through the town.
- 3.4 It was agreed that the provision of attractive and safe routes for cycling and walking would encourage more people to travel actively and various examples from around the world were discussed. It was also agreed that it is important for any routes such as these to connect into the wider network, as their value is limited if they are isolated.
- 3.5 There will be a public exhibition on 3rd May between 4pm and 8pm in the Regent Room at Brunton Hall, Musselburgh, to show the work of the consultants. They will also be launching an online survey in the next few days.

4. FORUM FACEBOOK.

- 4.1 As mentioned earlier the Chair has sent pictures of the Provost's reception for the Path Wardens to Ken, who will put these on facebook.

5. 'PATHS IN EAST LOTHIAN' PUBLICATION.

- 5.1 The Chair is keen that the momentum continues with the walks sheets in order to produce sufficient for a small book. He has offered to help Nick with this and encouraged other members of the Forum to do the same.
- 5.2 Councillor McMillan suggested that his wife and Graeme Yarwood, both keen ramblers, could write up their favourite walks. The Chair reminded members that we had agreed to only promote core paths and other recognised routes.
- 5.3 Nick suggested that Peter Jackson had produced a leaflet about walks in the Gullane area several years ago. Some of these routes could be used, which would require less research. Nick will put together a list of potential walks that could be included in the walks sheets. **NM**

6. ACCESS OFFICERS' UPDATE.

This was circulated in advance of the meeting and Nick ran through it.

- 6.1 Councillor McMillan offered to write a letter of support to the NHS for the development of path around the new Community Hospital in Haddington. Members of the Forum agreed how important it is to have decent paths around hospitals. **JM**

7. ACCESS ISSUES UPDATE.

This was circulated in advance of the meeting.

- 7.1 There were only four new access issues raised since the last meeting, which were not too contentious and they had all been resolved. Other longer-standing issues continue to be worked on.

8. MEMBERS' UPDATES.

- 8.1 The Chair highlighted that the NFU have been spending much time recently publicising sheep worrying and dogs.
- 8.2 Thomas informed the members that new "Guidance on Engaging Communities on Decisions Relating to Land" had been produced by the Scottish Government. It contains much general information, but also a lot of issues that had been discussed at today's meeting. It also highlights that Scotland is leading the world with its public access legislation.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

- 9.1 The Chair reported that he attended the joint NAF/LAF meeting on 16th March, which focussed on engaging with young people. There were many interesting presentations. One item that was raised was that young people find it difficult to relate to the SOAC in its current format. SNH are proposing to produce a version of the Code for the younger audience. The Chair asked for suggestions to encourage a young person to attend LAF meetings. All to think how this could be done. **All**
- 9.2 Councillor McMillan reported that a new beach wheelchair access was opened on Saturday at Port Seton. The Countryside Ranger Service were involved with this project.
- 9.3 Councillor McMillan reported that Gordon Patterson will be at the next Haddington Farmers Market with a stand. He is planning to cycle east to west across Canada in aid of the Heart, Chest and Stroke charity.
- 9.4 Thomas suggested that it would be interesting to invite someone from East Lothian Council's Planning department to a future meeting to learn about what planners expect in the way of active travel provision from new developments. **NM**

10. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS.

~~Wed 25th July 2018~~ Now changed to Wednesday 1st August 2018

Wed 31st October 2018

All meetings will be held from 2pm – 4:30pm.