

Countryside Access Forum AGM
Thursday 31st March 2011 7pm
Room 11, Islesburgh Community Centre, Lerwick

Minutes

Present:

David Adamson	National Farmers Union Scotland
Alec Miller	Shetland Anglers Association
Jonathan Duncan	Outdoor Access Officer, SIC
Ian Walterson	A.S.C.C (Chair)
Abigail Robertson	Equestrian Association

Apologies:

Pete Ellis	RSPB
Austin Taylor	Heritage Manager SIC
Sheila Johnson	Outdoor Access Officer, SIC (Maternity leave)

1. Welcome

Ian opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. Introductions were not deemed to be necessary.

2. Apologies

Jonathan read out the three apologies he had for Pete, Austin and Sheila.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (10th March 2011) were found to be correct and true with the exception of the word "lake" being replaced by "loch" (agenda item 4, Fishing & Natural Habitat), "assess strategy" being replaced by "access strategy" (agenda item 4, Communication & Timescale) and it was noted that "Eastlea wind turbine development" should read "Whitelee wind turbine development. (agenda item 4). After these changes were acknowledged & agreed by all present, they were proposed by Ian Walterson, seconded David Adamson.

4. Matters arising

IW commented that he felt that the meeting with the Viking Energy representative had been valuable. Jonathan Duncan agreed, stating that Aaron had let him know that he had felt that it had been useful. It was stated that Aaron had taken note of all present, and the bodies that they represented.

Alec Miller brought up the fact that after his suggestion at the previous meeting that the Loch of Spiggie might benefit from access improvements similar to the Asta & Tingwall lochs had met with little enthusiasm. There was some discussion, and all felt that further discussion of the subject at a meeting with greater representation of members would be useful.

5. Appointment of office bearers

Ian stood down as chairman, and nominations were sought for election of a new chairman. DA proposed IW to return as chair and Abigail Robertson seconded. No other nominations for chair were received, and IW accepted the invitation to return.

The position of vice-chairman was relinquished by Alec Miller, and nominations were sought for a replacement. DA proposed AM to return, IW

seconded. There were no further nominations, and AM accepted the invitation to return.

IW then resumed proceedings and the meeting continued.

6. Dates, venues and times of meetings for the forthcoming year

IW sought consensus on how frequently meetings were to be held. JD advised that meetings in the past year had been arranged on an “at least quarterly” basis. IW felt that this should continue, and if circumstances required, sooner. It was agreed by all that this should continue to be the programme.

There was no date set for the next meeting, but a date in July was suggested.

AM suggested that we keep in mind the idea of a field trip meeting.

Action - JD to seek input on a date from members & organise the next meeting.

7. AOCB

IW brought up a complaint from Henry Anderton about stiles becoming slippery on a route on his land. JD said that Amenity Trust ranger Howard Towll was looking into the complaint, and would report what he found. JD would keep the Forum informed as to what Howard’s findings were.

AW brought up the subject of the Access Budget. JD reported that it stood at the same figure as the year previously, and did not know how/if it would be altered in future years. JD felt that an increasing amount of future budgets would be likely to be spent on maintenance of existing access infrastructure, as some of the original structures put in place were now becoming quite old.

The subject of recent developments at the foot of the Staneyhill track re. removal of the padlock allowing the barrier to be lowered into the closed position was discussed. Some members of the Forum had read in The Shetland Times of the Lerwick Community Council’s input into ensuring that the barrier was lowered in the interest of safety by (hopefully) reducing the volume of traffic using the track.

JD reported that unfortunately there had been a couple of accidents since the barrier had been lowered, due to the fact people were simply not prepared for the barrier being in the closed position. Due to this, the barrier had been replaced in the open position in the time being, until a conclusion can be reached as what should be done long term. JD promised to keep the Forum advised of any further developments.

They’re being no further business; IW thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.