

West Lothian Local Access Forum

4th Meeting

Tuesday 3 October 2023

3:45pm to 5.30pm

Sutherland Building Beecraigs Country Park

(Tour Location: Oatridge College, Ecclesmachan)

Decision Record

Prior to the formal LAF Meeting the following members of the LAF attended a guided tour of the Paths for All National Path Demonstration Site at Oatridge (1:30-3:40):

Michael Eagers, Sammy Saunders, Cllr Alison Adamson, Hannah Patterson (Corr.), Tim Beesley (Corr.), Rosslyn Barr (Corr.) and Tony Mason (Access Ranger)

	Item	Summary of Item / Decision Taken	Action to be Taken	By Whom
1	Welcome and apologies	<p>Following the Tour of the National Path Demonstration Site at Oatridge the Meeting commenced at the Sutherland Building at 3:55pm.</p> <p>A welcome was extended to the Members of West Lothian's Local Access Forum ('the Forum') in attendance.</p> <p>IN ATTENDANCE: Gordon Allan Michael Eagers Malcolm Hill Sammy Saunders Cllr Alison Adamson</p> <p>Rosslyn Barr (Corr.) Hannah Patterson (Corr.)</p> <p>West Lothian Council: Tony Mason – Access Ranger Beverly Stirling - Ranger Services Manager Tracey Smith - Ranger Chris Nicol – Active Travel</p> <p>APOLOGIES RECEIVED: Jamie Smart Jo Young Pippa Plevin Sandy Edgars Nick Drainey (RESIGNED) Cllr Tom Conn Ross Walker (Corr.)</p>	NONE	
2	Quorum	<p>The Meeting was declared to be quorate in accordance with para 8.1 of the Standing Orders of the Forum which requires one third of the membership to be in attendance</p>	NONE	
3	Appointment of Chair for Meeting	<p>In the absence of Jamie Smart who sent his apologies and was unable to attend this meeting Malcolm Hill was unanimously appointed Chair for the Meeting in accordance with para 7.1 of the Standing Orders of the LAF</p>	NONE	

4	Resignation of Nick Drainey	<p>It was intimated to the Forum that Nick Drainey had announced his resignation from the Forum due to an increase in his other commitments</p> <p>Nick Drainey represented 'Access User' interests and accordingly a suitable replacement would be required. No current Correspondent Member fell into the 'Access User' category and it would accordingly be necessary to advertise for a replacement.</p>	WLC would now commence advertising for a suitably qualified representative to replace Nick Drainey as a Member representing 'Access Users'.	TM
5	Feedback from Tour of National Path Demonstration Site discussion and feedback	<p>The feedback from those members of the Forum who had been able to attend the tour of the National Path Demonstration Site at Oatridge was that it and our guide, Graeme Anderson of Paths for All, had been excellent and that the Tour had been very illuminating.</p> <p>Relevant material for further reading could be found here:</p> <p>The National Path Demonstration Site Outdoor Access Design Guide Outdoor Accessibility Guidance 2023 Lowland Path Guide Signage Guidance For Outdoor Access Dementia and the Outdoors Guidance Community Path Grant Guidance Notes 2023 Community Paths Grants Ian Findlay Path Fund</p>	NONE	
6	Approval of Minutes of previous meetings	The Minutes of the Meeting of 6 June 2023 were unanimously confirmed.	The Minutes to be uploaded to the Forum page of the WLC website once updated	TM
7	<p>Action Points arising from meeting of 2 May 2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Privacy Notices 2. WL LAF webpage & bios 3. SOAC in classroom 4. Control of Dogs <p>(where not on agenda)</p>	These Action Points remained outstanding – see Minutes of LAF Meeting dated 6 June 2023 for details of Action Points.	Further reports to follow at the next meeting of the Forum	<p>Action Points 7.1 and 7.2: TM / CHAIR</p> <p>Action Points 7.3 and 7.4: Subgroup – and see below at Action Point 8</p>
8	Subgroup(s) creation and election of cross-section of representatives : e.g. to provide Consultation Responses / advice on access disputes	<p>The Forum agreed that the use of subgroups would be helpful.</p> <p>The Forum unanimous resolved that, as necessary, ad hoc Subgroups would be created either formally at meetings or, where time was critical, informally between meetings by circulating a request to all Full Members of the Forum for volunteers to sit on any proposed Subgroup), as required.</p> <p>It was noted that in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Forum any such Subgroup so formed should be representative of the entire Forum and should be given a defined remit. Any subgroup so formed could seek external advice and comment where advantageous to allow a thorough consideration of the matter before the Subgroup. All business of any Subgroup is to comply with the Terms</p>		

		<p>of Reference and Standing Orders of the Forum.</p> <p>It was also unanimously agreed that the findings or recommendations of the Forum would be brought back to the Forum in formal meeting for a fuller consideration of the matter and approval of the recommended action except where a matter was time critical in which case the findings or recommendations of the Subgroup (if any) would be circulated to all Full Members of the Forum for consideration/comment and approval within such timescales as shall be considered reasonable in the circumstances.</p> <p>In implement of this decision it was unanimously agreed to form a bespoke Subgroup to consider and prepare a response on Action Points 7.3 and 7.4 above with the remit to prepare draft letters to the NAF and to the Scottish Ministers all in accordance with the decision made by the Forum in meeting dated 6 June 2023 (Action Point 11). The drafts to be brought back for approval at the next LAF Meeting.</p> <p>The following Members of the Forum volunteered and were unanimously appointed to the Subgroup: Malcolm Hill, Gordon Allan and Sammy Saunders.</p>	<p>Bespoke Subgroup to report back to next Forum Meeting with draft letters to be sent to the National Access Forum and the Scottish Ministers in implement of Action Points 7.3 and 7.4</p>	<p>Subgroup</p>
9	Police/WLPARC Update	<p>In the absence of Ross Walker, Hannah Patterson gave a brief update on matters before the WLPARC (West Lothian Partnership Against Rural Crime). WLPARC's fly tipping campaign was discussed.</p> <p>It was also noted that an urban venue was being sought to which large agricultural machinery could be brought to highlight the dangers and challenges presented by large farm machinery on rural roads. Various suggestions were put forward including possibly Morisons carpark in Bathgate and sharing locations with a classic car club rally.</p>	NONE	
10	<p>National Access Forum matters</p> <p>National Access Forum - 7 June 2023 Scottish Outdoor Access Code (outdooraccess-scotland.scot)</p>	<p>The Forum noted the current business of the NAF – copies of the most recent NAF papers are annexed for information.</p>	NONE	
11	<p>Training Event:</p> <p>Online LAF workshop - Scottish Outdoor Recreation Alliance: Wednesday 8 November, 18.00-20.00</p>	<p>The Members of the Forum were reminded of the invitation to attend the Scottish Outdoor Recreation Alliance online LAF workshop on Wednesday 8 November at 18.00-20.00 which is aimed at LAF members and is free to join.</p> <p>Further information and registration details are contained in the flyer in the Appendix to this Minute.</p>	<p>Forum Members are invited to attend.</p> <p>Anyone wishing to attend should email: helen.todd@ramblers.org.uk</p>	ALL
12	Quiet Roads	<p>Chris Nicol gave an update to the Forum on the current position in</p>	<p>Forum noted the current position on Quiet Roads</p>	TM

	<p>Quiet Roads - West Lothian Council</p>	<p>relation to the WLC Quiet Roads Initiative.</p> <p>Public consultation was undertaken in 2016 and gained broad approval from Council in 2017. In 2021 consultants were employed to deliver a feasibility study to assess viability of various proposals.</p> <p>The pandemic saw the introduction of 20mph speed limits in most urban areas across West Lothian but following removal of pandemic restrictions, in 2022 substantial public opposition resulted in the Council resolving to withdraw all speed restrictions introduced as a result of pandemic measures.</p> <p>In light of the decisions not to adopt 20mph limits in urban areas, no action is planned or contemplated to progress the Quiet Roads initiative due to lack of resources and pending the adoption of the new West Lothian Active Travel Plan 2023-28. Stage 1 consultation on the draft Active Travel Plan was undertaken earlier this year and the draft Active Travel Plan will be published shortly. Following Stage 2 consultation the draft Plan will then be brought to Council for approval (expected to be around December 2023) and adopted early 2024.</p> <p>Chris Nicol confirmed that it was highly probable that the new Active Travel plan would make recommendations in relation to Quiet Roads and that while Stage 1 of the formal public consultation period had ended any comments which the Forum may wish to make on the Active Travel Plan 2023-28 at this stage would be considered.</p> <p>See Appendix for PowerPoint slides re West Lothian Council Active Travel Plan 2023-28.</p> <p>It was agreed by the Forum that the Forum should consider and where agreed, make representations on the Active Travel Plan 2023-28 once it was released in draft form.</p>	<p>and resolved to consider the draft Active Travel Plan 2023-28 once available. TM to circulate.</p>	
13	Any Other Business	NONE	NONE	
14	Date of next meeting(s) & Close	<p>It was unanimously resolved that the next Forum meeting would be held on 23 January 2024 at 3pm and would be a face-to-face meeting to be convened at the Sutherland Building, Beecraigs Country Park.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 5:40pm</p>	<p>Next meeting: 23 January 2024 @ 3pm</p> <p>If any Member has any item that they wish added to the Agenda could these be brought to the attention of the Chair or the Access Ranger well in advance of the meeting.</p>	ALL

APPENDIX

West Lothian Council Active Travel Plan 2023 - 2028



OVERVIEW

West Lothian Council are currently at consultation stage for delivering the new 2023 to 2028 Active Travel Plan

The new plan will supersede the previous 2016 - 2021 plan which is now out of date. There are numerous reasons for this delay and in particular the pandemic which saw many changes around how and where we travel and numerous staff deployed to other critical services.

Jacobs have been appointed (Sept 22) as consultants to assist West Lothian Council in preparation and delivery of the new plan.

FUNDING 2023/24

Various funding streams are available to Local Authorities to encourage Active Travel.

31 March 2023 WLC received notification from Transport Scotland of grant allocation of 1.1M - to be spent by 31 March 24

Funding has come from:

- Scottish Government for Cycling Walking and Safer Routes (CWSR)
- Sustrans (Scotland) for Places For Everyone (PfE) and Paths for All for Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP)

This funding contributes to the development of the new Active Travel Plan.

PLACES FOR EVERYONE ALLOCATED FUNDING

Sustrans has approved funding to progress design for:

- Development of New Active Travel Plan (£65k)
- Cycle path Link Stoneyburn to Fauldhouse inc. bridge crossing over A706 (£14k)
- Key links to Bathgate town centre as part of the Bathgate Meadows Nature Park Project (£112k)

SMARTER CHOICES SMARTER PLACES PROGRAMME (Paths for All)

Submission by WLC for allocation of £166k has been made identifying the following strategies and schemes:

- I Bike Project
- Love to Ride
- Signing Strategy for Walking and Cycling Network
- Education Driven Projects
- Parksmart Initiative
- Other Initiatives

WHERE ARE WE CURRENTLY WITH THE NEW PLAN?

We are currently at consultation stage with the new ATP

Consultation with stakeholders and the general public is running concurrently and is expected to last 4 weeks

Outlets include WLC's website, news outlets, social media accounts

Contact has also been made with:

- Community councils
- Community groups
- Disability West Lothian
- Cycling Scotland
- Other Key Stakeholders

We have had significant engagement from the public alone with over 300 responses within the first week

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For more information, and to comment, please visit
[https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/active-travel-plan-refresh.](https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/active-travel-plan-refresh)

Note, the closing date for comments is 9.00 am on Tuesday 20th June.

PROGRAMME

Task list:		
Task Ref.	Task description	Percentage complete
Project Management		
1	General	75.00%
2	Inception Meeting	100.00%
3	Produce revised method statement, resource plan and costings for sign-off	100.00%
4	Client sign-off	100.00%
Review of Existing Active Travel Plan		
5	Assessment of current ATP	100.00%
Engagement		
6	Initial engagement	33.00%
7	Christmas holidays	100.00%
8	Gateway Review 1	0.00%
Develop 2022-27 Active Travel Plan		
9	Review of policy context	100.00%
10	Current travel behaviour and community aspirations	50.00%
11	Develop Vision, Objectives and Outcomes	10.00%
12	Infrastructure Improvements	0.00%
13	Behaviour Change Plan	0.00%
14	Delivery Plan and M&E Framework	0.00%
15	Draft ATP	10.00%
16	Follow-up engagement	0.00%
17	Gateway review 2	0.00%
Identify Key Projects and Scheme Hierarchy Levels		
18	Identify key projects and scheme hierarchy levels	0.00%
Design Standards		
19	Design Standards development	15.00%
20	Draft Design Standards completed	0.00%
21	Client review workshop	0.00%
Deliverables		
22	Final Design Standards	0.00%
23	Final Report	0.00%

LIST OF KEY PROPOSED CWSR PROJECTS 2023/24

- A89 junction of Newhouses Road Broxburn
- A705 Redmill Nursing Home, East Whitburn
- B8084 North Street, Armadale
- Calder Park Road, Mid Calder
- Church Street Addiewell
- Hardhill Road, Bathgate
- Kirkton South Road, Livingston
- Lower Bathville at Heathervale Walk
- Main Street Mid Calder
- Murieston West Road, Livingston
- Preston Road, Linlithgow
- Removing barriers to Accessibility
- Springfield Road, Linlithgow
- Wester Inch to Whitehill Ind Estate
- Whitburn Town Walks Phase 2
- Heartlands to Whitdale Roundabout
- Edinburgh Road Guildiehaugh to Train St, Bathgate
- Whitdale Roundabout Connections

All Above Construction, 4 below Design

RESERVE LIST:

- B7066 Heartlands to Whitdale Roundabout (Construction)
- Edinburgh Road Bathgate (Construction)

CONCLUSION

It is anticipated that the draft plan will be concluded late October and this will be taken to the PDSP for review.

Following approval by West Lothian Council the plan will become available to all.

Training opportunity – see Agenda Item 8

To all access officers and LAF conveners/contacts/LAF members

SAVE THE DATE – Online LAF workshop, Wednesday 8 November, 18.00-20.00

You are invited to attend the Scottish Outdoor Recreation Alliance (SORA*) online LAF workshop. This event is aimed at LAF members and is free to join. It will be held on Wednesday 8 November at 18.00-20.00. There will be a mix of presentations and small group discussions. More information to follow on the programme.

Aims of the event:

- **To increase the effectiveness of LAFs**
- **To support LAF members in their roles**
- **To introduce LAF members to SORA members and discuss how SORA can help LAFs to be more effective.**

If you have any suggestions for topics you'd like to discuss please let me know.

Registration: registration is open now but we will email you again nearer the event with details of the programme. To register, please email helen.todd@ramblers.org.uk setting out your name, email address, phone number, the LAF you are a member of and in what capacity. eg, walking or horse riding representative, landowner or community representative, etc.). *Your details will be kept securely and only for the purposes of this meeting, and then deleted. We will not contact you for any other reason.*

*SORA members are: British Horse Society Scotland
Cycling UK in Scotland
Mountaineering Scotland
Ramblers Scotland
Scottish Canoe Association
ScotWays
Plus the Scottish Sports Association

NATIONAL ACCESS FORUM - PAPERS

National Access Forum – 60th meeting on Wednesday 20th September 2023, 10:30 – 12:30

Hybrid meeting – In-person at Battleby and Virtual via MS Teams

1. Welcome, introductions, apologies – Don Milton – Convenor – **10:30 – 10:45**
2. Minutes of previous meetings, action points and matters arising – **10:45 – 11:00** – (unconfirmed minutes from the hybrid meeting held 7th June 2023 attached)

Carried over from 7th June 2023

AP 56/5: - NatureScot to investigate the legal position on liability for third party promotion of paths.
On-going: [Feb 2023 update: Bridget Jones confirms](#) NatureScot has prepared a draft brief and will be seeking legal advice, using our legal advisors, with a response anticipated by early spring. May 2023 update: No progress on action point, carry forward - *delayed and on hold, hoping to make progress later in the year.*

AP 60/1: Members to identify and highlight any areas of woodland planning process where there are issues pertaining to access - *discharged, no feedback*

AP 60/2: NAF members to help in disseminating upland deer management and access messaging to their members/audiences, especially those within the commercial, recreation and land management sectors - *discharged*

AP 60/3: ADMG to ask members about the possibility of extending HFTSH to include the hind season, and to encourage increased engagement with HFTSH by its members - *on-going*

AP 60/4: Members to identify where there are hotspots relating not only to deer management and access, which have issues with national implications and/or relating to commercial operators - *no feedback received*

AP 60/5: NAFSec to produce a document with answers to NAF/LAF attendee questions, with help from the Convenor - *discharged*

AP 60/6: Graeme McLean to inform NAF if he comes across any e-MTB issues that may require NAF attention and to update the NAF on progress as necessary - *on-going*

3. Access for education - paper - Ali Tait - 11:00 - 11:20

4. Resources for access update - Helen Todd - 11:20 - 11:30

Comfort Break - 11:30 - 11:40

5. VMS overview - Bridget - 11:40 - 12:00

6. Update on responsible mountain biking - Graeme McLean - 12:00 - 12:10

7. Forthcoming meetings and agenda items – Don Milton – updated work programme attached –
12:10 – 12:20

- NAF meeting - TBC (7th/14th Feb 2024) – Battleby
- NAF meeting – Wednesday 5th June - 2024 - TBC

Future agenda items

- Camping wording - action from VMS
- Feedback on the managing access in areas of wildlife sensitivity guidance

8. A.O.B - 12:20 - 12:30

Helen Todd - SORA LAF Workshop, 8th November

Close 12:30

National Access Forum Workplan:

Tracking No	Title	Initiation	Actions	Start Date	Updates	Target Completion Date	Completion Statement
1	E-bikes	AP 52/2	Form working group on 'outdoor access with e-bikes' to convene Nov/Dec 2020	16/09/20	20/11/20 - WG Meeting. Recommend NAF maintain position on legal status of E-bikes: await results of UK Review; support SOAC guidance; promote SOAC to new audience.	30/11/20	27/01/21 Action 1 complete. NAF 53 Minutes Para
1b			NAF review WG recommendations	27/01/21	NAF agrees current bike advice transferable. Await results of UK study on E-biking then review.	Autumn 21	
1c			WG to update NAF on UK study progress	27/01/21	Research to cover 4 areas, trends, path design, land management and behavioural change.	02/06/21	Graeme MacLean provided update.
1d			Graeme MacLean to keep Forum informed of progress and opportunities for members to input to the research.	02/06/21		22/09/21 and ongoing.	Graeme MacLean provided update
1e			Graeme MacLean to keep Forum informed of progress and opportunities for members to input to the research.	22/09/21	Update to meeting 8/6/22.	08/06/22	Graeme MacLean provided update
1f			Now routine action with updates to NAF as required.	08/06/22			Now routine business
2	VMS	NAF Mtg 53 AP53/1	Final draft of the guidance 'Managing camping with tents' to be circulated to full members for immediate comments or changes. Provided there were no substantive comments the Convenor would sign off any changes	27/01/21	Draft circulated. Draft updated. Convenor signed off.	19/02/21	Published 16/02/21
2b		NAF Mtg 53	NAF members of VMS groups to update NAF on VMS progress.	27/01/21		02/06/21	02/06/21 Updates provided.
2c			Update to be provided at next meeting and ongoing.	02/06/21		22/09/21 and ongoing.	22/09/21 Update provided
2d			Update to be provided at next meeting and ongoing.	22/09/21	Regular updates to NAF as required.	08/06/22 and ongoing	Complete – now routine.

3	Mediation	NAF Mtg 51 AP51/2	Sub-group produce guidance for publication. Promote at NAF/LAF Mar 21. Face to Face for LAFs Autumn 20.	16/09/20	SOAN hope to organise training for access professionals with Scottish Mediation. LAF face to face cancelled.	27/01/21	Guidance published on SOAC website. NAF/LAF briefed 26/03/21
3b		NAF Mtg 53	Update NAF members.	27/01/21	SOAN considering virtual mediation training because of pandemic.	Summer 21	
3c		NAF Mtg 53	Update NAF members Jun 21	02/06/21		02/06/21	Update provided.
3d		NAF Mtg 53 AP53/5	Convenor to discuss with Eddie Palmer running the mediation session as a separate event for LAFs.	27/01/21	Discussions Milton/Fahy/Palmer Jan-Mar 21 confirmed virtual NAF/LAF mtg 26/03/21 briefing only. Mediation progress beyond consultation with LAFs. Training planning underway. Consideration of in person LAF briefing post-pandemic/virtual presentation to LAFs Summer/Autumn 21. Discussion at NAF Mtg 54	02/06/21	Action complete Mar 21. Update provided by Eleisha Fahy
3e		NAF Mtg 54	Engage with LAFs at meeting(s) post Sep NAF Mtg as further 2021 update. Identify date(s) and programme(s). Identify funding options for LAF development. Update at Sep NAF.	02/06/21	Mediation included in programme for next NAF/LAF meeting.	22/09/21	Update provided at NAF meeting. Action complete.
3f			Presentation to NAF/LAF joint meeting	22/09/21	Afternoon session of NAF/LAF meeting devoted to Mediation.	25/11/21	Action complete.
3g			Provide update to NAF	22/09/21		02/02/22	Action complete.
4	NAF/LAF Programme	NAF/LAF Mtg 26/03/21 AP53/5	Agree future NAF/LAF meeting programme and content.	02/06/21	NAF/LAF to convene post Sep NAF Mtg. Less updates and more discussion. Confirm if Mediation to be part of broader Mtg or single topic Mtg.	02/06/21	Action complete in outline.
4b		NAF Mtg 54 AP 54/2	WG to bring draft NAF/LAF programme/ content to Sep NAF Mtg. cf 3d		Programme agreed.	22/09/21	Action complete.
4c			Agree Spring NAF/LAF meeting agenda.	25/11/21	Note of NAF/LAF meeting 25/11/21 circulated for consideration and future planning action.	25/03/22	OBE
4d		NAF Mtg 56 AP 56/6	Members to be sought for WG to plan Autumn NAF/LAF meeting agenda.	02/02/22	Request for volunteers promulgated. Agenda item 08/06/22	08/06/22	Action complete
4e		NAF Mtg 57 AP 57/6	Further call for volunteers.	08/06/22	No volunteers. Risk to Autumn NAF/LAF Mtg.	21/09/22	Ongoing
4f		NAF Mtg 58 AP 58/4	Nick Cole to seek feedback from LAF Chairs on the issue of support / resourcing of LAFs by local authorities.	21/09/22	NAF agrees delay of NAF-LAF to Spring 2023 because of lack of planning time. Additional volunteers found. Planning mtg scheduled for 21 Feb 23.	08/02/23	Ongoing

4g		NAF Mtg 59	Planning group to ask for approval of plans for spring 2023 NAF/LAF meeting	08/02/2023	NAF agrees 26 April for date, but didn't approve format of meeting. Change to virtual meeting. Ag	26/04/2023	Ongoing
4h		NAF Mtg 59	Update planning	08/02/23	NAF-LAF Meeting held. Attendee feedback sought. Review at next NAF Mtg	08/02/23	Ongoing
4i		NAF-LAF 26/04/23	Attendees provide feedback.	26/04/23	Feedback received from attendees, brief to NAF 7 Jun 23	07/06/23	Ongoing
4j		NAF Mtg 60	LAF feedback indicates no desire for Autumn meeting. Next NAF/LAF in Spring 2024.	07/06/23	At next meeting, confirm Sub-Group to plan for Spring NAF/LAF.	20/09/23	
5	Roads and Access	NAF Mtg 54	Engage with Transport Scotland on Roads/Access issues.		Discussions with Transport Scotland reps. Differences between trunk and local roads responsibilities, need to identify key issues and actions. Establish WG.	02/06/21	Initial action complete.
5b		NAF Mtg 54 AP 54/1	Roads/Access WG to meet and provide update to Sep NAF Mtg	02/06/21	Draft issues list and associated papers circulated. WG Mtg 11/08/21.	22/09/21	Action complete.
5c			WG to meet and agree principles for draft guidance note. Draft note to be written and circulated. Update Feb 22 NAF meeting.	22/09/21	WG met 09/12/21. Draft note prepared and circulated for discussion at Feb 22 NAF meeting	02/02/22	Action complete.
5d		NAF Mtg 56 AP 56/2	Draft guidance to be prepared.	02/02/22	Guidance drafted. Agenda item Mtg 08/06/22.	08/06/22	Action complete.
5e		NAF Mtg 57 AP 57/3	Comments on the 'roads and access rights' draft guidance note should be sent to Mark Wrightham by the end of June.	08/06/22	Comments received. Meeting arranged for 13 Sep 22.	21/09/22	
5f		NAF Mtg 58 AP 58/2 AP 58/3	58/2 Publish Guidance on SOAC website, enlist Members assistance in dissemination. 58/3 Convenor to write to Ministers.	21/09/22	Both actions complete.	08/02/23	Action complete.
6	Countryside Fires	NAF Mtg 54	Signage and camp fires, paper on fires and VMS engagement raised at Mtg	02/06/21	Convenor approached by SFRS ref SOAC and guidance on fires. Request for this to be raised at next Mtg.	22/09/21	Initial action complete.
6b			Engage with VMS Comms Group partners and camping sub-group when more detail available.	02/06/21	VMS work continues. Potential requirement to update camping leaflet.	Ongoing	Ongoing
6c					ScotGov/NS behavioural research on promoting responsible camping through 2022. Jan 23 update: camping including fires & responsible behaviour and	08/02/23	Action Complete

					cumulative impacts is now included in the Visitor Management Strategy action plan for 2023		
7	Forestry	NAF Mtg 54	Issue raised at meeting re LAF engagement and subsequent request by member to add Forestry to Workplan. Update Members at Sep Mtg.	02/06/21	Concerns about UKFS content. Phase 1 consultation closed, Phase 2 in spring 2022, NAF to consider. Discussions with Scottish Forestry & differences between UK nations within one document. SF offer to attend NAF Mtg. Lack of trng in Access requirements? Convenor attended National Forestry Stakeholder Group Mtg.	22/09/21	Action complete.
7b		NAF Meeting 55.	Convenor/Sec to engage with Scottish Forestry to define requirement and arrange speaker at next meeting.	22/09/21	Meetings with Scottish Forestry held. Speaker attending meeting 02/02/22.	02/02/22	Action complete.
8	Access & Agricultural Funding	Post NAF Mtg 54. Request.	Request for NAF to consider how some form of funding for access is included in the next iteration of the SRDP. Raise at Sep Mtg.	04/06/21	Presentation provided at Mtg 55.	22/09/21	Action Complete.
		Mtg 55 AP 55/1	Members interested in participating in a small meeting to discuss paths and IPA future funding issues are requested to contact the secretary.	22/09/21	Meeting convened 27/05/22.	27/05/22	Action complete
9	Dog Sports Code	Request for inclusion at next meeting.	Request for NAF approval of a new dog sports code which has been developed by FLS and SKC.	03/08/21	Guide endorsed on the basis that the Kennel Club endorse the canine welfare aspects and help promote it through their communication channels.	22/09/11	Action complete
9a		AP 55/3	Link to guidance from SOAC website to be provided.	22/09/21	Link in place.	08/06/22	Action complete
10	Network Rail/Level Crossings	Recurring issue	Consider implications of Network Rail actions on closing level crossings.	03/08/21	Network Rail attended Mtg 55, extensive discussion followed NR presentation. ScotGov survey of private level crossings with Core Paths underway. Await further information.		Action complete.
11	Cumulative camping impacts.	NAF Mtg 56 AP 56/3	Mark Wrightham to reconvene camping sub-group to consider potential actions. Report at September meeting.	02/02/22	Correspondence paper drafted and circulated on 24/5 to the sub-group.	08/06/22	Action complete
11b		NAF Mtg 57	Report at September meeting.	08/06/22	Comments from sub-group received.	08/06/22	Ongoing
11c					ScotGov/NS behavioural research on promoting responsible camping through 2022. Jan 23 update: camping including fires & responsible behaviour and cumulative impacts is now included in the Visitor Management Strategy action plan for 2023	08/02/23	Action Complete

12	Access and Wildlife Disturbance	NAF Mtg 56 AP 56/4	Mark Wrightham to set up a small sub group to look at revising the access and wildlife disturbance guidance and report back to the Forum on any recommendations	02/02/22	Volunteers for sub-group received, paper being drafted. Scottish Raptor Study Group to join sub-group.	08/06/22	Ongoing
12b		NAF Mtg 57	A paper has been circulated to the sub group and a report will be made to the September NAF meeting.	08/06/22	Sub-group met 20 Jun 22.	21/09/22	Ongoing
12c		Sub-Group Mtg	SG Members to submit proposed amendments to draft guidance.	26/01/23	Draft guidance reviewed. Proposed amendments to be submitted in time for updated guidance for NAF circulation for Mtg 59.	30/01/23	
12d		NAF Mtg 59	Proposed updated guidance approved by NAF.	08/02/2023	Updated guidance published to NAF website – https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/doc/guidance-managing-public-access-areas-wildlife-sensitivity-scotland		Action complete
13	Upland Deer Management and Access	NAF Mtg 56	Request to present to NAF at next meeting.	02/02/22	Presentation made to NAF 8 Jun 22.	08/06/22	Action complete
13b		NAF Mtg 57 AP 57/2	Forum members wishing to be part of a working group to look at wild deer management and access should inform the NAFsec.	08/06/22	8 volunteer names passed to ADMG with request for ADMG to initiate WG arrangements. ADMG leading.	21/09/22	Action complete
13c			Initial meeting held 5 Dec 22 to agree terms of reference for the group, 1 st full meeting scheduled for 22 Feb 23.	21/09/22		08/02/23	Ongoing
13d			1 st full meeting held 22 Feb 2023, 2 nd on 2 May 2023, to discuss possible wording for generic communication messages on key periods for approval at June NAF meeting	22/02/2023	Draft paper and update to NAF Mtg 07 Jun 23	07/06/2023	Ongoing
13e		NAF Mtg 60	Paper agreed. Actions AP60/2 Members to help disseminate messaging. AP60/3 ADMG to ask members about the possibility of extending HFTSH to include the hind season, and to encourage increased engagement with HFTSH by its members. AP60/4 Members to identify where there are hotspots relating to deer management and	07/06/23	AP60/4 No feedback received.	20/09/23	Action complete

			wider access, which have issues with national implications.				
14	Publication of Routes	Inaccurate "third party" route description	<u>Route description discussed with land manager and other interested parties.</u>	09/03/22	Paper for NAF agreed with interested parties for presentation to NAF 57.	08/06/22	Action complete
14b		NAF Mtg 57 AP 57/4	Forum members are requested to send comments to the Convenor and NAFsec on whether updated guidance is required and how this should be taken forward.	08/06/22	No comments received. No further action at this time.	21/09/22	Action complete
15	Access Resources	NAF Mtg 57 AP 57/5	Forum members wishing to join the access resources sub group were invited to contact the NAFsec by the end of June.	08/06/22	Sub-group meeting arranged for 8 Sep 22.	21/09/22	
15b		NAF Mtg 58 AP 58/6 AP 58/7	58/6 Helen Todd to invite reps from land management bodies to join the resources for access sub-group. 58/7 The resources for access sub-group to develop a work plan to include NAF responses to the current consultations on land reform and agriculture legislation		58/6 Complete 58/7 Responses to Agri and LR Bills submitted. Mtg held 19 Jan 23. Full update to Mtg 59.	08/02/23	<u>58/6 complete</u> <u>58/7 ongoing</u>
15c		NAF Mtg 59	59/2: Resources for access sub-group to progress and co-ordinate work on the agreed actions that seek to increase awareness of the value of Scotland's outdoors for public access and recreation and promote the case for funding to maximise this potential.	08/02/2023	NAFSec has requested any blogs/articles on access rights from member organisations for dissemination, sent out on 25/05/2023. Helen Todd has written briefing for MSPs/ministers, for NAF approval	07/06/2023	Ongoing
15d		NAF Mtg 60	Brief for MSPs approved. Develop option for Mairi Gougeon to be invited for site visit with a few NAF members. Provide update at next meeting.	07/06/23	Brief circulated prior to summer recess.	20/09/23	Ongoing
16	Access Phraseology	Member and public input.	Concern about use of "access taker" and "right of responsible access". Request for NAF consideration.	Dec 22	Views from members sought. To be addressed at Mtg 59.	08/02/23	

16b		NAF Mtg 58 AP 59/1	Members requested to provide views.	08/02/23	Collation and report at Mtg 59	08/02/23	
16c		NAF Meeting 60			Forum discussed and decided not to take any further, will use "access-users" in NAF documents going forward.	07/06/23	Action Complete
17	Education and Access	Summer 23	NAF receiving reports of difficulties in using access rights for educational purposes.	Summer 23	Views thought and paper drafted for consideration at NAF meeting 61.	20/09/23	

Access for Educational Activities

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek feedback and clarification from NAF members as to whether there is a growing issue surrounding permissions, administrative requirements and charging for access to sites for educational activities and whether this is impacting on outdoor practitioners using public open spaces for education.

Background

NAF has been approached by, the Chief Operating Officer of Learning through Landscapes and co-lead of the National Network for Outdoor Learning (NNOL) noting that they and other outdoor education practitioners are reporting that they are being challenged on their right to access to outdoor spaces for education purposes, particularly those seeking to access urban green spaces. Examples provided include:

- Schools/ nurseries being charged a fee to obtain a licence to use parks
- Requests from local authorities for group information that NNOL consider excessive including exact times, dates, adult names, all risk assessments, insurance and more.
- Schools/ nursery group, requested by a Local Authority, to not undertake educational activities on a piece of private owned land as they did not have 'written' permission.
- Educational requests seemingly being treated similarly to commercial organisation organising a run or bike race.
- Some landowners being very directive over what spaces can be used.

Learning through Landscapes and the NNOL feel there is a change in attitude, albeit well-meaning as a way of managing visitor pressure, which is now creeping into something against the spirit of our Access Rights.

What the Legislation and Scottish Outdoor Access Code Says

Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 - 'The Act'

S1 Access rights

- (1) Everyone has the statutory rights established by this Part of this Act.
- (2) Those rights (in this Part of this Act called "access rights") are—
 - (a) the right to be, for any of the purposes set out in subsection (3) below, on land;
 - and
 - (b) the right to cross land.
- (3) The right set out in subsection (2)(a) above may be exercised only—
 - (a) for recreational purposes;
 - (b) **for the purposes of carrying on a relevant educational activity;** or
 - (c) for the purposes of carrying on, commercially or for profit, an activity which the person exercising the right could carry on otherwise than commercially or for profit.
- (5) A "relevant educational activity" is, for the purposes of subsection (3) above, an activity which is carried on by a person for the purposes of—

- (a) furthering the person's understanding of natural or cultural heritage; or
- (b) enabling or assisting other persons to further their understanding of natural or cultural heritage.

Scottish Outdoor Access Code - 'The Code'

Paragraph 2.8:

Access rights extend to any educational activities concerned with furthering a person's understanding of the natural or cultural heritage. For example, access rights would extend to the students, leader and any support staff on a visit to the outdoors to learn about wildlife or landscapes or geological features. People carrying out field surveys of the natural or cultural heritage, such as of birds or plants, as a recreational activity or for educational purposes, are covered by access rights (see paragraph 3.64).

Paragraph 3.57:

...As a general rule, the larger a group or event, or the more regularly use is made of a particular place, the greater is the risk of causing unreasonable interference with the rights and needs of land managers and other people, and of causing impacts on the environment. Therefore, if you are responsible for organising a group or an event, or for running a recreational or educational business requiring access to the outdoors, you need to show extra care.

Paragraph 3.62:

If you instruct, guide or lead people in recreational or educational activities (see paragraphs 2.8 to 2.9), either commercially or for profit, take extra care to minimise any adverse effects that you might have on the interests of other businesses, such as a farm or an estate, and on the environment. Doing a full risk assessment of your activities will provide a good starting point and you can show extra care by:

- planning your activities in ways that minimise possible impacts on land management and the interests of others should you wish to use a particular place regularly or if your visit might cause any particular concerns about safety or the environment;
- talking to the land managers who are responsible for places that you use regularly or intensively; and by
- obtaining the permission of the relevant land manager(s) if you wish to use a facility or service provided for another business by the land manager (such as an equestrian facility);
- if you are running a business that utilises access rights consider assisting with care of the resource used by your business.

SOAC: Public Parks and Other Managed Open Spaces

Responsible Behaviour by the Public: Access rights can be exercised in most urban parks, country parks and other managed open spaces. These parks are normally provided for recreational and educational purposes, but may also be managed to help safeguard the environment. Where the levels or types of use are such that peoples' safety or the environment is at risk, local guidance or management measures, such as management rules, regulations or byelaws, might have been introduced. Follow such guidance to help ensure that safety or the environment is not put at risk.

Responsible Behaviour by Land Managers: Promote the exercise of access rights in such places where this would not put safety or the environment at risk. Use measures such as management rules or byelaws as a last resort.

Considerations for NAF

1. NatureScot has already requested feedback from Scottish Government Outdoor Learning Group (SGOLG) and the SOAN Knowledge Hub to ascertain the scale of the issues (local or national) and whether this is a growing issue as identified by Learning through Landscapes; and also requests feedback and views from NAF members.
2. Clarification may be required over the specific circumstances as there may be other factors involved such as management rules, byelaws or other elements of an activity which may require permission e.g. setting up marquees, parking, access to toilets.
3. Subject to the above, agreement from NAF members on the next steps –for example the development of guidance (of information in another format e.g. a briefing)by NatureScot, with input from NAF members, to promote to relevant audiences as a reminder that access rights extend to access for education activities

NatureScot

2023

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

National Access Forum – 60th meeting

Hybrid meeting: 7th June 2023

Present:

	Representatives	Organisation
1	Don Milton	Convenor - National Access Forum (NAF)
2	Ali Tait	Secretary - National Access Forum (NAF)
3	Frank Spencer-Nairn	Association of Deer Management Groups (ADMG)
4	Linzi Seivwright*	ADMG
5	Peter Clark	British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC)
6	Helene Mauchlen	British Horse Society Scotland (BHSS)
7	Colin Mair	National Farmers' Union of Scotland (NFUS)
8	Stephen Jenkinson	Kennel Club / Scottish Kennel Club (KC/SKC)
9	Stephan Hennig	ScotWays
10	Nick Cole	Local Access Forum (LAFs)
11	Davie Black	Mountaineering Scotland (MS)
12	Grant Dolier	Canoe Scotland
13	Stephen Young	Scottish Land and Estates (SLE)
14	Alan Macpherson	NatureScot (NS)
15	Graeme McLean	Scottish Cycling
16	Sue Hilder	Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA)
17	Paul Timms	Cycling UK (Scotland)
18	Const. Graeme Scott	Police Scotland (PS)
19	Helen Todd	Ramblers Scotland (RS)
20	Hugh McNish	Scottish Forestry (SF)
21	Malcolm Duce	Scottish Government (SG)

* in attendance as additional representatives or guests

Item 1 – Welcome, introductions and apologies

1. The Convenor opened the hybrid meeting, welcoming everyone to the Forum. He particularly welcomed Linzi Seivwright who attended alongside Frank Spencer-Nairn for ADMG and Stephen Young as SLE's representative at this meeting in place of Simon Ovenden.

Apologies: Roy Barlow (Woodland Trust), Adam Streeter-Smith (Cairngorms National Park Authority), Eileen Stuart (NS), Tom Turnbull (ADMG), Simon Ovenden (SLE), Rona Gibb (Paths for All), Carol Ritchie (Wild Scotland), Bob Frost (SF), Andrew Hopetoun (Historic Houses Association Scotland).

Convenor's report:

2. The Convenor reported that he had attended a meeting of the National Forestry Stakeholder Group in March, and was pleased to see that access was part of the agenda on Community Engagement. He has also responded to an e-mail raising an issue that Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) had incorrectly cited the Countryside Code in their messaging about the wildfire at Cannich, which has since been corrected using SOAC as the citation. Ali Tait has also passed this feedback to the Visitor Management Operational Group of which SFRS is a member.

Item 2 – Minutes of previous meetings, action points and matters arising

3. Minutes: the unconfirmed minutes of 8th Feb 2023, previously circulated, were approved with no amendments.

4. Action points:

AP 56/5: - NatureScot to investigate the legal position on liability for third party promotion of paths.

On-going: [Feb 2023 update: Bridget Jones confirms](#) NatureScot has prepared a draft brief and will be seeking legal advice, using our legal advisors, with a response anticipated by early spring. May 2023 update: No progress on action point, carry forward.

AP 59/1: Members to consult with their organisations/representative areas to seek views on the use of the phrase “access-takers”, whether the NAF should provide guidance, confirm suggested or propose better terminology and to send comments or proposed new terminology to NAFsec before the June meeting – **Discharged**, see agenda item 8

AP 59/2: Resources for access sub-group to progress and co-ordinate work on the agreed actions that seek to increase awareness of the value of Scotland's outdoors for public access and recreation and promote the case for funding to maximise this potential – **Discharged**, see agenda item 5

AP 59/3: The NAF/LAF event planning group to plan the spring virtual meeting and circulate details to LAF Chairs, Local Authority Access teams, and full NAF members as soon as possible - **Discharged**

Item 3 - Forestry planning process

5. Hugh McNish (SF) updated the Forum on the progress of the United Kingdom Forestry Standard (UKFS) and Forestry Grant Scheme consultations. Both have now closed; analysis is underway and the updated UKFS will hopefully be launched in summer 2023. SF will use the launch of the UKFS to re-invigorate training for Woodland Officers, including in relation to access.
6. Colin Mair gave some examples of access issues with new plantations, specifically in South Ayrshire. It was raised by Forum members that consultation with LAFs and Access Officers is needed at the planning stage. Nick Cole raised a query about whether it would be possible to make LAF consultation a statutory requirement. However, it was recognised that some LAFs are non-operational or have limited capacity to respond, as well as Access Officers also facing difficulties with capacity and some Access Authorities having vacancies in their access teams.
7. Hugh responded that establishing good lines of communication will be included in the reinvigorated SF training, and the Convenor also noted he was pleased to see reference to the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 included in the UKFS earlier draft. SF will update the forum again in September. It was also noted by Hugh that consideration has been given to the differences between the four devolved nations.

8. Steve Jenkinson also highlighted that Strava data could be a useful tool for Woodland Officers to identify popular routes used by access-users.

AP 60/1: Members to identify and highlight any areas of woodland planning process where there are issues pertaining to access.

Item 4 - Upland deer management and access

9. Frank Spencer-Nairn (ADMG) updated the Forum on the progress of the sub-group, which has identified three main topics: key periods, hotspots and commercial operators. The main focus, so far, has been on key periods. As there has been no representation on the group from the commercial operator sector, only limited discussions have been had on this topic to-date. Frank was pleased to report that the sub-group has been working well and highlighted the relevance of the work being done by the Resources for Access sub-group to this issue.

10. ADMG initially presented a paper to the forum in June 2022, outlining issues around access and deer management. Subsequently, the Upland Deer Management and Access sub-group was put together, has agreed terms of reference and met twice since.

11. Alan Macpherson (NS) presented a paper covering messaging about deer stalking and access aimed at access-users. The paper focusses on key periods and has four aims:

- Improve general public awareness and understanding of stalking activity
- Raise awareness that reducing red deer numbers significantly in the uplands is essential to address nature loss and meet climate targets
- Encourage increased use of the Heading for the Scottish Hills (HFTSH) website, and other information sources used by hill goers and deer managers
- Encourage hill goers to take greater steps to avoid disturbance during two short key periods at the end of the stag and hind seasons.

12. The messaging in the paper will be used to guide consistent messaging across a range of media. Subject to feedback, the sub-group was seeking approval from the NAF to use this messaging for the start of the 2023 stag season (1st July).

13. Alan noted that an extension of HFTSH to include the hind season (October 21st - February 15th) would be necessary. He also highlighted potential upcoming changes to the stag season; no closed season. This would require minor changes to the proposed messaging. It was agreed that any such changes would be drafted by the sub-group and approved by the Convenor.

14. Steve Jenkinson reported that he was happy to endorse the paper, and gave a few suggestions. He highlighted that pared-down messaging can be the most effective with difficult to reach audiences; focusing on “where can I go?” and “what can I do?” He also highlighted some issues with HFTSH, particularly a lack of estate boundaries. This was echoed by Linzi Seivwright, who asked whether the site could be altered to have more of a map functionality. Alan reported that a map approach has been used previously but it was very resource intensive. To Steve’s point, he responded that the messaging will most likely be used in bite-sized chunks e.g. on the SOAC website, HFTSH, social media.

15. Frank asked whether there was a way to make it easier for estates to update HFTSH.

He also provided some information about the way in which a year-round stag season may not change the operations of some estates. According to ADMG, roughly 50% of estates are “hind forests” - they only have stags on them during the rut which means they are fairly limited to the rut to achieve their stag cull targets.

16. There was discussion about rangers being a potentially better source of information for access-users regarding deer management than land managers. However it was recognised that ranger numbers are relatively low. Nick also mentioned issues with commercial operators who aren't accredited/qualified not providing information about deer management or building good relationships with land-owners. Linzi noted that some ADMG members are feeling frustrated that the spirit of responsible access isn't always present in access-users.
17. Members were pleased overall with the guidance and happy to endorse it for use beginning with the 2023 stag season, noting that minor changes may need to be made in line with potential changes to the stag season.
18. Hotspots: The Convenor raised that the NAF does not have the remit or capacity to look at individual hotspot cases or commercial activity, but wondered if there was a need to broaden the approach to these issues other than purely deer management. He also reminded members of the previous messaging on SOAC comms provided by Cat Synnot (NS) at the Feb meeting of the NAF. He thanked members of the sub-group for their work and asked NAF members to identify where hotspots and commercial operator activity, other than pure deer management, had national implications that might benefit from review by a broader based sub-group than created for deer management.

AP 60/2: NAF members to help in disseminating upland deer management and access messaging to their members/audiences, especially those within the commercial, recreation and land management sectors.

AP 60/3: ADMG to ask members about the possibility of extending HFTSH to include the hind season, and to encourage increased engagement with HFTSH by its members.

AP 60/4: Members to identify where there are hotspots relating not only to deer management and access, which have issues with national implications and/or relating to commercial operators.

Item 5 - Resources for access

19. Helen Todd (Ramblers Scotland) updated the Forum on the activity of the Resources for Access sub-group. Thanks were given to those Forum members who have already used the 20th anniversary year of the LR(S)A to highlight access successes/issues, and members were asked to continue doing so. At the last meeting of the sub-group, there was discussion of producing a longer paper on the state of access. This would require funding and as yet this has not been identified; NatureScot cannot provide it. The sub-group has responded to two consultations on behalf of the NAF; the Land Reform Bill and the Agriculture Bill.
20. A briefing paper for Ministers and MSPs was presented for approval. Overall, members were happy with the paper, with a few edits to be discussed with specific members. These will be addressed with the members, with the aim of the paper being ready to send to Ministers/MSPs before the end of June (summer recess).

21. There was discussion about whether some members of the Forum that are public bodies may need to recuse themselves from the briefing paper. Nick Cole drew a comparison between LAFs advising access authorities generally, not just access departments. Malcolm Duce also said he didn't see an issue with the NAF corresponding directly with Ministers/MSPs as NAF has previously written to Scottish ministers/government to advise e.g. guidance on roads.
22. There has also been discussion about inviting Mairi Gougeon, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, to meet a small group of NAF members and discuss access issues. Ideas include meeting somewhere in or near north Angus (the CabSec's constituency), perhaps hosted by SLE. The Convenor highlighted that if inviting the CabSec then similar issue of public bodies having to recuse themselves might arise.
23. It was agreed that before the invitation is sent out, consideration should be given as to what issues the NAF wants to highlight. Malcolm also gave advice that Friday is constituency day, so there is a better chance of getting time in CabSec schedule. Frank said he would like rangers to be highlighted. Paul Timms commented that this briefing could also be used for a wider audience e.g. councillors and potentially MPs (with some adjustments made).

Item 6 - NAF/LAF feedback

24. The Convenor provided post-meeting feedback from the [NAF/LAF](#) meeting in April 2023. Feedback from the event attendees was low, but indicated that the meeting was generally appreciated. The virtual format worked well, allowing those with demanding schedules or facing geographical barriers to attend. Break-out rooms worked well technically, however it was felt they could have been longer to allow for more in-depth discussions.
25. There was also little time at the end of the meeting to answer questions that had been submitted by attendees pre-meeting. Therefore, it was discussed that a document be prepared with high level answers to these questions; many of the questions were on the same topics and can be grouped. There was little demand for a meeting in the autumn and the next meeting will be in spring 2023.
26. There was a following discussion about the difficulties faced by LAFs (mainly Access Officers facing a lack of capacity, Access Authorities not having sufficient understanding of access issues and their role in addressing them or the Access Officer role being vacant) and in identifying LAFs that are no longer functioning. The Convenor highlighted the need to keep LAF issues in mind within the NAF. Frank highlighted it would be helpful to have a list of LAFs and Access Officers. A list of Access Officer contact details can be found [here](#).

AP 60/5: NAFSec to produce a document with answers to NAF/LAF attendee questions, with help from the Convenor.

Item 7 - E-mountain bike study - update and next steps

27. Graeme McLean gave an update on taking forward the recommendations of the research carried out on e-mountain bikes (e-MTBs). Evidence from the study highlights that e-MTBs can help address inequality in participation and get people into exercise/keep them exercising for longer. Cost was found to be the main barrier to participation.
28. There are some issues around infrastructure and impacts; it would be useful to have a demonstration project. Of the devolved nations, it was found that Scotland has the best

communications for e-MTBing, especially around access, but could still be improved. One improvement would be to make the comms more specific to e-MTBing. Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBinS) will be developing specific messaging for their website.

AP 60/6: Graeme McLean to inform NAF if he comes across any e-MTB issues that may require NAF attention and to update the NAF on progress as necessary.

Item 7 - Terminology

29. The Convenor introduced this topic; the NAF had received feedback to express discontent with the term “access-taker” as it can be seen to have negative connotations, and a preference for the term “access-user”. Don noted that the LR(S)A and SOAC do not use the term “access-taker” or any term directly equivalent; SOAC does have a couple of references to “take access”. It was also noted that this is a linguistics issue taken by the NAF in an attempt to be an “honest broker” and does not fall under the remit of the NAF defined in the Operating Principles Aims and how the Forum will achieve these aims.
30. Feedback gathered within the Forum indicated that the majority did not wish to have an extended debate, did not see this as core NAF business or felt that there was more relevant business for the NAF to cover in the limited time that is available in meetings. At opposite ends of the spectrum there were those expressing support for “access-user” and those who were content with “access-taker”. In between, there were those with no strong feelings about use of either term and could live with both, or thought that the terminology should be associated with the context in which it is used.
31. The NAF members noted the concerns expressed about terminology such as “access-taker” and were minded to avoid needlessly or inadvertently causing offence wherever possible, while noting there was no universally-agreed alternative form of words that were better to use in some, or all, contexts. It was also noted that there had been no suggestion that the wording under discussion was discriminatory or offensive in terms of statutory protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
32. Given the finite resources and more pressing challenges and opportunities facing the NAF as a whole and its members individually, there was thus majority agreement that the NAF should not dedicate any further time to discussing the matters of terminology recently raised. The NAF will use the term “access-user” in its publications, as agreed at the February 2023 NAF meeting.

Item 9 - Forthcoming meetings and agenda items

- NAF meeting - Wednesday 20th September 2023 – Battleby
- NAF meeting - Wednesday 7th February 2024 - TBC
- Agenda item - Education groups and access - Matt Robinson (Learning through Landscapes and National Network for Outdoor Learning in Scotland) has had feedback from colleagues about some issues accessing spaces for education purposes.

Item 10 - A.O.B.

33. Davie Black introduced a new campaign from Mountaineering Scotland and the Outdoor Access Trust - “It’s Up to Us” (www.savemountainpaths.scot). The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of the need for investment in the repair and maintenance of informal upland paths. The campaign launched in May and has three aims:
 - Engage with stakeholders and government to develop a framework for funding for upland paths

- Raise the profile of challenges faced in finding funding for path repair and maintenance, the need for further investment in this area and the social and economic benefits
- Fundraising for path restoration projects, beginning with a project to raise £300,000 to address decades of erosion on An Teallach.

Close - The Convenor closed the meeting, thanking the Forum for their contributions.

Summary Action Points

AP 60/1: Members to identify and highlight any areas of woodland planning process where there are issues pertaining to access.

AP 60/2: NAF members to help in disseminating upland deer management and access messaging to their members/audiences, especially those within the commercial, recreation and land management sectors.

AP 60/3: ADMG to ask members about the possibility of extending HFTSH to include the hind season, and to encourage increased engagement with HFTSH by its members.

AP 60/4: Members to identify where there are hotspots relating not only to deer management and access, which have issues with national implications and/or relating to commercial operators.

AP 60/5: NAFSec to produce a document with answers to NAF/LAF attendee questions, with help from the Convenor.

AP 60/6: Graeme McLean to inform NAF if he comes across any e-MTB issues that may require NAF attention and to update the NAF on progress as necessary.