

ACHMORE AND STROME FERRY PATHS GROUP – NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17/04/2024.

Present – Colin Parsons, Marion Howat, Claudia Weegan, Mary Macbeth, Iseabail Howat

Apologies – Mhairi Macrae, Chris Cartwright, Kath Smith, Kate Biss, Rory Biss

PREVIOUS MINUTE AND ACTIONS ARISING	AMENDMENTS/UPDATES	COMPLETED	WHO	DATE
1. Previous Minute		Approved		
2. Local Access Officer	The group welcomed Stewart Easthaugh, Local Access Officer. See attached for summary of Stewart’s very helpful input and an email Stewart had sent with links to very informative and useful online sites.			
3. AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO	TARGET DATE
Action points from last meeting - <u>3.1.ii</u>	<p><u>3.1.ii) Update from Fernaig Community Trust. FCT members</u></p> <p>No direct update but following on from some of the discussion with Stewart around group constitution, insurance needs and being able to apply for funding from different sources the group again discussed the merits of becoming a sub-group of the Fernaig Trust. It was recognised that FCT would be concerned that their insurance would increase, and additional work would be created for their already hard-working board members. The Paths Group members are happy to do the graft re applying for resources, arranging feasibility studies where necessary and organising direct work volunteers. Stewart inclined towards the Paths Group joining an existing constituted group where there was cross over on objectives so community resource (people) could be used more efficiently by avoiding duplication of effort and demand for volunteers to fill roles across groups.</p> <p>It was suggested that potentially FCT’s insurance could already cover the insurance needs for volunteers working on paths locally or that to add cover to it may be much cheaper for the community than a new group taking this out new. It was agreed it would be helpful to know what is covered by the FCT’s existing insurance and, if not covered how much it would be to add this on. The Paths Group members are all members of FCT so there shouldn’t be any issue sharing it.</p>	Write to FCT asking if their insurance could be looked at and discussed /shared.	<p><u>Paths Group FCT board members</u></p> <p>IH</p>	Feedback to next meeting

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<p>3.2.i.) Achmore/Strome Routes</p>	<p>3.2.i) Road Update – IH</p> <p>IH advised that there has been no reply from 2 requests made to Malcolm MacLeod (Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Highland Council). These requests followed an earlier email copied by our local roads manager to 5 councillors and 2 more senior roads managers in September 2023 asking if they could point us in the right direction to try and get a feasibility study completed on the path along the road. IH had phoned HC on the 15th April and spoke to a Customer Advisor who said he would pass details of the request to the ‘right team’ asking them to call her before tonight’s meeting. No one did.</p> <p>Stewart suggested writing to Neil Young, Project Manager, Active Travel instead re trying to get a feasibility study done.</p> <p>Path – Stewart may be able to access a new self-closing gate. It would need to be put in place by the Group. It would need the landowner’s agreement. If we get this to get back to Stewart.</p>	<p>Letter to Neil Young</p> <p>Discuss with landowner.</p>	<p>IH</p> <p>CP</p>	<p>Feedback to next meeting.</p> <p>Feedback to next meeting</p>
<p>3.6. i) and 3.6.ii) Rights of Way signage and Insurance</p>	<p>3.6.i) and 3.6. ii) – Rights of Way signage and insurance for volunteers/walkers. To be discussed with Stewart (above).</p> <p>Discussed during Stewart’s input (see attached). Bullet points on ‘signage’ were –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and directional signs should be put on the Achmore/Stromeferry hill path to encourage people to walk it and to clearly show the right of way is not down the water track access through a private garden but across to the stream and down. • The above requires landowners’ permission and, • obtaining the signs, which the Access Officer may be able to help with. 	<p>Discuss with landowner in conjunction with above.</p>	<p>CP</p>	<p>Feedback to next meeting</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The signs would need to be distinguishable from existing CMNet signs. • Information displayed on them needs to be current. <p>‘Insurance’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under common law individuals have a right to cut back bushes, etc to keep Rights of Way free and this does not require insurance. • Insurance is needed where volunteers are acting as part of a constituted group. • Stewart re-iterated what Nic Boulivant said about those choosing to walk a right of way doing so at their own risk and where, for example, a sign says there are cattle on the route and a cow injures someone it thinks is posing a threat to its calf. • If the paths group were to put in infrastructure on the hill path and someone was injured because it wasn't put in correctly or wasn't maintained the liability for this would fall to the group. This is why low risk infrastructure (gates rather than stiles) should be used. 			
<p>3.8.i) Strome Beach Track</p>	<p><u>8.i) Write to new contact for the landowners.</u></p> <p>IH had written to the Secretary of J Boston Ltd but had not received a reply. Wording on a new letter to be changed and sent to the owner saying unless they have objections it is intended to clear this path. It was also noted that as had been done previously by a now sadly deceased individual acting on his own this could be done again if any individual chose to.</p> <p>MM advised that this path was not on the Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) that Scotways maintains. Colin advised he had not been aware it had been a right of way when collating local ones for inclusion in CROW. Colin will try to</p>	<p>Letter to owner.</p> <p>Try to have added to CROW</p>	<p>IH</p> <p>CP</p>	<p>Before 03/05/2024</p>

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	have it added. MH thought it had been recognised as a Right of Way by the former Access Officer and the owner.			
4 Held Items.	Sulky Road and other forest roads – no discussion	Hold on agenda		Rolling item
5. AOB – Promoting Paths Group	<p>There was discussion about using some of the wider communication networks such as the Community WhatsApp Group and the Strome ferry and Achmore Webpage to share and promote the work of the Paths Group.</p> <p>Perhaps a very short brief on the WhatsApp and adding the Group’s Minutes to the Strome ferry and Achmore webpage. CP and MMcB would be involved to some degree in each of these.</p>	Continue discussion at next meeting.		Next Meeting
5. Hall fees	MH said she’d pick up hall fee for this meeting. Thank you	Payment to Hall Treasurer.	MH	Every meeting
Date of next meeting	<p>It was agreed the Paths Group should meet monthly on the second last Wednesday of each month.</p> <p>Date of next meeting will be 22nd May 2024 at 7pm.</p>			