

Feedback from S Lanarkshire Local Access Forum Meeting 4/9/19

Background

The Local Access Forum is a body set up under the Land Reform Scotland Act (2003) to allow interested parties to raise issues related to the "Right to Roam" provisions of the Act. It comprises representatives of SLC, Community Councils, and a range of interested organisations e.g. Ramblers Scotland, the Scottish Canoe Association, and the National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS).

Some of the issues raised at the meeting related to other parts of South Lanarkshire and are not covered in this report.

Janet Moxley represented BCC at this meeting.

Issues in Biggar

- * SLC no longer adopt play areas within new housing developments. These remain the responsibility of the developers or their factors. This will apply to recreational areas within Pentland Reach.
- * The Scottish Canoe Association feel that SLC's stance on use of ponds which they manage for boating is out of line with the access provisions of the Land Reform Act which give access to water. There are signs at a number of SLC-owned ponds such as Biggar Boating Pond and Lanark Lock which appear to deter access. Prior notice and £5m public liability insurance is required to use Biggar Boating Pond, and paddlers and open water swimmers have been asked not to use the Heritage Loch in East Kilbride. Other local authorities allow free access to similar areas such as Musselburgh lagoons and Castle Semple Loch. It was agreed that the Access Forum would send a letter to SLC raising these concerns, and emphasising that it is the access-takers, not the land owner, who are responsible for assessing and mitigating any risks involved.

Issues Close to Biggar

- * There has been an issue with a locked gate on the track to Stonehill Wood between Carmichael and Rigside. The ownership of the wood changed recently, and the new owners appear to be trying to restrict trail bike access to the wood, but are also preventing mobility scooters and buggies from using the track. SLC are to suggest some options to constrict the access which would deter trail bikes while allowing access for scooters and buggies.
- * The cycle path between Hyndford Bridge and Lanark is in a poor state. Those concerned about this were asked to notify SLC using the Road Faults Reporting Form on the SLC website.

General Items

- * It was noted that core paths should be brought up to a "reasonable" standard within 2 years of the adoption of a core paths plan, but this has not been done in S Lan. It is unclear what constitutes "reasonable" in this context.
- * Sustrans has approximately £20k available in grants for upgrades to cycle paths in Clydesdale.
- * More Scottish Government funding has been provided to allow landowners to promote access. This is mainly targeted at the Highlands, but some funding will be available elsewhere.

Requested Action BCC to note the content of this report.