

# Minutes of the Sutherland Local Access Forum,

Monday 30 March 2026

Chamber, Drumbuie, Golspie and online

1500 – 1700

Present – John Ross (Chair JR), Lesley Cranna, Betty Grieve (BG), Marion Milligan (MM) (online), Cllr Leslie-Ann Niven (online)

Matt Dent (MD) – The Highland Council Access Officer

## 1. Apologies

Francis Gunn (wishes to step down),

Leslie-Anne noted Cllr Jim McGillivray had tendered his resignation at last full council meeting

## 2. Notes from meeting of the 29 September 2025

MD apologised for sending agenda for comment not the minutes, sent hour or two before the meeting.

## 3. Matters Arising

Core path amendment at Kilbraur – will go to the area committee in June, MD was unaware it needed to go to this committee. Probably a good idea with amount of extra core path, JR stated he was impressed with the works done at Farlary – Mr Meeres. **Action MD**

Rhives Farm campsite works underway, new path route working well?

British Legion route – since last meeting the Council has asserted the route. There has been a bit of too-ing and fro-ing with the barrier but currently clear. It is clear and usable, no “appeal” to Council assertion upto occupier to take next step. This reminded MD of need to look at Littleferry which would take to elected Cllrs.

Hill Of Edderton – still ongoing, MD has prepared a mediation brief. To send brief to Scottish Mediation. **Action MD**

#### 4. Ongoing Access Enquiries and Work

Dairy Park, surface of core path, adjacent field ploughed last Autumn, track as was not used. so maybe mow to ensure no encroachment. LC suggest stakes to mark, MD to view on aerial maps. **Action MD**

Carbisdale – leaflets printed and distributed. Panel installed and fallen tree cleared.

Local group strimmed woodland paths, section by loch for THC to undertake.

JR asked about cabins by loch, MD had not seen anything since planning application.

Upper Bighouse – path cleared, signs being produced and ready to pass to owner to install.

Little Rogart – MD has followed up but kept missing owner. Round Rogart path is well used but not much use elsewhere.

Little Torboll – Eiden MD visited and found track clear apart from a fallen tree – some issues with direction finding in middle as track is vague. Rogart is part of next phase of waymaking

Achinduich – SSEN in progress with replacement gate at Loch Laro. JR suggested there was an kissing gate here but MD not seen. Location will be subject to a lot of future development. Added to CROW. JR commented there is another double field gate across the track, not locked but would benefit from a side pedestrian gate. **Action MD**

Strathy Point – historic case, mainly dogs but since rise in use of NC500 and sell off of the lighthouse buildings seem to have increased use of public visiting Strathy Point.

Kilbraur – Locked gate on Kilbraur to Farlary, no progress/feedback from common grazings/sheepstock club. Led on to chat about tracks and fencing/gates.

#### 5. AOCB

BG – asked about adding Seaweed Road signage, Navidale/Helmsdale. Locals know it as Square Road leading Seaweed Lane/Road. **Action MD**  
BG mentioned gates on Square Lane, number of gates is a work in progress some waymarking required. BG also asked about old fencing, MD to follow up.

BG – asked about the coastal erosion by the Helmsdale bridge and questioned path under bridge.

MD – Requests for more land ownership representation on the forum,

MD – Highlight ability of robotic flail mower to clear paths.

- Helmsdale Rock?
- Embo railway, strimmed but need to keep clear, JR said poached by cattle
- Opisdale woodland suggest by JR (bit remote - MD)

BG – talked about JOGT and how visitors can report issues or know where to go if not signed/clear on the ground. Some questions over cows and users understand how to access the trail.

MD – explained current phase of amended core path signage

MM – Beinn Tongue – reports of discouragement from taking access, MD mentioned issue with dogs some years ago, MM to visit. The council did some clearance work at the Coldbackie end but MD will write. MD had heard about issues with telecoms access, this may have caused the pedestrian concerns? Should be separate. **Action MD**

MM – Hope lodge opening soon, old trails maybe open again. Mentioned work on the Moine Path, MD asked if MM had contact for Steven Liddle

**Action MM/MD**

6. Date of next meetings - proposed

28 September 2026