Fife Access Forum Meeting Minutes

Thursday 9th July 2026, 7pm-8.30pm, at Michael Woods Leisure Centre and online

Attendees: Robbie Blyth, FCCT, Chair (RB); Marjory Wood, FCCT, minutes (MW); Jim Taylor (JT); Brian Cruickshank (BC); Iain Wilkinson (IW); Neil Sutherland (NS); Brian Dewar (BD); Beryl Leatherland (BL - online); Roslyn Paris (RP - online).

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

RB welcomed all and gave apologies from Jan Kerr, Kirsty Nairn, Iain Mitchell, John Andrews, John Stewart and Pete Hogg (FCCT).

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of meeting of 30th April 2026 proposed by JT, seconded by BD and therefore approved.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. Matters Arising

Actions from the last meeting:

- Dovecot Park, Glenrothes. RB reported that access has been opened up and that he has offered help with self-closing gates and signage.
- Freuchie Right of Way. This Forum had proposed a diversion. RB reported that the North East Fife Area Committee did not approve this. The gate should be unlocked, but it was not unlocked as of today.
- Path from Limekilns to A985 Admiralty Road. RB wrote to local elected members, community council and Fife Council to say path quite dangerous in its current state and it should be resurfaced. He asked FC to put in measures to slow down cyclists as a couple of Rights of Way and desire lines come off the path. FC said they were really keen to do the work but were not given a big enough window of opportunity (with the landowner). **Action:** RB to speak to NFUS reps on the Forum to see if they can contact landowner.
- Harperleas historic kissing gates are restricting access for bikes. **Action:** RB to reach out to Scottish Water
- Tree on core path P731/01. RB said the tree was secure. **Action:** RB and BD to arrange a date to meet at this location.
- Flooding on road at Otterston Loch, Aberdour. RB has raised with FC Transportation Services as this is next to an adopted road.
- Jamphlars Place path, Cardenden, and use by tenant with horses. RB said FC have to maintain the access but don't generate enough income from letting the field to justify upkeep of the path. FC have agreed with his suggestion to turn this field into a wetland and find another field for the tenant.

5. Fife Core Paths Update

No Access Officer present at the meeting and RB said no updates beyond what was reported at Matters Arising (above).

6. **Information Sharing – Core Paths and Rights of Way**

RB explained that sharing details of land ownership would be a breach of data. This is Fife Council's legal advice which he agrees with. It is permissible to share the Core Path number. All Forum members will get a list of path access issues showing the path number, What3Words or grid reference and the challenge/issue. This will allow Forum members to see progress being made. RB said the Fife Core Paths map is relatively well up to date and any issues can be brought to his attention.

7. **Ramblers Scotland path maintenance volunteers protocols**

BD reported that Rambers Scotland (RS) have set up a path maintenance team locally and training is required re health & safety and power tools. RS are providing initial funding but future funding for new volunteers will be an issue. He asked if RS could apply for funding in future. RB said the Forum will help groups apply for funding.

8. **Funding Proposals**

The Forum agreed that FCCT would hold Forum funds (in the absence of a Forum bank account) and that the Forum can then attract funding and dispense to groups who apply for it for projects like signs and gates. **Action:** RB to action this with FCCT.

9. **Section 11 and Closure Notices**

Forum members can go online to see the current three temporary closures at Current path closures and exemptions | Fife Council RB reported that a temporary closure application had come in from Kellie Castle. The route will be diverted for those five days so access will remain.

10. **Forum Members' Updates**

RS said she'd not heard any updates re the Code of Conduct signage at West Sands Beach. BC listed Nuts Trail Races: Splash & Dash Race at West Sands on 26 July; Falkland Hill Race on 25 July; and General Sosabowski Race takes place on 30 August at Leven. BD said clearing a path at Cullaloe Reservoir had been very difficult and he's heard of a locked gate issue at Auchtertool. He's asked Ramblers Scotland to feedback issues to him. BL mentioned the data centre planning application at Auchtertool and a concern over core paths. RB said he'd look at the planning application and that if he was going to respond he would let Forum members know. Forum members can respond themselves. **Action:** RB to look at data centre planning application.

11. **Fife Coast and Countryside Trust staffing update**

FCCT are considering who to appoint as Access Officer having completed interviews.

12. **AOCB**

- Burnturk Rural Riders have contacted RB re path at Markinch on Fife Pilgrim Way proving difficult for horse access since fencing put up. RB explained this is a 'permissive path' because the landowner agreed it could be used as route of Fife Pilgrim Way. But not a Core Path or Right of Way. Landowner has agreed to remove some of the barbed wire fencing. A culvert has been put in and people and horses can use the path on the other side of the burn.
- Section 11 notices. RB said applicants have to consult to make the public aware and that legislation states they can, if they wish, consult the Forum. RB proposed that for closures of five days or less, that the Access Officer is authorised to consult the chair or vice-chair of the Forum (as representing the Forum's views) to enable a quick decision to be made. BL asked that where possible landowners are asked to put in an alternative route. Chair, vice-chair would then share their decision with the wider Forum for info. Agreed.
- Coffin Road, Balcurvie. A Right of Way dispute for five to six years and recently some unpleasant signage was put up in the area that mentioned the Access Officer. RB would like to convene a discussion with landowner, locals and Forum members to try to reach a resolution. **Action:** RB to formally contact all interested parties to offer Forum's help. Agreed. BL said that a last resort could be the National Access Forum.

- BD had been contacted about a locked gate by Mr A. D. RB reiterated that such enquiries should come to outdooraccess@fife.gov.uk **Action:** RB to ask Access Team to triage this.
- Charleton Estate access issues. IW reported his walking group being 'shouted at' and that estate has put up a 'Private' sign on a road that's been accessed for years. Landowner said he had FC permission to erect said sign. **Action:** RB to check with Access Team.
- Kilconquhar Path diversion was passed by the North East Fife Area Committee.

Date of next scheduled meeting: Thursday 29th October 2026, 7pm – 9pm at Michael Woods Leisure Centre, Glenrothes, and online [details TBC].

List of actions:

- Limekilns to A985 path measures to slow cyclists. RB to speak to NFUS reps on the Forum to see if they can contact landowner about a window of opportunity to do this.
- RB to contact Scottish Water re kissing gates at Harperleas
- Tree on core path P731/01. RB and BD to arrange a date to meet at this location.
- RB to arrange FCCT to hold any funds for Fife Access Forum.
- RB to look at Auchtertool data centre planning application.
- RB to offer Forum's help to all parties re Coffin Road, Balcurvie, RoW dispute.
- RB to ask Access Team to triage issue raised with BD by Mr A. D.
- RB to check with Access Team re Charleton Estate private sign.