

Scottish Countryside Access Network (SCAN)

Conference
June 2001

“Movers and Shakers”



Plenary 1 *questions/answers*

- ? *Any suggestions to help Ian McCall pull disparate parties together?*
- Ross Martin Someone has to take the lead and get all organisations on board. Organisations that can come together will be listened to by Parliament. If there is no consensus coming through then a Committee may 'divide and rule' or cherry-pick.
- Dennis Robert -Sullivan Chose 4-5 key points of broad agreement, each organisation picks 2, plus one other that is especially important to them. So choosing the same thing in waves.
- Mike Dales* *What about power parties, for instance, what influence has the House of Lords?*
- Dennis Robert-Sullivan Yes, can get a Lord to drive a piece of legislation, and also Lords are part of networks.
- Peter Scott* *What do you see as the 5 key points from the Draft Legislation?*
- Dennis Robert-Sullivan It fails to adhere to the recommendations of the Access Forum and SNH without explanation why it introduces a Local Authority right of expulsion. It introduces a Land Owner power to suspend the right which has the potential of widespread abuse. Criminalisation of trespass. The extent of the powers over inland water
- Hugh Muschamp Much that is in the Bill should be in the Code.
- Dennis Robert-Sullivan There is a feeling in some quarters that the Bill could be a single side of A4 with all the rest in a better Code.
- Ross Martin An example of this is the guidance/guidelines were used in the Section 28 Sex Education debate.

Plenary 2 *questions/answers*

- ? *Can journalists be trusted?*
- Rob Edwards Use common sense. Don't 'off the record' journalist cannot keep secrets. And don't be frightened of journalists. The media depends on people calling them up.
- Tony Dyer HC* *To whom or what is/are the civil servants responsible?*
- Jessica Pepper Scotland has the biggest administration in Civil Servants Work and the Executive. Scotland has population of 6million - and we have 129 MSP's and all the support staff. City of London has 11millionpeople and only x MPs. .
- Alistair Lawson* *If misquoted, what comeback is there?*
- Rob Edwards 9 out of 10 occasions when newspapers are taken to count are just not worth it. Better to complain directly to journalist

and ask for letter of Editor to be published. Everything you say is fair game. A journalist will choose to most dramatic and interesting and use it, probably out of context. Ask for a pre-bleter before the 'real' interview or email what you want said. Big companies just send a 4-line comment. Beware of having words put in your mouth!

David Henderson

Is the Press Complaints Commission biased towards journalists?

Rob Edwards

It's more peely wally in personal cases. Big companies and public figures and politicians are one thing, personal individuals are quite different.

Alison Irvine

Is it important to have 'politically correct' photo shoots?

Rob Edwards

Not an issue to most editors

Dennis Robert-Sullivan

Children / animals will get you in/on media.

Rob Edwards

Papers need a balance of pictures, so does animal stories, the world loves cuddly animals.

Jessica Pepper

Listen to the language of the politicians - Use their buzz words.

Dennis Robert-Sullivan

BBC now has satellite from Dundee so can do much wider geographical spread. The way forward could be agreeing the 5 points/topics and deciding what we want/need to do over the summer.

Plenary 3

questions/answers

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Interested in pre-legislative timing

Mike Dales

Only 5 years ago there was little or no public consultation or discussion. The pre-pre-pre-legislative stage has been 100 years of access issues.

Dennis Robert-Sullivan

Getting issues written into a manifesto gets it onto the Agenda for debatebut they tend to be bland.

Jessica Pepper

MSP's have power to bring forward legislation

Hugh Muschamp

Has the day made us feel differently about lobbying?

Dennis Robert-Sullivan

What are the next steps for the SCAN campaign?

Tony Dyer

Those of us who are employed by local authorities have to be very careful about lobbying.

Dennis Robert-Sullivan

But you can use other methods, families for example.

Clare Hamilton Sturdy

If we can't do things directly can go to our own councillors, convenors

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| Linda Mathieson | Aberdeenshire sent its consultation about the proposed access legislation to our MSP's and to all on our community consultation database. |
| Jessica Pepper | Role also to involve, educate and select info Ross Martin |
| Dennis Robert-Sullivan | Can set agenda in Trade Union officials do this. |
| Dennis Robert-Sullivan | Ask bosses if you can speak to MSP's and then bend their ear! |
| Stewart Cameron | Not easy when very lowly in hierarchy |
| Stil Ed (?) | Depends very much on culture of each Council. |
| <i>Mike Dales</i> | <i>Surely can act as member of the public?</i> |
| Stewart Cameron | Still difficult |
| Dennis Robert-Sullivan | Have to imaginative creative, subversive use networks |
| Tim Edwards | Proportional representation for local government will happen and the culture will change. |
| Mike Dales | Join a voluntary organisation and advise them |
| Dianne Adams | Has a very limited budget so need to be most effective |
| Alison Irvine | Yes we can use networks, but SCAN is only made up of individual members |
| Mike Dales | LINK is in a better position as it has 36 member bodies, SCAN can't do as much |
| Jessica Pepper | LINK do a weekly monitoring subscriber website on what's going on in Parliament. It's a good idea to visit Parliament to sit-in and see how it's done. |
| Mike Dales | Go on Wednesdays. Committee in morning, Main Chamber in afternoon and TV in the evening! |
| Catherine Baker | Everyone can write and meet their MSP despite their employment. You have that right |
| Ian McCall (RA) | Need to act with LINK and also separately to spread load and to ensure MSP's receive pressure from all over |
| Linda Mathieson | Chief Executive meet with MSP's - ask for access to be put on the Agenda |
| Dennis Robert-Sullivan | Ask if Chief Executives are aware of the proposed access legislation and its potential impact on Local Authorities. "You need lots of wee bricks to make a wall" and "there are more ways of killing a cat than choking it with butter". |
| ? | <i>Will the draft legislation be put back?</i> |
| Dennis Robert-Sullivan | Parts of the legislation are poor due to lack of drafters and the process of construction is more time consuming. |

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| Catherine Baker | RSPB have raised 2 petitions and asked members to write about the importance of specific legislation, keeping up the importance of issues to prevent things being shelved. |
| <i>Alistair Lawson</i> | <i>Should the Bill be treated like 1977 when the loyal and faithful thing was to throw out the Devolution of Scotland Bill.</i> |
| Dennis Robert-Sullivan | If the Bill is “killed” it could be a <u>long</u> time for its reappearance. However, it could be “killed” at the 3 rd reading. |
| Mike Dales | Have 3 choices 1) Kill the Bill. We are better off as we are 2) Keep the system going - but suggest another draft with comments. 3) Carry on e-system and use it to get Bill changed. The draft Bill has brought back ‘us’, ‘them’ attitude |
| Dennis Robert-Sullivan | This is a test of the process as well as the legislation or Scotland will return to the Westminster Parliamentary betrayal. |
| Catherine Baker | The train is in motion |
| Jessica Pepper | Need to build on what is right about draft Bill |
| Tim Edwards | Do make connection with elected members |
| Catherine Baker | Just do it! |
| Mike Dales | Must keep doing responses, back up the Access Forum, support the good points and point out the bad points. |

Denis finished by praising the Gateway Centre - good room, excellent arrangements, and co-operative, helpful staff. He thanked Pet for her positive enthusiasm, the conference organisation, audience for coming, despite being moved about and the speakers