

# SCAN NEWS

For people working in the field of rights of way and countryside access in Scotland

Number 9, November 1999

The Newsletter of the Scottish Countryside Access Network

## Access Legislation Delayed

All readers will no doubt remember that the last issue of SCAN NEWS predicted the draft access legislation would be out during November. Well it wasn't. Nor did it come out during December. In fact it is now expected during January. We will see. There is no official explanation for this slippage, but given the tight timescales and the complexity of the issue it is not surprising.

It looks likely that Access will remain part of the Land Reform Bill and not, as some had hoped, be treated as a separate piece of legislation. This may complicate the things and cause further delay, but the Government is still determined that this Manifesto pledge will be met and is keen to push things along. This means that once the draft legislation is published time will be tight. It is expected that there will be only six weeks for all interested parties to read, inwardly digest and comment. It is therefore important that everybody is ready to act quickly once the draft act is published. Keep an eye on

comment. It is therefore important that everybody is ready to act quickly once the draft act is published. Keep an eye on the television news, an ear on the radio news and your internet browser pointed at the Scottish Parliament Web Site.

When the proposed Scottish Outdoor Code was passed to SNH the Scottish Landowners Federation and the Association of Deer Management Groups put up a minority paper highlighting issues about which they still had concerns eg. the definition of curtilage. This should act as a good reminder to all readers that the best way to ensure your views on the legislation are heard is tell the Scottish Parliament. When the draft is published you should tell the Parliament what you think about it, both good and bad. If you do not like it, give them suggestions on how to improve it. Only by doing this can we hope to ensure that the new legislation will help rather than hinder us in the task of managing public access.

### SNH Preparations for the New Access Legislation

SNH have now recruited four new staff to the Recreation and Access Branch to conduct the preparatory work with the local authority pilot projects and to enable all local authorities to prepare for the new legislation. All are names you will be familiar with and SCAN wishes them all good luck.

Ron McCraw, Access Project Leader  
Judith Lewis, Access Officer (National Baseline Inventory)  
Marion Mulholland, Access Officer (Partnerships)  
Frances Berry, Project Support (part time)

All are based at the SNH offices at 2 Anderson Place Edinburgh.



### Social SCAN



Next year Inbhirfhaolain Bothy has been booked for 28-30 April and 29-30 September. Everybody is welcome. Call Cathy Kinnear to reserve your places. For any of you who have not been, the bothy is located in Glen Etive with easy access to the Glen Coe and Glen Etive hills. It has all mod cons including coal fire (bring your own coal) and composting toilet (bring your own woodshavings). Seriously though, it does provide an excellent base for exploring the surrounding hills and the congenial company is sure to relax you after a taxing week solving access issues.



Merry Christmas, a  
Happy New Year and  
all the best for the next  
Millennium



# Bridleway Blues!

**The scene. A small local authority office in deepest Morayshire.** Jim Strachan, Speyside Way Route Manager and his long suffering colleagues have a problem ....

We needed a new tin of blue paint. You know, the colour we all paint waymarking arrows on bridleways? (No, Cathy Kinnear, that's not adopting the English system, it's part of the standards set for Scottish Long Distance Routes too!)

Ian's question was "What colour of blue?"  
 "Same as last time."  
 "I've thrown away the tin."  
 "Ah."

OK, no problem. The well-thumbed CCS folder would provide the BS numbers for both the yellow and blue paint used in waymarking Long Distance Routes. It didn't. Well it *did* have a number for the yellow colour, but the blue? Nope!

SNH will know, after all, they wrote the current LDR standards document. Where's Alan McPhersons phone number?  
 The head scratching was audible. "I'm sure we should have that somewhere". I'll phone you back (we're still waiting, Alan!).

Well, Cathy Kinnear will know for sure (thae Fifers know everything there is to know about the countryside)  
 Cathy's colleague (herself was out) was more doubtful. "I don't think *she* would know *that*."

Oh well, who else? Inspiration from Alison "What about Anne Fraser? - (BHS Access Officer) We'll get a result there for sure."  
 Anne was at home. "Yes, I order all the bridleway markers from a firm in the Borders. The arrows are blue." (Yes!)  
 "What colour of blue?"  
 "Light blue." (sigh!)

On any other occasion this might have sufficed, but by now we were on a mission! (I must tell you that by this time Ian had departed, shaking his head, to the DIY store to buy the nearest approximation he could find to the last tin.)

By now we seemed to have run out of Scottish options, and were faced with the (almost) unthinkable on a local authority budget - an international call (well to

budget - an international call (well to England, anyway). But who to call? Of my acquaintances amongst the English National Trail Officers, Susan Rogers, the North Pennine Bridleway Officer, seemed like a good choice. However, the Countryside Agency Newcastle Office (starting to get out of my depth here, and having to moderate my Doric accent as best I could) informed me that Susan was not available, but could anyone else help? Dave McGlade, the National Trail Officer of the Hadrian's Wall National Trail, was *too* helpful!

"Yes, I can tell you the BS number, but what *background* colour are you using?"

"Dark brown."

"Did you know that best practice for the purposes of compliance with the terms of the DDA would be to display blue arrows on a yellow background, and yellow arrows on a green background?"

"HUH?" Visions of having to repaint half the Speyside Ways marker posts green, and the other half yellow. Thanks (a lot) for that!

"Alison, aren't you going to the seminar on the DDA at Battleby next week?"

"No."

"Well you are now, and please come back with information which doesn't mean we have to repaint all *our* waymarkers. Hadrian's Wall National Trail can please itself!"

The ever pragmatic Ian had come back. "None of the blue paint in the shop has BS numbers anyway. This looks about right, what do you think?"

"Yes, looks about right" (Our enthusiasm for truth, light and BS numbers was waning rapidly by now. Ever felt *you* were in way too deep?) Anyway, it was lunchtime.

Footnote:- as I later returned the CCS folder to the shelf, no prizes for guessing what fell out. Well of course it was the sheet with the BS number for the blue paint!

Whats that? The colour for Bridleway blue? Oh that's BS 20E51, everyone knows that!

Jim Strachan

*For the curious yellow is BS 08E51 and red (Byways Open to All Traffic) is BS 06E55 (approximate). Even Paths for All have recently been caught trying to track down the number for the colour green. That which forms the background to the green and white rights of way signs. No BS colour, but I can exclusively reveal that it is Faskall 600 Series Forest Green 611SF.*



## Centrewire

**Need a gate and not sure where to go?** Then Centrewire may be worth a call. It is one of the few companies which have expanded specifically to meet the needs of the countryside access world. This article gives you an insight into this aspect of the company's work.

Tom Bindoff, one of the founding Directors of Centrewire, has a love of the countryside and has been a lifelong walker and climber. His concern for rights of way began many years ago when he led walks as a weekend warden for the Ridgeway National Trail. He found that most path furniture was of poor quality and design and presented a considerable barrier for many people who wanted to enjoy walking for recreation. Since then Tom has pioneered good design and materials for path furniture to achieve effective access for all.

Active research and development began about ten years ago with several new designs for stiles installed in Tom's back garden near Oxford. The Demonstration Area has gradually developed from this small beginning and is now well established in the neighbouring field.

Development and testing of new ideas are vital elements of Tom's approach. The focus is always on meeting people's needs in the simplest way, using designs that work well and need minimum maintenance. Good working relationships have been built up with professionals in rights of way as well as a wide range of users and Tom now has experience of the national scene which is probably unique. His strong personal commitment to improving access for all is widely recognised and he is rapidly gaining an enviable reputation for his knowledge and expertise.

Recently Tom has been a member of the working party preparing a draft for the new British Standard for Gates and Stiles (see New Releases, Ed). The new Standard will be a significant step towards improving access to the countryside. It is intended that the principle of the 'least restrictive option' will be established. Tom is a keen supporter of this. If a simple gap is possible it should be used. Tom will certainly not try to sell a gate to fill it.

Tom has been working with Sue Springall since 1980 and they set up Centrewire together in 1990. Centrewire is well established as a supplier of wire fencing materials throughout the U.K. and has offices near Oxford and Norwich and a distribution centre at Warrington. Sue is a Director of the company and manages the Head Office in Norfolk. She, too, is a keen walker and is enthusiastic about the ever increasing range of gates and fittings the company supplies. Centrewire Gates and Stiles has now grown into a flourishing second division of the company.

The future is looking very interesting. Movement towards providing good access for all legitimate users of public rights of way is gaining momentum. The Countryside Commission's recent report on 'Rights of Way in the 21st Century' promotes the principle of 'least restrictive option' and will be a key influence on future good practice in England and Wales. Similarly, the

good practice in England and Wales. Similarly, the proposed right of responsible access in the new Scottish access legislation will do the same in Scotland. The implications of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 are also beginning to be taken on board. Tom has been working with the Disabled Drivers Association as a voluntary consultant for some time and is well aware of the needs of user groups with restricted mobility.

Centrewire is still a small company and Tom is determined that it will stay that way. Personal contact with customers is of primary importance. It is only by talking to people that the company can be sure that it is meeting customers' needs.

Please give us a ring if you have any questions about our products, or if you need some practical advice. We are here to help solve your problems.

Centrewire can be contacted at PO Box 11, Wymondham, Norfolk, NR18 0XD, tel: 01491 614490, fax, 01953 605637

## The Paths Industry Skills Group

**The Paths Industry Skills Group (PISG) is a forum for all organisations involved in pathwork in Scotland whether contractor, landmanager, local authority or statutory agency.** The aim of the group is to improve the quality of path management through developing common language, understanding and standards which will maintain and improve the quality of work specification, project management and site works.

To date PISG has helped develop a 'contextualised' approach to the existing level 2 SVQ in Environmental Conservation for path constructors and managers. They have also just published the Upland Path Construction Standards which aims to set the standard in upland path work (reviewed next issue). For more information on the work of PISG or to join write to PISG c/o Deryck Irvine 14 Argyle Grove, Dunblane FK15 9DU.



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## New Releases

BS 5709 - Specification for Gaps, Gates and Stiles (Draft Revision of BS5709:1979)

**Hot into the office is this revised British Standard in draft form.** It is a revision of the 1979 standard which had become decidedly dated. It takes account of current practice and the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act. It means that you now have official guidance on the correct sizing for all your boundary crossings (Did you know that a pedestrian gap must be 1.2m wide?). You probably will be familiar with most of the contents and I am sure some of the designs at the back will be familiar. But it does contain one or two interesting minor facts such as the need to leave a 40mm gap between gate and slam post on two way self closing gates to prevent trapped fingers. Obvious really.

In 1998 the Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers conducted a series of tests at the Royal Agricultural Show at Stoneleigh. They installed a variety of stiles and gates along one of the avenues and invited people to test them. The results showed that the original British Standard for a single step stile was not the public's favourite. Flicking through the draft standard it is good to see that these results have been incorporated. The preferred type of stile was a narrow two step stile with steps at 300 mm above ground level and 600 mm.

The document is however a draft and the British Standards Institute are seeking your views on it by the end of next February. If you have not yet received a copy you can get one from the BSI at *BSI Customer Services, 389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL. Tel 020 8996 9000, fax 020 8996 7400, e-mail orders@bsi.org.uk. It costs £13 for members and £26 for non members.*

### Shared Use Routes, Access Controls

**These two Sustrans information sheets will be of interest to anyone who works with multi use routes and access controls.** The first looks at the implications of changing single use routes into multi use, the safety aspects, width requirements and the need for sensitive developments.

The second deals with the use of access controls in the light of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the need to stop illegal use by motorised vehicles. It details the barrier free stance now adopted by Sustrans and the experiences of Durham County Council. Durham discovered that if access controls are removed six months after establishing a new route eg. along a disused railway line then usage patterns have become so well established that young motorcyclists go elsewhere.

*Both are available from Sustrans 35 King Street, Bristol, BS1 4DZ, tel 0117 929 0888, fax 0117 929 4173. FF04 Shared Use Routes, FF22 Access Controls.*



*If you feel the need to improve your skills, the courses below are worth a go*

**Promoting Good Practice amongst Cyclists in the Countryside**, 9 March 2000, Battleby, £30 (includes lunch & refreshments).

An event aimed at those involved in advising on, planning and providing for accessible countryside for cyclists. It will look at issues relating to care for the countryside and sharing of access facilities for road cyclists and mountain bikers and examine a number of case studies illustrating ways in which responsible behaviour can be promoted.

For more information on these courses contact the Sharing Good Practice Administrator, SNH, Battleby, Redgorton, Perth, PH1 3EW.

**Countryside Access - Strategies for the Future**, 13 April 2000, Battleby, £60 non members, £35 members (includes lunch and refreshments).

The first SCAN conference of the new Millennium will review existing strategies and look at the needs for the future, both at national and local level, lowland and upland. The programme will be looking at the big picture - planning a balanced approach for all access; strategy updates - an overview of recent local authority developments and what sort of strategy will be necessary to manage the new general right of access and core path networks; preparing for the new access legislation; Future Issues - funding, behaviour.

This is a developing programme so if you have any suggestions for possible presentations - and who might give them - contact either Mike Dales or Ron McCraw. To reserve your place contact Pet Thomas.

**Losehill: Courses for Environmental Professionals 2000** Various dates and prices, Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire, England.

The new Losehill Training brochure contains a wide variety of courses starting in January next year and running through to November. Subject areas include: People, Business and Management Skills; Access and Interpretation; Managing the Countryside and Urban Environment; Community and Education; and Ranger Training.

To order your copy of the brochure contact Sue Davies or Lyn Horan on 01433 620373.

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