

REPORT TO GARIOCH AREA COMMITTEE – 19 JUNE 2018

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL OUTDOOR ACCESS STRATEGY 2018-2021

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. **consider and discuss the aims and key priorities of the Outdoor Access Strategy 2018-2021 and associated Team Action Plan.**
2. **provide comments to be considered by Infrastructure Services Committee**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 The Strategy outlines the work of Planning & Building Standards in relation to non-motorised public access in Aberdeenshire for the period 2018 to 2021. Delivery of the Strategy will be facilitated by an annual action plan for each year of operation. Outdoor access issues within Cairngorms National Park are the responsibility of the Cairngorms National Park Authority and is not covered in the Strategy. The Strategy and 2018-2019 Action Plan is included in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Strategy focusses on the efficient and effective management and enhancement of existing path infrastructure. The Strategy also outlines aims and objectives in relation to the development of new facilities, in particular how we will work with other Services, external bodies and communities. The Strategy aims to promote and deliver responsible outdoor access that provides social, environmental and economic benefits. Overall it will aim to ensure that efficiency and best value are delivered from available Council resources.
- 2.3 Within Planning and Building Standards, the Environment Teams have the lead in delivering the Outdoor Access Strategy. Within the Environment Team, staff who predominately focus on outdoor access total approximately 3 FTE split between 5 posts. However, a number of other members of the team also contribute to this work area.
- 2.4 Planning and Building Standards work in partnership with other teams and Council Services, and with other bodies and community groups, to deliver high quality public access.
 - Landscape Services who maintain many of our paths,
 - Ranger Service who provide a focus for public engagement on outdoor access,
 - Transport Strategy who focus on the delivery of sustainable transport,
 - Development Management and Planning Policy Teams who ensure new built development enhances outdoor access provision.

2.5 It is Aberdeenshire Council's vision to be the best area and the best council in Scotland.

Our vision for outdoor access is:

"Aberdeenshire Council aims to facilitate access to a network of well-maintained and welcoming paths and protect access rights to enable residents and visitors to enjoy the area's diverse countryside and settlements"

2.6 Key outdoor access priorities are identified which deliver the most positive impact on access in the area to reflect national and corporate priorities. For the 2018-21 period, the key priorities identified are:

- Ensure paths and associated infrastructure that the council has responsibility for are properly maintained and fit for purpose.
- Develop a model for community engagement and volunteer input into the management and development of the path network
- Signage of Aberdeenshire's path network beginning with core paths
- Continue to improve processes used in upholding access rights.

2.7 The aims and objectives of the 2018-21 A Outdoor Access Strategy are in line with the strategies, plans and policies of the Scottish Government and Aberdeenshire Council. The Strategy objectives provide a common framework for a customer and performance focussed service which works in partnership with stakeholders to deliver a high quality, efficient service for best value. The six overarching aims which cover all the major outdoor access work areas for the 2018-21 period can be summarised:

- Aim 1: Effective management of outdoor access infrastructure
- Aim 2: Sustainable and innovative path provision
- Aim 3: Ensure development protects and enhances outdoor access provision
- Aim 4: Promotion of outdoor access
- Aim 5: Upholding access rights
- Aim 6: Continuous improvement

2.8 This report is being presented to all six Area Committees and following this to Infrastructure Services.

2.9 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this Report and their comments are incorporated within the Report and they are satisfied that the Report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

3.1 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section B1.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as the Committee is asked to comment on a matter which impacts their Area.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required because there will be no differential impact as a result of this Report on people with protected characteristics.
- 4.2 There are no specific staffing or financial implications arising from this Report but trends are used to inform future budget planning.
- 4.3 The following risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level ([Corporate Risk Register](#)):
- *Budget Pressures*: The Strategy and Action Plan has been written with a view to delivering an effective and efficient approach to outdoor paths and access management within the available budget.
- 4.4 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level ([Directorate Risk Registers](#)):
- *Active Travel*: Reduction in capital expenditure and availability of external grants would impact on the ability to provide access infrastructure across Aberdeenshire. The Environment Teams will monitor and seek external funding opportunities when they arise.
- 4.5 A Town Centre Impact Assessment is not required because there will be no significant impact as a result of this Report on Town Centres.

Stephen Archer

Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Craig Stewart, Environment South Team Leader
Date: 28 May 2018



From mountain to sea

Aberdeenshire Council

Outdoor Access Strategy

2018-2021

“Aberdeenshire Council aims to facilitate access to a network of well-maintained and welcoming paths and protect access rights to enable residents and visitors to enjoy the area’s diverse countryside and settlements”



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1 Introduction

From the mountains to the sea, Aberdeenshire's environment is one of its most valuable assets. It contributes to the high quality of life enjoyed by local residents, attracts visitors and underpins the local economy. The Council seeks to support and promote access to this rich environment, by improving and increasing the opportunities for both recreational and functional use and also ensuring that the rights of the public and landowners are protected.

There is a strong legislative basis for Aberdeenshire Council's involvement in outdoor access. The Land Reform (Scotland) Acts (LRSA) of 2003 and 2016 and their associated guidance, the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC) 2004, establish access rights, giving the public a right of responsible access for walking, cycling, horse riding and canoeing throughout much of Scotland. The Acts also identify Local Authority statutory duties in relation to outdoor access, namely to:

- *Uphold Access Rights*
- *Produce a Core Paths Plan*
- *Promote the Scottish Outdoor Access Code*
- *Establish a Local Access Forum*

In addition to the LRSA, the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 is still relevant in that it provides the legislative foundation for access to the countryside. The Act gives powers and places duties on local authorities in respect of countryside access for example in protecting rights of way.

1.1 Scope of Strategy

The Strategy outlines the work of Planning & Building Standards in relation to non-motorised public access in Aberdeenshire for the period 2018 to 2021. Planning and Building Standards will work in partnership with other teams and Council Services, and with other bodies and community groups, to deliver high quality public access.

The area covered by the Strategy is identified in Map 1, page 4. Outdoor access issues within Cairngorms National Park are the responsibility of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) and is not covered within this document.

Map 1: Area covered by Outdoor Access Strategy



The Strategy focusses on the efficient and effective management and enhancement of existing paths and associated infrastructure. Associated infrastructure involves bridges, signage, gates, benches, fencing and other infrastructure which supports the path network. The Strategy also outlines aims and objectives in relation to the development of new facilities, in particularly how we will work with other Services, external bodies and communities. The Strategy aims to promote and deliver responsible outdoor access that provides social, environmental and economic benefits. Overall it will aim to ensure that efficiency and best value are delivered from available Council resources.

This Strategy outlines Planning and Building Standards work on outdoor access for 2018 to 2021. Delivery of the Strategy will be facilitated by an Annual Action plan for each year of operation. The 2018-19 Action Plan is included in Appendix 1.

1.2 Aberdeenshire Council's Vision for Outdoor Access

It is Aberdeenshire Council's vision to be the best area and the best council in Scotland.

Our vision for outdoor access is:

"Aberdeenshire Council aims to facilitate access to a network of well-maintained and welcoming paths and protect access rights to enable residents and visitors to enjoy the area's diverse countryside and settlements"

2 Resources

Within Planning and Building Standards, the Environment Teams have the lead in delivering the Outdoor Access Strategy. Within the Environment Teams, staff who predominately focus on outdoor access total approximately 3 Full Time Equivalents split between 5 posts. However, a number of other members of the team also contribute to this work area.

Within Infrastructure Services, other teams also have input to the delivery of outdoor access, notably;

- Landscape Services who maintain many of our paths,
- Ranger Service who provide a focus for public engagement on outdoor access,
- Transportation who focus on the delivery of sustainable transport,
- Development Management and Planning Policy Teams who ensure new built development enhances outdoor access provision.

The 2017-18 Revenue budget for paths and outdoor access development and management within the control of Planning & Building Standards was £250,000. A £50,000 Capital budget is available for Access/Environmental projects and can be allocated to path projects, including long distance routes, where this work is identified as a priority. The breakdown of the budget by usage is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Outdoor Access Budgets

Work area	Budget	Revenue or Capital
Maintenance of existing outdoor access infrastructure	£150,000	Revenue
Path upgrades and new path development	£51,000	Revenue
Delivering sustainable transport	£40,000	Revenue
Outdoor Access Forum costs and upholding access rights	£9,000	Revenue
Access/Environmental projects - including path projects	£50,000	Capital

Where opportunities arise, the monies above can be used to match external funding to maximise the opportunities to maintain and improve the Aberdeenshire path network.

3 Policy Context

The National Planning Framework was published in June 2014 and sets out the context for development planning in Scotland. The table on page 7 lays out the national policies and shows how the Outdoor Access Strategy connects to it.

The Council currently has **11 key priorities of which 4 priorities** are particularly relevant to this strategy:

- **Support a strong, sustainable, diverse and successful economy**
- **Protect our special environment, including tackling climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions**
- **Have the best possible transport and digital links across our communities**
- **Encourage active lifestyles and promote well-being with a focus on obesity and mental health**

3.1 Aberdeenshire Council Outdoor Access Strategy Context

Legislation (A1-A3)	(A1) Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and 2016		(A3) Scottish Outdoor Access Code 2005(SOAC)	
Scottish Government Purpose	To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.			
Scotland Performs	National Outcome 10	National Outcome 12	National Outcome 13	National Outcome 15
Scottish Government National Outcomes (B1)	We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need	We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations	We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity	Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs
Scottish Government National Plans, Policies & Strategies (B2-B8)	(B2) National Walking Strategy 2014	(B5) National Planning Framework 3	(B8) National Tourism Development Framework 2016	
	(B3) Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2010	(B6) Scottish Planning Policy		
	(B4) Physical Activity Strategy 2003	(B7) Planning Advice Note 2/2011		
Aberdeenshire Council Vision	Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland			
Aberdeenshire Council Plans & Strategies (C1-C5)	(C1) Aberdeenshire Council Single Outcome Agreement 2013-23		(C2) Aberdeenshire Council Community Plans	
	(C3) Council Plan 2017-22			
	(C4) Infrastructure Services Service Plan 2017-20		(C5a) Local Development Plan 2017	
			(C5b) Local Transport Strategy 2012	
			(C5c) Economic Development Strategy	
			(C5d) Active Aberdeenshire	
		(C5e) Ranger Service Strategy 2017-20		
Outdoor Access Vision	<i>Aberdeenshire Council aims to provide a network of well-maintained and welcoming paths which will encourage the public to access and appreciate the area's varied countryside and settlements</i>			
	Aberdeenshire Council Outdoor Access Strategy 2018 - 2021			
Workplans (D1a-D1b)	(D1a) Annual Team Plan		(D1b) Annual Individual Workplans	

4 Outdoor Access Strategy Aims, Objectives and Priorities

The Outdoor Access Strategy aims and objectives have been drawn together to reflect the strategies, plans and policies which form the 'golden thread' (see Section 3) between Scottish Government Outcomes and delivery on the ground. The Strategy objectives provide a common framework for a customer and performance focussed service which works in partnership with stakeholders to deliver a high quality, efficient service for best value.

This Strategy presents 6 overarching Aims which cover all the major outdoor access work areas:

- Aim 1: Effective management of outdoor access infrastructure
- Aim 2: Sustainable and innovative path provision
- Aim 3: Ensure development protects and enhances outdoor access provision
- Aim 4: Promotion of outdoor access
- Aim 5: Upholding access rights
- Aim 6: Continuous improvement

A series of Objectives have been identified to achieve these Aims - the Objectives under each of these aims are detailed in sections 4.2 to 4.7.

The Aims identified above will run through both this and also future strategies. However, in order to provide a focus on the most pressing issues for each three year strategy period, each strategy identifies a number of Key Priorities. The Key Priorities for the period 2018 to 2021 are presented in section 4.1.

The Annual Outdoor Access Action Plan (Appendix 1) details actions the Environment Teams will take to achieve the Strategy's objectives for Aberdeenshire and it indicates how performance will be monitored. The Environment Teams will use the Access Strategy and the Annual Action Plan to develop individual annual work programmes.

4.1 Key Priorities 2018-2021

Table 2 identifies the key outdoor access priorities to be delivered between 2018 and 2021.

Table 2: Key Strategy Priorities 2018-21

Key Priority	Success Measures	Outcomes
1 Ensure paths and associated infrastructure that the Council has responsibility for are properly maintained and fit for purpose	Paths management and maintenance process implemented Path inspection process implemented	Sustainable and efficient management of infrastructure Increased quality of access provision and improved user experience
2 Develop a model for community engagement and volunteer input in to the management and development of the path network	Model trialled and delivered Number of volunteer hours and length of paths created and maintained by volunteers	Increased capacity to create and maintain outdoor access infrastructure Increased volunteering opportunities and community engagement
3 Signage of Aberdeenshire's path network beginning with core paths	Kilometres of path signed	Increased awareness of path network and improved user confidence
4 Continue to improve processes used in upholding access rights	Access rights cases are dealt with consistently, transparently and efficiently	Improved customer experience Effective management of outdoor access and protection of outdoor access rights

4.2 Aim 1 – Effective management of outdoor access Infrastructure

To ensure there is a robust process and adequate funding in place for the management and maintenance of the outdoor access infrastructure that Aberdeenshire Council manages.

Table 3: Aim 1 Objectives

Objective	Golden Thread (see Section 3)	Outcome
1.1 Implement a Paths Management and Maintenance process	B1(NO15), B2, C4, D1a	Sustainable and efficient management of infrastructure Increased quality of access provision and improved user experience
1.2 Establish a robust monitoring and inspection regime for paths, and access related assets	B2, D1a, b	Increased quality of access provision and improved user experience Compliance with health and safety requirements
1.3 Develop volunteer policy and procedures, and increase volunteering opportunities	B2, D1a, b	Increased capacity to maintain outdoor access infrastructure Increased volunteering opportunities and community engagement
1.4 Investigate creating a path public feedback system.	B1 (NO15), C4, D1a	Increased quality of access provision and improved user experience

4.3 Aim 2 – Sustainable and innovative path provision

To enable the continued development of path provision throughout Aberdeenshire without increasing the management and maintenance burden on the Council, for example through the exploration of alternative delivery models.

Table 4: Aim 2 Objectives

Objective	Golden Thread (see Section 3)	Outcome
2.1 Identify external funding opportunities to enhance access provision in Aberdeenshire.	C1,C3, C4	Sustainable and efficient management of infrastructure Increased quality of access and improved user experience
2.2 Explore opportunities for cross service partnership path development	B2, B3, C5b, C5c, C5d	Sustainable and efficient management of infrastructure Increased quality of access provision and improved user experience
2.3 Promote the involvement of local path groups and other organisations developing outdoor access facilities	B2, D1a,b	Increased capacity to create outdoor access infrastructure Increased volunteering opportunities and community engagement

4.4 Aim 3 – Ensure development protects and enhances outdoor access provision

Provide advice, support and expertise to ensure that outdoor access is protected and enhanced in line with national and local policies.

Table 5: Aim 3 Objectives

Objective	Golden Thread (see Section 3)	Outcome
3.1 Provide input to national policy and guidance development	A1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8	Efficient and effective policy and guidance Alignment with national policy
3.2 Provide input to the Local Development Plan process	B6, C3, C5a	Efficient and effective policy and guidance
3.3 Provide consultation advice and support to the Development Management process	A1, B5, B6, C5a	Protection of outdoor access rights and infrastructure New and enhanced access Opportunities within new development
3.4 Provide consultation advice and support for forestry applications	A1	Protection of outdoor access rights and infrastructure
3.5 Provide consultation advice and support for agri-environment applications	A1	Protection of outdoor access rights and infrastructure
3.6 Provide consultation advice and support for utility applications	A1	Protection of outdoor access rights and infrastructure
3.7 Provide training to Development Management staff	A1, B5, B6, C5a	Protection of outdoor access rights and infrastructure

4.5 Aim 4 – Promotion of outdoor access

To help promote understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment and outdoor access to everyone, and to ensure it is at the heart of community wellbeing, economic development and sense of place.

Table 6: Aim 4 Objectives

Objective	Golden Thread (see Section 3)	Outcome
4.1 Maintain and improve Outdoor Access webpage	A1, B2, B4, C4, C5c	Increased public awareness of outdoor access opportunities
4.2 Ensure the Core Path Plan continues to be relevant and up to date	A1	Increased public awareness of outdoor access opportunities
4.3 Progress signage of core path network	A1	Increased awareness of path network and improved user confidence
4.4 Review current promotional material for outdoor access	A1, B2, B4, C4, C5c	Increased public awareness of outdoor access opportunities
4.5 Work with internal partners, external partners and interest groups in promoting outdoor access	A1, B2, B4, C4, C5c	Increased public awareness of outdoor access opportunities
4.6 Support Local Access Forum in promoting outdoor access	A1, B2, B4, C4, C5c	Increased public awareness of outdoor access opportunities

4.6 Aim 5 – Upholding access rights

To ensure that the Council is delivering its duties in relation to the LRSA and Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 legislation and that these activities are monitored and reviewed as part of a continuous service improvement as well contributing to Government Performance Indicators.

Table 7: Aim 5 Objectives

Objective	Golden Thread (see Section 3)	Outcome
5.1 Uphold access rights	A1, A2, A3, D1a	Access rights protected for users compliance with statutory duties
5.2 Facilitate legitimate short term public access restrictions	A1, A2, A3, D1a	Access rights protected for users compliance with statutory duties
5.3 Promote responsible access	A1, A2, A3, D1a	Improved awareness of outdoor access rights and responsibilities
5.4 Ensure proper process is in place relating to Council responsibilities in upholding access rights	A1, A2, A3, D1a	Improved process for upholding access rights
5.5 Encourage and support the involvement of the Local Outdoor Access Forum in resolution of outdoor access cases as appropriate	A1,A2,A3,D1a	Improved process for upholding access rights

4.7 Aim 6 – Continuous improvement

To ensure that activity in relation to the management and promotion of outdoor access in high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs.

Table 8: Aim 6 Objectives

Objective	Golden Thread (see Section 3)	Outcome
6.1 Develop and maintain a Team Strategy and Action Plan	D1a, D1b	Efficient working
6.2 Ensure staff CPD requirements are met as required	A1, A2, C3, C4	Professional standards are maintained
6.3 Carry out annual monitoring	A1, C3, C4	Monitored work outcomes
6.4 Produce performance reports	A1, C3, C4	Monitored work outcomes
6.5 Maintain continuous service improvement	C3, C4	Continuous improvement

5 Annual Monitoring

In order to monitor outdoor access workload, to assess the impact of the Strategy and to allow for resource planning, the following annual monitoring will be carried out and reported.

- 5.1 Aim 1 – Effective Management of outdoor access infrastructure
 - I. Percentage of paths inspected
 - II. Percentage of bridges inspected
 - III. Volunteer hours spent on path maintenance
 - IV. Length of path maintained by volunteers
 - V. Length of core path maintained
 - VI. Money spent on core path maintenance/enhancement

- 5.2 Aim 2 - Sustainable and innovative path provision
 - VII. Amount of external funding accessed
 - VIII. Number of cross-service projects
 - IX. Number of local and community groups worked with
 - X. Length of path developed

- 5.3 Aim 3 – Ensure development protects and enhances outdoor access provision
 - XI. Number of Development Management consultation responses
 - XII. Number of forestry consultation responses
 - XIII. Number of agri-environment consultation responses
 - XIV. Number of utility consultation responses
 - XV. Number of DM training sessions done

- 5.4 Aim 4 – Promotion of outdoor access
 - XVI. Number of views of outdoor access webpage
 - XVII. Length of core path signed
 - XVIII. Number of public events attended
 - XIX. Number of Local Access Forum meetings
 - XX. Hours spent on Local Access Forum work

5.5 Aim 5 – Upholding access rights

XXI. Number of access cases

XXII. Number of Section 11 orders

XXIII. Number of section 14 orders

5.6 Aim 6 – Continuous improvement

XXIV. Up-to-date Outdoor Access Strategy and action plans

XXV. Annual performance report produced

XXVI. Customer feedback received

XXVII. Staff CDP hours

Appendix 1 – Outdoor Access Action Plan

Outdoor Access Action Plan 2018 - 2019				
Aim 1: Effective management of outdoor access infrastructure	Actions	Lead Officer/s	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
1.1 Implement a Paths Management and Maintenance process	Work with Landscape Services to ensure that paths Aberdeenshire Council has responsibility for are identified and appropriately maintained	Alastair Fullwood	March 2019	Length of core path maintained
	Establish a methodology for prioritisation of further upgrades to Council managed paths	Alastair Fullwood	December 2018	
	<p>Current path upgrade programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deeside Way • Apply prioritisation criteria to the review and potential upgrade to stretches of coastal paths • Riverside Path, Port Elphinstone • Formartine and Buchan Way • Back Green Car Park, Portsoy • Crovie Viewpoint Car Park • St Johns Path, Gardenstown • Crovie Sneuk Path <p>Further upgrades may be undertaken based on implementation of the prioritisation criteria,</p>	Alastair Fullwood and James Davidson	March 2019	Money spent on core path maintenance/enhancement

Aim 1:	Actions	Lead Officer/s	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
1.2 Establish a robust monitoring and inspection regime for paths, and access related assets	Set up inspection protocol and regime for non-motorised bridges	Alastair Fullwood	June 2018	Percentage of paths inspected
	Implement non-motorised bridge inspection programme	Alastair Fullwood and James Davidson	September 2018	Percentage of bridges inspected
	Review non-motorised bridge inspection programme following initial implementation	Alastair Fullwood	March 2019	
	Develop and commence a path inspection programme to carry out inspections of all outdoor access assets	Alastair Fullwood	March 2019	
1.3 Develop volunteer policy and procedures, and increase volunteering opportunities	Evaluate results of volunteer groups pilot project undertaken with Torphins Path Group	Marsaili Aspinall	December 2018	Volunteer hours spent on path maintenance
	Identify the range of work volunteers can do and develop necessary methods and procedures	Marsaili Aspinall	January 2019	Length of path maintained by volunteers
	Develop and commence the roll out of a Volunteer Information Pack	Marsaili Aspinall	March 2019	
1.4 Investigate creating a path public feedback system.	Review existing and if appropriate develop a customer contact system for reporting path issues	James Davidson	March 2019	

Aim 2: Sustainable and innovative path provision	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
2.1 Identify external funding opportunities to enhance access provision in Aberdeenshire.	Be aware of external funding opportunities and apply/disseminate as appropriate	Marsaili Aspinall	Ongoing	Amount of external funding accessed
2.2 Explore opportunities for cross service partnership path development	Hold quarterly meetings a year with Landscape Services, Structures, Transportation Strategy to ensure a coordinated approach to access development and management	Craig Stewart	4 meeting per year	Number of cross-service projects
2.3 Promote the involvement of local path groups and other organisations developing outdoor access facilities	Support existing path groups and potential roll out to other groups as identified in 1.3	Marsaili Aspinall	Ongoing	Number of local and community groups worked with Length of path developed by volunteers
Aim 3: Ensure development protects and enhances outdoor access provision	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
3.1 Provide input to national policy and guidance development	Respond to consultations as they arise	Marsaili Aspinall	Ongoing	Number of Policy development consultation responses
3.2 Provide input to the Local Development Plan process	Provide input to Local Development Plan process when opportunities arise	Craig Stewart	Ongoing	
3.3 Provide consultation advice and support to the Development Management process	Provide Development Management consultation responses in relation to access development and management	James Davidson, Eleanor Munro	Ongoing	No. of Development Management consultation responses

Aim 3: Ensure development protects and enhances outdoor access provision	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
3.4 Provide consultation advice and support for forestry applications	Respond to consultations as they arise	James Davidson and Eleanor Munro	Ongoing	Number of forestry consultation responses
3.5 Provide consultation advice and support for agri-environment applications	Respond to consultations as they arise	Bridget Freeman and Richard Elliott	Ongoing	Number of agri-environment consultation responses
3.6 Provide consultation advice and support for utility applications	Respond to consultations as they arise	James Davidson and Eleanor Munro	Ongoing	Number of utility consultation responses
3.7 Provide training to Development Management staff	Attend a team meeting with each Development Management Team once a year	James Davidson and Eleanor Munro	Ongoing	Number of Development Management training sessions done
	Attend Development Management training days as required	James Davidson and Eleanor Munro	Ongoing	

Aim 4: Promotion of outdoor access	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
4.1 Maintain and improve Outdoor Access webpage	Review current content and use of outdoor access webpage and identify improvements needed	Marsaili Aspinall	October 2018	Number of views of outdoor access webpage
	Following review, carry out website improvements	Marsaili Aspinall	December 2018	
4.2 Ensure the Core Path Plan continues to be relevant and up to date	Implement required changes to core path plan – e.g. path additions, deletions and diversions	Eleanor Munro	Ongoing	
4.3 Progress signage of core path network	Set up phased approach to delivery of signage	Alastair Fullwood	June 2018	Length of core path signed
	Identify costing and who will undertake physical works	Alastair Fullwood	September 2018	
	Implement signs on highest priority paths	Alastair Fullwood	March 2019	
4.4 Review current promotional material for outdoor access	Audit current promotional material held by Environment Team	James Davidson	November 2018	
	Store, disseminate or dispose of material as informed by audit	James Davidson	ongoing	
4.5 Work with internal partners, external bodies and interest groups in promoting responsible outdoor access	Liaise with relevant partners and groups as appropriate such as Scottish Natural Heritage, Cairngorms National Park Authority etc.	Craig Stewart	ongoing	

Aim 4: Promotion of outdoor access	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
4.6 Support Local Access Forum in promoting outdoor access	Support Aberdeenshire Local Outdoor Access Forum (ALOAF) including assisting meeting organisation	Bridget Freeman and Richard Elliott	Ongoing	Number of Local Access Forum meetings
	Manage and monitor ALOAF expenditure	Craig Stewart	Ongoing	Hours spent on Local Access
	Provide input and advice to support the delivery of an ALOAF Action Plan	Bridget Freeman and Richard Elliott	Ongoing	Forum work
Aim 5: Upholding access rights	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
5.1 Uphold access rights	Fulfil Council statutory duties by evaluating, responding and where appropriate resolving, outdoor access rights issues raised	Bridget Freeman and Richard Elliot	Ongoing	Number of access cases Number of section 14 orders
5.2 Facilitate legitimate short term public access restrictions	Process temporary public access rights suspensions via new web based process	Bridget Freeman and Richard Elliott	Ongoing	Number of Section 11 orders
5.3 Promote responsible access	Advise landowners, groups and the public of their rights and responsibilities under the Land Reform (Scotland) act and Scottish Outdoor Access Code	Bridget Freeman and Richard Elliot	Ongoing	Number of access cases
5.4 Ensure proper process is in place relating Council responsibilities in upholding access rights	Complete best practice guidance notes on upholding access rights procedures	Richard Elliott	September 2018	

Aim 5: Upholding access rights	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
5.5 Encourage and support the involvement of the Local Access Forum in resolution of outdoor access cases as appropriate	Work with ALOAF to encourage their involvement in relevant cases	Bridget Freeman and Richard Elliott	Ongoing	Number of access cases
Aim 6: Continuous improvement	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
6.1 Develop and maintain a Team Strategy and Action Plan	Produce 3 year Outdoor Access Strategy	Craig Stewart	June 2018	Up-to-date Outdoor Access Strategy and action plans
	Produce 2018-2019 annual action plan	Craig Stewart	March 2019	
	Hold 4 Outdoor Access cross team meets a year	Craig Stewart	Ongoing	
	Ensure Outdoor Access Strategy aim, objectives and work plans are taken account of in individual staff work plans	Craig Stewart	Ongoing	
6.2 Ensure staff CPD requirements are met as required	Provide opportunities for staff to attend relevant training events/seminars/conferences/workshops	Craig Stewart	Ongoing	Staff CDP hours
	Undertake regular Employee Annual Reviews	Craig Stewart	Ongoing	
6.3 Carry out annual monitoring	Create process and means to record annual monitoring data	Craig Stewart	June 2018	
	Record annual monitoring data	All	Ongoing	

Aim 6: Continuous improvement	Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Annual Monitoring
6.4 Produce performance reports	Produce an Annual Review Report on the performance of the Outdoor Access Team	Craig Stewart	Ongoing	Annual performance report produced
	Contribute to Scottish Government monitoring of Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003	Marsaili Aspinall and James Davidson	Ongoing	
	Contribute to Scottish Government Monitoring of Local Authority key performance indicators	Marsaili Aspinall and James Davidson	Ongoing	
6.5 Maintain continuous service improvement	Produce best practice notes for all generic access related processes for inclusion in an Environment Team Best Practice Manual.	Richard Elliott	September 2018	Customer feedback received
	Undertake Customer Satisfaction Survey (Development Management)	Craig Stewart	December 2018	Customer feedback received
	Increase usage of Office 365 applications	Craig Stewart	June 2018	