

Nethy Bridge & Vicinity Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on

Thursday 2nd April 2026

At 7:30pm in the Community Centre

Present: S.McCook (Chairman), H. Tucker (Secretary), E. Ibbertson, D.Black, F. Cormack, F. Gilchrist, J. Grant

In Attendance: Cllr B. Lobban, E. Curley (Dorback Estate Manager), U. Stoneman (SLRC), B. Jones (RSPB) and 4 members of the public.

Welcome: S. McCook welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting.

Apologies: L. Parker (Treasurer)

Declaration of Interest: None

Minutes of last meeting: Proposed: F. Cormack Seconded: J. Grant

Matters Arising: Contract has been awarded for the Aultmore Bridge. Steel and timber ordered, hopefully start this month and be completed in 3/4 weeks.

Stagecoach had replied that they were sorry that stopping the early bus caused inconvenience. Our concerns had been passed on to the Inverness Depot Manager, nothing further from them. B. Jones was asked if there was still a problem with large groups trying to see the capercaillie lek. He said not really but the Rangers were out early at 5am to stop individuals trying to gain access.

Dorback Estate: E. Curley elaborated on the document that had been sent out from Oxygen, setting out initial community benefit proposals. He stated that this was a working document and that feedback was welcomed.

Using local enterprises, how to advertise and contact anyone interested.

Local Procurement & Tourist Integration, provide local produce to holiday lets and promote local businesses to visitors.

Education & Culture, create cultural walks with historical narratives, school visits.

Local Food, provide venison and fruit/vegetables from the Estate to local businesses and food banks.

Natural regeneration and peat restoration, met with Cairngorms Connect to discuss.

Oxygen Accelerator, opportunity for someone local to be helped with training, career opportunities.

S. McCook then asked for questions. Asked if the estate was presently up for sale, Ed said definitely not. He also replied to a question that deer culling was presently under way.

CNPA young rangers program had visited the estate for some training.

Question asked if the in by land would be kept for grazing cattle. Ed said this area would not be replanted but natural regeneration may be allowed.

S. McCook stated that he had been assured this would not be allowed to happen. Ed said he would look into this.

Would the Estate be working with GGS to facilitate visits and training for leadership courses? Ed said that he was already in contact with someone at the school. Possibly working at the tree nursery and then planting the trees. Mention was made that there were far more businesses in the village, that could benefit from working with the Estate than already mentioned. Dorback should be considered part of the community.

RSPB are already liaising with them over environmental issues and it was hoped to have more dialogue with local crofters and farmers.

Question asked what the timescale was for these proposals to be happening.

Ed stated that he hoped that there would be meaningful progress by this time next year. Accelerator could possibly be in place by Christmas. Venison could be in shops and food banks within 6 months. There was discussion about improving paths to avoid visitors walking in farmers fields. Grants would have to be sourced to enable any new paths to be constructed. Those present were content with progress so far.

U. Stoneman said that there had been good dialogue from the various meetings and there would be more discussions in the future.

E. Curley would revise the statement ready for the Spring Gathering in May. He would send it out and it would go on the village website and noticeboard. Suggestion that hard copies should be available for the gathering.

The decision was taken that there was no need for a further meeting, that it would be better to wait for community feedback, before having further discussions.

U. Stoneman said that he would script something to go out on social media with a link to the full document.

Question was asked if it was reasonable for one person to manage Dorback & Kinrara Estates. Ed replied that it was hoped to have a Ranger or Assistant for Kinrara.

Police Report: None

Members of the Public: Matter of the inconvenience of so many gates and the steep rise behind Inchtomach, on the Speyside Way. The path was not suitable for wheelchairs. S. McCook mentioned that CNPA were looking into the replacement of the gates but couldn't imagine that there would be adequate funding, to remove the steep slope. Contact will be made with CNPA Outdoor Access to ask for latest update.

Planning: 1 Balliemore Cottages, extension - no objections. Greenwood, short term let application - members wish to object, there are sufficient letting properties within the village.

Treasurer's Report: Balance is £3,364.53. Zurich Insurance had been paid. S. McCook had received a thank you message from Mr & Mrs Millward, stating that they had been overwhelmed by the generosity of the local community.

Councillor's Report: Quiet month, nothing to report. H. Tucker mentioned the broken road sign opposite Baliemore farm had been reported online.

CNPA Report: None

AOCB: Volunteers would be needed on Saturday 2nd May to help set up for the Spring Gathering. Tulloch had replied that they hoped to start the community garden by October. There had been an enquiry concerning the old sawmill. Explore Abernethy are still hoping to create a woodland museum at the old nursery.

Main bridge had been damaged by a tree that had been growing out of it. This and the buttress that was still not repaired would be reported.

RSPB centre is now open and one Osprey has returned. Some excellent goshawk camera footage was available. The new electric wheelchair was now available for the public to book for the trails.

H. Tucker mentioned that she had submitted EOI's to CNPA for funding for the signs and river project.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 7th May at 7:30pm in the hotel.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.