

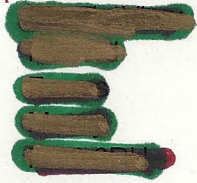


The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



Richard Lochhead  
SNP MSP for Moray

Mr Brian Higgs



25 May 2017

Dear Mr Higgs

**Re: Access Roundtable Meeting**

I'm writing to update you, following on from the roundtable discussion on Scottish rights of public access to land and inland water that was kindly hosted by Ramblers Scotland.

I opened the meeting by explaining that I had been contacted by a number of constituents in recent years regarding access issues, which had proved difficult to resolve, leading me to question whether the Scottish access legislation was fit for purpose and seek a discussion with the Scottish Land Commission and other relevant agencies on the matter.

Andrew Thin, Chair of the Scottish Land Commission explained that the SLC was in the process of establishing itself and producing a 3-year strategic plan which he hoped would be laid before parliament by the end of September. It was likely the SLC's initial main focus would be 'productivity', i.e, making the most of Scotland's land for the benefit of Scotland's people.

The discussion then moved onto discuss the key issues related to access rights, including education, dealing with irresponsible access, conflict resolution, prioritisation and resourcing of access and a general review of current access issues and the legislation. I have included a copy of the notes from this meeting, which goes into more detail about each of the above topics.

Stakeholders who attended have begun to take forward further discussion on the issues raised at the meeting with the Land Commission and other relevant bodies.

I hope this update been of use to you, and please be assured that I am continuing to monitor all access cases across Moray.

If you feel I can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to get back in touch.

