

THE DAVA WAY ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting held 11th February 2025

Venue: Royal British Legion, Sanquhar Road, Forres, IV36 1DG.

Meeting Opened: 19:00

Item	Minute	Action By
1	<u>Welcome:</u> Neil Sinclair chaired the meeting and welcomed members.	
2	<u>Present:</u> Malcolm Campbell (MC), Neil Sinclair (NS), Pete Mitchell (PM), Robbie Roberts (RR), Trevor Thornley (TT).	
	<u>Apologies:</u> Paul Barron (PB), Michael J Sutherland (MS), Tim Heaps (TH).	
3	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th January 2025</u> The minutes of the previous Dava Way Association (DWA) BoT meeting were read and accepted without change. Proposed: MC Seconded: RR	
4	<u>Matters Arising from the previous meeting</u>	
4.1	Ref 6.1: MC reported that he has written a letter to Kenneth McElroy, Development Manager for the Association of Northern Trails (ANT), expressing DWA support towards the appointment of a Trail Development Manager to be responsible for overseeing the maintenance of the John O' Groats Trail (JOGT) and developing a route to connect the JOGT to the Moray Coast Trail. Action closed.	
4.2	Ref 5.8: (See Item 5.8 below)	
4.3	Ref 7.3.1.1: (See Item 7.2.1.1 below)	
4.4	Ref 7.3.1.2: (See Item 7.2.1.2 below)	
4.5	Ref 7.3.2: (See Item 7.3.2 below)	
4.6	Ref 7.3.3: (See Item 7.3.3 below)	
4.7	Ref 7.3.4: (See Item 7.3.4 below)	
4.8	Ref 7.3.5: (See Item 7.3.5 below)	
4.9	Ref 7.4.1: (See Item 7.4.1 below)	
4.10	Ref 7.4.2: (See Item 7.4.2 below)	
4.11	Ref 7.4.3: (See Item 7.4.3 below)	
4.12	Ref 7.5.1.1: (See Item 7.5.1.1 below)	
4.13	Ref 7.5.1.2: (See Item 7.5.1.2 below)	
4.14	Ref 7.5.2: (See Item 7.5.2 below)	
4.15	Ref 7.5.3: (See Item 7.5.3 below)	
4.16	Ref 8.1.1: (See Item 8.1.1 below)	
4.17	Ref 8.1.2: (See Item 8.1.2 below)	
4.18	Ref 8.1.3: (See Item 8.1.3 below)	
4.19	Ref 8.2.1: (See Item 8.2.1 below)	
4.20	Ref 8.2.2: (See Item 8.2.2 below)	
4.21	Ref 8.2.3: (See Item 8.2.3 below)	
4.22	Ref 8.3.2: (See Item 8.3.1 below)	

4.23	Ref 8.3.3:	(See Item 8.3.2 below)	
4.24	Ref 8.3.4:	(See Item 8.3.3 below)	
4.25	Ref 8.3.5:	(See Item 8.3.4 below)	
4.26	Ref 8.3.6:	(See Item 8.3.5 below)	
4.27	Ref 8.3.7:	(See Item 8.3.6 below)	
4.28	Ref 8.3.8:	(See Item 8.3.11 below)	
4.29	Ref 8.4:	(See Item 8.4 below)	
4.30	Ref 9.1.2:	(See Item 9.1.2 below)	
4.31	Ref 10.1.1:	(See Item 10.1.1 below)	
4.32	Ref 10.1.2:	(See Item 10.1.2 below)	
4.33	Ref 12.2.2:	(See Item 12.2.2 below)	
4.34	Ref 12.2.3:	(See Item 12.2.3 below)	
4.35	Ref 13.2:	(See Item 13 below)	
4.36	Ref 17.1:	Action held over. MC will make the arrangements for a “Thank You” event for key Altyre Estate staff, to be held at the Altyre Sawmill when the weather improves.	MC
5	<u>Treasurer’s Report</u>		
5.1	NS reported from PB’s notes that a balance of £12,894.06 is in the DWA account. Unrestricted Funds: £ 8,809.15 Restricted Funds: £ 84.25 Places Called Home; for Dallas Dhu Ramp project. £ 4,000.00 Money for Moray; for Dallas Dhu Ramp project.		
5.2	Significant Income: £ 2,593.77 from Ticket Tailor; Ghost Train Walk (GTW) ticket/mug sales.		
5.3	Significant Expenditure: £ 104.40 to Ticket Tailor; prepaid ticket sale fees.		
5.4	Anticipated Expenditure (from DWA funds): £ 1,740.00 to Kineil Coaches; GTW coaches (qty 6 @ £290 each) £ 450.00 to Scotia Medical Group; GTW first aid cover. £ 459.11 to Nixon Hire; GTW Portaloo hire.		
5.5	Anticipated Income (from external funding): £ Nil		
5.6	Anticipated Expenditure (covered by external funding): £ Nil		
5.7	Donations via the GiveWP-Stripe process since last meeting: £ Nil		
5.8	Ref 5.8: Action held over. NS will purchase appropriate additional materials to the value of £84.25 (or more) to complete the manufacture of a replacement information board frame for Dallas Dhu; see Item 7.4.2 below.		NS
6	<u>Correspondences</u>		
6.1	To the Secretary (Nothing to report)		
6.2	Other Correspondence (Nothing to report)		
7	<u>Dava Way Path Works and Equipment Maintenance</u>		
7.1	Unplanned Work Since Last Meeting MC reported that he received reports of windblown trees blocking the Dava Way (DW) just north of Grantown-on-Spey and at the Lynmore Bypass. Local DWA volunteer Kenny MacDougall quickly removed the fallen trees.		

7.2	Planned Work Since Last Meeting	
7.2.1.1	<p>Ref 7.3.1.1: The following works were carried out at the full work party held 08/02/25:</p> <p>Cowgreens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved bunds. • Cut drainage offlet ditch. • Scraped muddy patch, infilled with sub-base and topped off with quarry dust. <p>Cowgreens to Longley Crossing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qty 5 gates checked and adjusted. • Cut back some encroaching vegetation and carried out minor drainage work. <p>AJ's Bridge to Clashdhu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut back encroaching vegetation. • Cleared blocked ditches. <p>Action closed.</p>	
7.2.1.2	Ref 7.3.1.2: MC notified the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out. Action closed	
7.3	Priorities for Next Work Party and Mini Work Parties	
7.3.1	<p>PM proposed that the following works be considered priorities for upcoming full work parties:</p> <p>Cutting by Sluggan Burn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear blocked drainage pipe. <p>Bantrach Cutting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a bund at the south end of the cutting. <p>Dava North</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove trees from ditch on east side. • Cut offlets to drain ruts. • Clear ditches as far as possible. <p>Balvlair to Dunphail Cutting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear ditches and rod drainage pipes. <p>Dallas Dhu Ramp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excavate and lay material to extend ramp. <p>Agreed unanimously.</p>	
7.3.1.1	PM will make the necessary arrangements.	PM
7.3.1.2	MC will notify the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out.	MC
7.3.2	Ref 7.3.2: Action held over. PB will contact the relevant estate manager and request an on-site meeting to discuss options to resolve the flooding issues that have resulted in erosion of the path surface between Balvlair and Dunphail.	PB
7.3.3	Ref 7.3.3: Action held over. PM or NS will treat the oak benches with teak oil when possible.	PM/NS
7.3.4	Ref 7.3.4: Action held over. NS will inspect the damage to the nose of the Redcoat sculpture and see what can be done to repair it.	NS
7.3.5	Ref 7.3.5: NS reported that Grantown Grammar pupils will plant the tree seedlings along the DW route north of the Huntly's Cave Cutting at work parties to be held 06/03/25 and 11/03/25. NS and MC will liaise.	NS/MC
7.4	Signage	
7.4.1	Ref 7.4.1: Action held over. PB will tabulate a bill of materials and obtain a total cost for fixing waymarker signs to lamp posts and street signs, to replace the wooden waymarker posts between the Tolbooth and Mannachie Avenue.	PB

7.4.2	Ref 7.4.2: Action held over. NS will manufacture a new information board frame to the standard design for installation at the Dallas Dhu Ramp (see Item 5.8 above).	NS
7.4.3	Ref 7.4.3: Action held over. NS will manufacture a new information board frame to the standard design and arrange for its installation adjacent to the Dullicht Bridge.	NS
7.5	Tooling and Equipment	
7.5.1	Preparations for installation of RadioBeam People and Bicycle Counter (RBBP) at crossing south of Dallas Dhu:	
7.5.1.1	Ref 7.5.1.1: Action held over. MC and NS will apply to the Berry Burn Community Fund for funding to purchase a RBBP at a cost of £2920. An offer of a £500 contribution from DWA funds towards the cost of the RBBP will be included in the application.	MC/NS
7.5.1.2	Ref 7.5.1.2: MC reported that government funding for active travel projects has been severely cut. Sustrans are undergoing a major downsizing and are not currently able to provide the required advice. Action closed.	
7.5.2	Ref 7.5.2: Action held over. PM will purchase a bolted shroud and secure padlock for securing the second ISO, then arrange a mini work party for their installation.	PM
7.5.3	Ref 7.4.3: Action held over. PM will purchase and mount qty 2 400mm x 300mm 'Path Works in Progress' signs to supplement the current warning signs. The new signs will be mounted on small folding wooden 'A' frames, allowing easy transport in the back of vehicles.	PM
8	Project Reports	
8.1	Dallas Dhu Access Ramp Improvement Project	
8.1.1	Ref 8.1.1: Action held over. PM will schedule the Dallas Dhu Ramp improvement works to be carried out at a mini work party.	PM
8.1.2	Ref 8.1.2: Action held over. PM will obtain annual plant insurance to cover use of his mini digger at DWA work parties.	PM
8.1.3	Ref 8.1.3: Action held over. PB noted that a quantity of subbase and quarry dust will be required for this project. PB will contact Leiths to see if the DWA still has an account with them.	PB
8.2	Dava Bypass Project	
8.2.1	Ref 8.2.1: Action held over. PB will update Dave McLeod of Station House, Dava.	PB
8.2.2	Ref 8.2.2: Action held over. PB will contact Mike Dickson of Station Cottage, Dava to discuss private water supplies and protection measures.	PB
8.2.3	Ref 8.2.3: Action held over. PB will seek specialist advice from the Paths for All technical advisers about path design constraints regarding private water supplies.	PB
8.3	Ghost Train Walk 2025 and DWA 20th Anniversary Project	
8.3.1	Ref 8.3.2: MC reported that PB has accepted the quote of £450 for event first aid cover from Scotia Medical Group and has confirmed the booking. Action closed.	
8.3.2	Ref 8.3.3: MC reported that PB received a quote of £459.11 from Nixon Hire for the hire of qty 3 Portaloo's. PB has accepted the quote, following agreement from the DWA Trustees via a round robin email. Action closed.	
8.3.3	Ref 8.3.4: MC has made a formal request to the 1st Forres Scout Group for their participation in the GTW event; breakfast catering, refreshments at Dava and spooky entertainment. MC and RR will liaise with the Scouts nearer the date of the GTW regarding catering spooky entertainment. Action closed.	

8.3.4	Ref 8.3.5: PM reported that North of Scotland Long-Distance Walking Association (LDWA) members Tom Fenton and his wife have volunteered as 'back markers' for the GTW event. Action closed.	
8.3.5	Ref 8.3.6: MC reported that GTW mugs are now available for sale through Ticket Tailor (TT) at £8 per mug, to be collected from the Dallas Dhu checkpoint. Action closed.	
8.3.6	Ref 8.3.7: MC reported that PB purchased 300 prepaid ticket sale fee credits in advance of tickets going on sale 20/01/25. Action closed.	
8.3.7	MC reported that the existing pedestrian route will be used by participants to bypass the Dava settlement during the GTW event. This follows safety concerns expressed by the Community Off-Road Transport Action Group (COTAG) about the route running alongside the A940 at previous events. Grantown Grammar have offered to carry out a work party in April to tidy and upgrade the route as far as possible. NS and MC will liaise. TT suggested that the change of route should be discussed with Mrs Coutts and the occupants of the railway cottages at Dava. MC confirmed that this was in hand.	NS/MC
8.3.8	MC showed a poster he produced to promote the GTW event. MC will print of and laminate copies of the poster, then distribute them for display in appropriate places.	MC
8.3.9	MC asked NS how many GTW event medals he has in stock. NS stated that he has approximately 150 medals. NS will purchase an additional 200 GTW event medals to ensure that there is sufficient stock.	NS
8.3.10	MC suggested that it would be beneficial to have a recognisable finish point for the event e.g. an arch of some type. TT noted that many events shown on the media utilise inflatable 'Finish' arches. RR suggested that a simple structure comprising vertical poles, a printed banner and guy ropes could be created cheaply and reused at future events. MC will research the relative costs of hiring or making a finish arch.	MC
8.3.11	Ref 8.3.8: MC noted that the DWA does not really have the necessary resources to run a separate event to celebrate the September 2025 20-year anniversary of the DWA formation. The Moray Way Ultras have been contacted and they may run an event of their own, based on the DWA anniversary theme. Action closed.	
8.4	DWA Information Leaflet Refresh Project Ref 8.4: Action held over: TH will produce a revised DWA information leaflet, to look like the information boards. NS and MC will work with TH on the design of the new leaflet.	TH/NS/MC
9	<u>Health and Safety</u>	
9.1	First Aid Kits	
9.1.1	The DWA first aid kits are held by MC, PB and PM. The completeness and serviceability of each kit was confirmed.	
9.1.2	Ref 9.1.2. Action held over. MC will compile a list of qualified DWA first aiders and note the date each person is due recertification.	MC
9.2	Injury Reports and Incidents (Nothing to report)	
10	<u>Business Planning</u>	
10.1	DWA Strategic Business Planning	
10.1.1	Ref 10.1.1: Action held over. DWA Trustees to read and comment on the revised DWA Strategic Business Plan and draft budget forecast covering the potential projects to be carried out 2024-2025.	All

10.1.2	Ref 10.1.2: Action held over. MC and MS will update the DWA Strategic Business Plan to include a funding strategy to meet the budget forecast.	MC/MS
10.2	Trustee Membership and Supporter Roles (Nothing to report)	
10.3	Succession Planning (Nothing to report)	
11	<u>Funding</u> RR reported that he will be walking one of the Camino routes , starting in April, and it should take 23-29 days to complete. Other organisations have used such walks for fundraising e.g. a lottery comprising slots where participants guess how long it will take for the walk to be completed. NS will ask TH if he would be interested in running a lottery for this event via the DWA website, selling 'day and hour' slots with a suitable prize e.g. £50 Marks and Spencer voucher.	NS/TH
12	<u>Social Media and Publicity</u>	PM
12.1	DWA Website (Nothing to report)	
12.2	DWA Facebook Group	
12.2.1	PM reported that the Friends of the Dava Way Facebook group now has 2,025 members.	
12.2.2	Ref 12.2.2: PM reported that he has advertised the DWA Easyfundraising scheme on the DWA Facebook group. Action closed.	
12.2.3	Ref 12.2.3: Action held over. PM will post an advert on the DWA Facebook group for a volunteer DWA Social Media Manager.	
12.3	Local, Regional and National Publications (Nothing to report)	
12.4	External Websites and Social Media. (Nothing to report)	
13	<u>DWA Annual Dinner</u> Ref 13.2: NS reported that he invited Norman and Jean Thomson, and Bruce Terris and his wife, as guests of the DWA to honour the support they have given to the organisation. A delightful evening was had by all, and NS received a thoughtful letter of thanks from Norman Thomson. Action closed.	
14	<u>AOCB</u> (Nothing to report)	
15	Date of the Next Meeting: 19:00 11/03/25, at the Royal British Legion, Sanquhar Road, Forres, IV36 1DG.	

Meeting Closed: 20:25



Neil Sinclair
Chairman
Dava Way Association