

THE DAVA WAY ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting held 12th August 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), Paul Barron (PB), Pete Mitchell (PM), Robbie Roberts (RR), Tim Heaps (TH), Trevor Thornley (TT). <u>Apologies:</u> Michael J Sutherland (MS).	
3	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10th June 2025</u> The minutes of the previous Dava Way Association (DWA) BoT meeting were read and accepted without change. Proposed: PB Seconded: MC	
4	<u>Matters Arising from the previous meeting</u>	
4.1	Ref 4.1: Action held over. MC will arrange a “Thank You” event for key Altyre Estate staff and Finderne Development Trust (FDT) representatives. MC suggested that the event could also be used to celebrate the 20 th anniversary of the creation of the Dava Way (DW). MC will research the availability of a suitable venue within the Altyre Estate for drinks and nibbles, to follow an early evening visit to the sawmill.	MC
4.2	Ref 7.3.1.1: (See Item 7.2.1 below)	
4.3	Ref 7.3.1.2: (See Item 7.2.2 below)	
4.4	Ref 7.3.2.1: (See Item 7.2.5 below)	
4.5	Ref 7.3.2.2: (See Item 7.2.6 below)	
4.6	Ref 7.3.3.1: (See Item 7.3.3.1 below)	
4.7	Ref 7.3.3.2: (See Item 7.3.3.2 below)	
4.8	Ref 7.3.3.3: (See Item 7.3.3.3 below)	
4.9	Ref 7.3.4: (See Item 7.3.4 below)	
4.10	Ref 7.3.5: (See Item 7.3.5 below)	
4.11	Ref 7.3.6.2: (See Item 7.2.5 below)	
4.12	Ref 7.3.7: (See Item 7.3.6 below)	
4.13	Ref 7.4.1: (See Item 7.4.1 below)	
4.14	Ref 7.4.2: (See Item 7.4.2 below)	
4.15	Ref 8.1.1: (See Item 8.1.1 below)	
4.16	Ref 8.1.2: (See Item 8.1.2 below)	
4.17	Ref 8.1.3: (See Item 8.1.3 below)	
4.18	Ref 8.1.4: (See Item 8.1.4 below)	
4.19	Ref 8.1.5: (See Item 8.1.5 below)	
4.20	Ref 8.2.1: (See Item 8.2.1 below)	
4.21	Ref 8.2.2: (See Item 8.2.2 below)	

4.22	Ref 8.3.6:	(See Item 8.3.1 below)	
4.23	Ref 9.1.2:	(See Item 9.2.1 below)	
4.24	Ref 10.1.1:	(See Item 10.1.1 below)	
4.25	Ref 10.1.2:	(See Item 10.1.2 below)	
4.26	Ref 12.2.2:	(See Item 12.2.2 below)	
5	<u>Treasurer's Report</u>		
5.1	PB reported that a balance of £12,544.52 is in the DWA account. Unrestricted Funds: £ 12,544.52 (includes income from Ghost Train Walk (GTW)) Restricted Funds: £ Nil		
5.2	Significant Income: £ 200.00 from FDT; GTW alternative minibus hire. £ 320.20 from Shona Marshall; GTW sponsorship. £ 400.00 individual donation from Norman Thomson.		
5.3	Significant Expenditure: £ 1,160.00 to Kineil Coaches; GTW coaches. £ 450.00 to Scotia Medical Group; GTW first aid cover. £ 247.24 to Murdoch's; GTW food items. £ 198.00 to MC; reimburse GTW mugs (qty 60). £ 255.98 to TH; reimburse GTW alternative minibus hire. £ 196.32 to PM; reimburse rough cutter parts and repairs, and gate post welding. £ 233.30 to Zurich; third party liability insurance renewal.		
5.4	Anticipated Expenditure (from DWA funds): £ ? to GTW supporting organisations. (See Item 8.3.2 below)		
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: £ 640.00		
6	<u>Correspondences</u>		
6.1	To the Secretary MC reported that he has received an email from Diageo Plc offering manpower on 22/08/25 to carry out suitable tasks on the DW. (See Item 7.3.7 below)		
6.2	Other Correspondence		
6.2.1	NS reported that he has written to Norman Thomson, thanking him for his individual donation to the DWA.		
6.2.2	PB reported that he has received an email from St John's Church, inviting the DWA to provide a talk midday on 24/08/25 on the DW. MC volunteered to provide the talk, and PB will send MC the contact details of the St John's Church representative.		PB/MC
7	<u>Dava Way Path Works and Equipment Maintenance</u>		
7.1	Unplanned Work Since Last Meeting		
7.1.1	01/07/25 MC carried out a cycle survey to assess damage to the DW from the recent wildfires.		
7.1.2	15/07/25 TH installed an extension to the ride-on mower charging cable.		
7.1.3	06/08/25 PM and MC carried out a cycle survey to assess damage to the DW from the recent high winds.		

7.1.4	07/08/25 PM and Greg MacAulay cleared windblown trees from the DW between the Divie Viaduct and Scurrypool Bridge.	
7.1.5	07/08/25 Paul Douglas cleared windblown trees from the DW between Dallas Dhu and Rafford Bridge.	
7.1.6	Date Unknown. RR cut back encroaching undergrowth from Mannachie Ramp to Sanquhar Mains Bridge and removed litter.	
7.1.7	Date Unknown. RR sprayed encroaching grass/weeds at the Dallas Dhu Ramp and removed litter.	
7.1.8	Date Unknown. RR sprayed encroaching grass/weeds along the Dunphail Bypass and treated Japanese Knotweed on property adjacent to the DW at the request of the owner.	
7.2	Planned Work Since Last Meeting	
7.2.1	Ref 7.3.1.1: PM reported that the full work party planned for 14/06/25 was cancelled due to inclement weather. A full work party was not held in July due to summer holiday and other commitments. The tasks scheduled for the 14/06/25 work party were completed at mini work parties instead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16/06/25 PM, PB and MC carried out grass cutting and essential undergrowth cutback at Lynmacgregor. 18/06/25 PM, PB and NS with 4 DWA volunteers carried out grass cutting and essential undergrowth cutback at various locations in preparation for GTW. Action closed.	
7.2.2	Ref 7.3.1.2: MC reported that he notified the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out. Action closed.	
7.2.3	PM reported that the following works were completed at the full work party held 09/08/25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North of Longley Farm Crossing – west side wheel ruts infilled with 4 tonnes of sub-base and compacted for approximately 60m. Various locations between Auchearn Crossing and Scurrypool Bridge – brash cleared and logs extracted. 	
7.2.4	MC reported that he notified the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out.	
7.2.5	PM reported that the following tasks were carried out at mini work parties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ref 7.3.6.2: 11/06/25 PM and PB installed the replacement bench adjacent to Sanquhar Mains Farm. Action closed. Ref 7.3.2.1: 11/06/25 PM and PB reinstalled the refurbished Mannachie Avenue finger post on a galvanised base. Action closed. 	
7.2.6	Ref 7.3.2.2: MC reported that he notified the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out.	
7.3	Priorities for Next Work Party and Mini Work Parties	
7.3.1	PM stated that he will wait until the 09/09/25 meeting to propose works to be considered priorities for the full work party to be held 13/09/25.	
7.3.2	PM proposed that the following works be considered priorities for mini work parties to be held when possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dava – replace fire damaged fingerpost. South of Dragoon Crossing – adjust misaligned clatter post. Various locations – install bunds to direct rainwater off path, to prevent the water running down ruts and causing further erosion. Agreed unanimously.	
7.3.2.1	PM will make the necessary arrangements.	PM
7.3.2.2	MC will notify the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out.	MC

7.3.3	Works to clear the drainage pipe blockage in the cutting south of the Sluggan Burn.	
7.3.3.1	Ref 7.3.3.1: Action held over. PB will liaise with the contractor and provide MC with a date for the works.	PB
7.3.3.2	Ref 7.3.3.2: Action transferred. PM will liaise with Greg MacAulay regarding removal/pruning of trees and provide MC with details of the works and a date for them to be carried out.	PM
7.3.3.3	Ref 7.3.3.3: Action held over. MC will notify the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out.	MC
7.3.4	Ref 7.3.4: 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. Dependent on the adjacent ditches having been cleared.	PB
7.3.5	Ref 7.3.5: Action held over. NS will treat the oak benches with teak oil when possible.	NS
7.3.6	Ref 7.3.7: 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
7.3.7	PM proposed the following as possible works for the Diageo Plc work party to be held 22/08/25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North of Longley Farm Crossing – progress infill of west side wheel ruts with sub-base. Various locations – ditch clearance. 	
7.3.7.1	MC will confirm the number of available Diageo Plc volunteers. PM will confirm appropriate works and make the necessary arrangements.	MC/PM
7.3.7.2	MC will notify the relevant estate manager(s) of the works to be carried out.	MC
7.3.8	PB suggested that sub-base stockpiles be replenished at Clashduh and Dava. It would also be useful to add stockpiles at suitable locations within the Logie and Seafeld estates.	
7.3.8.1	MC will confirm stockpile locations with the relevant estate managers.	MC
7.3.8.2	PB will arrange for the delivery of sub-base to the agreed locations.	PB
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 and arrange for its installation adjacent to the Dullicht Bridge.	NS
7.5	Tooling and Equipment PM reported that the tyre on one of the DWA wheelbarrows requires replacement. PM will obtain costs for suitable inflated and solid tyres, and report these back to the DWA Trustees for consideration.	PM
8	<u>Project Reports</u>	
8.1	Dava Bypass Project	
8.1.1	Ref 8.1.1: Action held over. PB will update Dave McLeod of Station House, Dava.	PB
8.1.2	Ref 8.1.2: Action held over. PB will contact Mike Dickson of Station Cottage, Dava to discuss private water supplies and protection measures.	PB
8.1.3	Ref 8.1.3: Action held over. PB will seek specialist advice from Paths for All re path design constraints regarding private water supplies.	PB

8.1.4	<p>Ref 8.1.4: Action held over. PB will form a DWA subcommittee with MC, NS and TT to decide what improvements to the DW should be requested to ensure that the DWA gain maximum benefit from the constraints placed on the developer. PB will confirm with MC and NS what works have already been discussed by them with the Ourack Wind Farm developer and obtain details of any future meetings that they have arranged with the developer.</p> <p>NB: There are three planning constraints for works affecting the DWA -</p> <p>Constraint 23. The development of an Outdoor Access Plan to secure public access rights during and after wind farm development.</p> <p>Constraint 24. The development of a scheme to improve and enhance the Dava Way.</p> <p>Constraint 25. The development of a scheme for the provision of off-site road works at Castle Grant, including full details of the works affecting the Dava Way.</p>	PB
8.1.5	Ref 8.2.5: Action held over. Under direction from PB, MC will contact the Ourack Wind Farm developer to arrange a meeting with the DWA subcommittee.	MC
8.1.6	PM noted that many of the posts used to mark the proposed route were damaged by the recent wildfire.	
8.1.6.1	PM will provide replacement marker posts.	PM
8.1.6.2	PB will replace the fire damaged marker posts along the proposed route.	PB
8.2	Dava Way Counter Project	
8.2.1	Ref 8.2.1: MC reported that he contacted DWA volunteer Bailee Allen. Action closed.	
8.2.2	Ref 8.2.2: TH reported that he and NS have formed a DWA subcommittee to explore the practicality of manufacturing an in-house DWA counter as a project. They have met with Bailee Allen, but the Trafx Trail Counter used by the National Parks Service is still relatively expensive and primarily available to the US market. Action closed.	
8.2.3	TH stated that the device described in the Reddit article may be more cost effective. He will obtain the appropriate components and build a test device as a winter project, with assistance from NS as required.	TH/NS
8.3	Ghost Train Walk 2025	
8.3.1	Ref 8.3.6: MC reported that he continued project management for the event, delegating tasks as required before handing over control of the event to NS. NS reported that the event was a great success, with both participants and volunteers reporting how much they enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to the next one. Action closed.	
8.3.2	PB noted the significant contributions made to the success of the event by COTAG and 1 st Forres Scouts. With reference to the current balance in the DWA account, he proposed that the DWA should donate £1,000 to each of these organisations. Agreed by majority vote. PB will donate £1,000 each to COTAG and 1st Forres Scouts.	PB
8.3.3	NS reported that he received an email from COTAG providing feedback on the event and suggesting some minor improvements.	
8.3.3.1	NS will circulate the email to the DWA trustees for comment.	NS
8.3.3.2	NS will clarify the COTAG observations re the DWA emergency maps.	NS
8.3.3.3	PM will update the DWA emergency maps appropriately.	PM
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.	

9.2	Training	
9.2.1	Ref 9.1.2. Action held over. PB reported that he has contacted Scotia Medical, but it may be the end of September before they can provide the DWA with an Emergency First Aid at Work course and assessment. PB will monitor progress.	PB
9.2.2	MC reported a request from Moray Estates for confirmation that the DWA chainsaw operator, Greg MacAulay, holds appropriate certification. PM will contact Greg to confirm the currency of his LANTRA certification.	PM
9.3	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> (Nothing to report)	
12	<u>Social Media and Publicity</u>	
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 2,533 members.	
12.2.2	Ref 12.2.2: Action held over. PM will post an advert on the DWA Facebook group for a volunteer DWA Social Media Manager.	PM
12.3	Local, Regional and National Publications MC reported that the Forres Gazette ran an article on the GTW in their 09/07/25 edition.	
12.4	External Websites and Social Media. (Nothing to report)	
13	<u>AOCB</u> (Nothing to report)	
14	Date of the Next Meeting: 19:00 09/09/25, at the Royal British Legion, Sanquhar Road, Forres, IV36 1DG.	

Meeting Closed: 20:50



Neil Sinclair
Chairman
Dava Way Association