

THE DAVA WAY ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting held 14th October 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), Tim Heaps (TH). <u>Apologies:</u> Paul Barron (PB), Michael J Sutherland (MS), Trevor Thornley (TT).	
3	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th September 2025</u> The minutes of the previous Dava Way Association (DWA) BoT meeting were read and accepted without change. Proposed: RR Seconded: PM	
4	<u>Matters Arising from the previous meeting</u>	
4.1	Ref 4.1: MC reported that a “Thank You” event for key Altyre Estate staff and Finderne Development Trust (FDT) representatives was held on 09/10/25. Drinks and nibbles at the Loch of Blairs facility followed an early evening visit to the sawmill. Attendees included Sir Alastair Gordon Cumming, owner of Altyre Estate, and Sue Bolton, the Chair of the FDT. Action closed. NS wished to record his thanks to MC for organising the event.	
4.2	Ref 7.3.1.1: (See Item 7.2.1 below)	
4.3	Ref 7.3.3: (See Item 7.3.2 below)	
4.4	Ref 7.3.4: (See Item 7.2.3 below)	
4.5	Ref 7.3.5: (See Item 7.3.4 below)	
4.6	Ref 7.3.6: (See Item 7.3.5 below)	
4.7	Ref 7.3.7.3: (See Item 7.3.6 below)	
4.8	Ref 7.4.1: (See Item 7.4.1 below)	
4.9	Ref 7.4.2: (See Item 7.4.2 below)	
4.10	Ref 8.1.1: (See Item 8.1.1 below)	
4.11	Ref 8.1.2: (See Item 8.1.2 below)	
4.12	Ref 8.1.3: (See Item 8.1.3 below)	
4.13	Ref 8.1.4: (See Item 8.1.4 below)	
4.14	Ref 8.1.5: (See Item 8.1.5 below)	
4.15	Ref 8.1.6.2: (See Item 8.1.6 below)	
4.16	Ref 8.2: (See Item 8.2.1 below)	
4.17	Ref 8.3.2.2: (See Item 8.3.1.1 below)	
4.18	Ref 8.3.2.3: (See Item 8.3.1.2 below)	
4.19	Ref 8.3.2.4: (See Item 8.3.1.3 below)	
4.20	Ref 8.3.3: (See Item 8.3.2 below)	
4.21	Ref 8.3.5.1: (See Item 8.3.3.1 below)	
4.22	Ref 8.3.5.2: (See Item 8.3.3.2 below)	
4.23	Ref 8.3.5.3: (See Item 8.3.3.3 below)	

4.24	Ref 9.1.2:	(See Item 9.1.2 below)	
4.25	Ref 9.2.1.1:	(See Item 9.2.1.1 below)	
4.26	Ref 9.2.1.2:	(See Item 9.2.1.2 below)	
4.27	Ref 9.2.2.2:	(See Item 9.2.2 below)	
4.28	Ref 9.4.1:	(See Item 9.4.1 below)	
4.29	Ref 10.1.1:	(See Item 10.1.1 below)	
4.30	Ref 10.1.2:	(See Item 10.1.2 below)	
4.31	Ref 13.1:	(See Item 13.1 below)	
4.32	Ref 13.2:	(See Item 13.2 below)	
4.33	Ref 13.3:	(See Item 13.3 below)	
5	<u>Treasurer's Report</u>		
5.1	NS reported from PB notes that a balance of £7,276.90 is in the DWA account. Unrestricted Funds: £ 7,276.90 Restricted Funds: £ Nil		
5.2	Significant Income: £ Nil		
5.3	Significant Expenditure: £ 447.60 to Ritchies Aviemore; sub-base to Glaschoil stockpile. £ 447.60 to Ritchies Aviemore; quarry dust to Glaschoil stockpile. £ 447.60 to Ritchies Aviemore; sub-base to Dava stockpile. £ 578.86 to Leiths; quarry dust to Longley stockpile. £ 175.00 to MH Creations; website/domain support. £ 121.11 to Logie Timber; larch gate posts and finger rails. £ 300.00 to G. Scott; accountant professional services.		
5.4	Anticipated Expenditure (from DWA funds): £ 198.00 to Moray Estates; refresher training Greg McAulay. £ 25.38 to KBM; purchase of work gloves. £ 150.00 to MIS; purchase of galvanised gate posts. £ ? to MIS; purchase of replacement rough cutter blade.		
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: £ 275.00		
6	<u>Correspondences</u>		
6.1	To the Secretary MC reported that the DWA has received an invitation from Adam Streeter-Smith, Access and Recreation Manager at Cairngorms National Park Authority, to attend a Community Path Group Gathering to be held 11:00-15:30 on 14/11/25 in Kingussie. MC, and possibly NS, will attend to represent the DWA.		MC/NS
6.2	Other Correspondence TH reported that the Railway Ramblers will be holding a national event in May 2026. They would like to walk the extent of the Dava Way (DW) along the trackbed, including visits to the remaining stations. It was agreed that the DWA should support this event.		
6.2.1	MC will contact the owners of the Dava and Dunphail station houses to ask if they would be willing to have the walkers pass through their grounds.		MC
6.2.2	TH will liaise with the Railway Ramblers.		TH

7	<u>Dava Way Path Works and Equipment Maintenance</u>	
7.1	Unplanned Work Since Last Meeting	
7.1.1	11/09/25 PB supervised the delivery of sub-base to Glaschoil stockpile, assessed fire damage to posts marking the proposed Dava Bypass, and surveyed an alternative stockpile site at Longley.	
7.1.2	16/09/25 PB and PM supervised the delivery of sub-base to Dava stockpile and installed a new hinge post at a gate south of the Dragoon Crossing.	
7.1.3	22/09/25 PB and PM supervised the delivery of quarry dust to Longley stockpile and replaced the hinge post on the Longley Crossing south gate.	
7.1.4	23/09/25 PB and PM supervised the delivery of quarry dust to Glaschoil stockpile, replaced DW logo discs along the Lynmore Bypass, and adjusted the hinge post at the Longley Crossing south gate.	
7.1.5	29/09/25 PB and PM installed a new clatter post at a gate south of the Dragoon Crossing, then relocated the existing gate.	
7.1.6	05/10/25 PM and Tom Summerscales carried out a post storm Amy cycle survey along the DW from Grantown to Forres. Numerous windblown trees were identified for removal.	
7.1.7	06/10/25 PM and Greg McAulay removed windblown trees from Auchearn Cutting, Belnain Wood, Longley Cutting and Cowgreens Wood.	
7.1.8	14/10/25 PM and Greg McAulay removed windblown trees from Lynmacgregor Cutting, Lynmore Bypass and Cairn Eney.	
7.1.9	PM reported that the removed timber from windblown tree removal has been delivered to Howard Davenport for processing into logs. PM will organise.	PM
7.1.10	RR reported that he has sprayed the area around the Mannachie Ramp and steps, and the steps adjacent to the Sanquhar Mains Farm Bridge where he has also carried out gorse cutback.	
7.2	Planned Work Since Last Meeting	
7.2.1	Ref 7.3.1.1: Full Work Parties. Action closed.	
7.2.1.1	PM reported that the following works were carried out at a full work party held on 13/09/25: North of Longley Crossing. • Infilled ruts with 10 tonnes of sub-base, compacted ready for top dressing with quarry dust. Peathillock Cutting. • Cleared drainage ditches as far as possible. • Filled deep potholes with sub-base.	
7.2.1.2	PM reported that the following works were carried out at a full work party held on 11/10/25: North of the Longley Crossing • Infilled ruts with further 2 tonnes of sub-base, compacted and top dressed with quarry dust. • Installed a small bund and offset to help drain water off to the sides to protect against flood washout. Belnain Wood Cutting • Removed storm debris from the concrete drainage channel. Various Locations. • Felled trees from post storm windblown tree removal cut into lengths and removed. Brash processed into wood chip.	
7.2.1.3	It was suggested that the estates may wish to make a contribution to offset the DWA costs for path surface repairs (rut and pothole infilling). MC will contact the appropriate estate offices to enquire if they wish to contribute.	MC

7.3	Priorities for Next Work Party and Mini Work Parties	
7.3.1	PM proposed that the following works be considered priorities for the full work party to be held 08/11/25: Bogeney. • Improve drainage south of Jess the Dog sculpture; use mini digger. • Cut back gorse/whins around Jess the Dog, clean and repaint sculpture. Various Locations • Repair fingerposts. Poor Weather Alternative. • Tools and equipment maintenance. Agreed unanimously. PM will make the necessary arrangements.	PM
7.3.2	Ref 7.3.3: Action held over. PM will liaise with Greg McAulay regarding removal/pruning of trees at the location of the drainage pipe blockage in the cutting south of the Sluggan Burn, to prevent further root growth.	PM
7.3.3	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
7.3.4	Ref 7.3.5: Action held over. NS will treat the oak benches with teak oil when possible.	NS
7.3.5	Ref 7.3.6: 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
7.3.6	Ref 7.3.7.3: NS reported from PB notes that all the stockpile replenishments have now been completed. Action closed.	
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	
7.5.1	PM reported that fuel labels (identifying 4-stroke) have been added to the chipper and whacker plate.	
7.5.2	PM reported that, after an informal discussion with David Binney, the DWA should invoice the Forres Community Woodland Trust (FCWT) for the recent repairs to the rough cutter. PB will invoice FCWT.	PB
8	Project Reports	
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	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. NB: There are three planning constraints for works affecting the DWA - Constraint 23. The development of an Outdoor Access Plan to secure public access rights during and after wind farm development. Constraint 24. The development of a scheme to improve and enhance the Dava Way. Constraint 28. 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.	PB
8.1.5	Ref 8.1.5: 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	Ref 8.1.6.2: NS reported from PB notes that all the fire damaged marker posts along the proposed Dava Bypass route have been replaced. Action closed.	
8.2	Dava Way Counter Project	
8.2.1	Ref 8.2: Action held over. TH will obtain the appropriate components and build a test counter device (see Reddit article) as a winter project, with assistance from NS as required.	TH/NS
8.2.2	MC reported that Moray Access Officer, Hector Bryden, might be able to provide the DWA with one or more counters. MC will liaise.	MC
8.3	Ghost Train Walk 2025	
8.3.1	COTAG feedback:	
8.3.1.1	Ref 8.3.2.2: Action held over. MC will arrange a Zoom meeting with COTAG to clarify their observations re the DWA emergency maps, etc.	MC
8.3.1.2	Ref 8.3.2.3: Action held over. PM will update the DWA emergency maps appropriately.	PM
8.3.1.3	Ref 8.3.2.4: Action held over. PM will design large, brightly coloured tags, to identify the various access gate keys and wrap reflective tape around the DWA padlocks.	PM
8.3.2	Ref 8.3.3: Action held over. MC will add a note to the GTW project report for future reference, that the GTW events should be brought forward a week to deconflict with other 'longest day' events.	MC
8.3.3	GTW publicity:	
8.3.3.1	Ref 8.3.5.1: Action held over. MC will prepare a report on the GTW for upload to the DWA website.	MC
8.3.3.2	Ref 8.3.5.2: Action held over. PM will provide MC with admin access to the DWA Facebook page.	PM
8.3.3.3	Ref 8.3.5.3: Action held over. MC will upload a report on the GTW to the DWA Facebook page.	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 call in the first aid kits for expiry date check.	MC
9.2	Training	
9.2.1	First aid refresher training:	
9.2.1.1	Ref 9.2.1.1: Action held over. PB will arrange an Emergency First Aid at Work course and assessment with Scotia Medical.	PB
9.2.1.2	Ref 9.2.1.2: Action held over. MC will ask Outfit Moray for potential course dates and costs for their Emergency First Aid at Work training.	MC
9.2.2	Ref 9.2.2.2: PM reported that Greg McAulay has completed chainsaw refresher training. Action closed.	

9.3	Injury Reports and Incidents (Nothing to report)	
9.4	Documentation Review	
9.4.1	Ref 9.4.1: Action held over. MC will distribute a copy of the DWA H&S Policy to each DWA Trustee for review/comment. MC will also distribute copies of the DWA risk assessments and COSHH assessments to each nominated equipment custodian for review.	MC/All
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 TH proposed that the DWA website pages be reviewed on a regular basis, minimum annually. This should be carried out by a project sub-committee. Agreed unanimously. TH, NS and MC will form a sub-committee to review the DWA website pages.	TH/NS/MC
12.2	DWA Facebook Group PM reported that the Friends of the Dava Way Facebook group has 2,570 members.	
12.3	Local, Regional and National Publications MC reported that an article on the DW was recently published in The Great Outdoors magazine.	
12.4	External Websites and Social Media. (Nothing to report)	
13	<u>Annual Members Meeting</u>	
13.1	Ref 13.1: MC reported that he has confirmed the booking of the hall at Forres Royal British Legion for 27/11/25. Action closed.	
13.2	Ref 13.2: NS reported from PB notes that the Trustees Annual Report – Appendix 1 has been signed off by the DWA Chair. Action closed.	
13.3	Ref 13.3: NS reported from PB notes that the Trustees Annual Report – Appendix 2 has been signed off by the DWA Accountant. Action closed.	
13.4	MC stated that he will notify the members about the date of the AMM and will circulate the associated ‘document pack’ as soon as it is available.	MC
13.5	TH stated that he will prepare an appropriate slide show, to be run in the background at the AMM.	TH
14	<u>AOCB</u>	
14.1	(Nothing to report)	
15	Date of the Next Meeting: 19:00 11/11/25, at the Royal British Legion, Sanquhar Road, Forres, IV36 1DG.	

Meeting Closed: 21:00

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Sinclair', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neil Sinclair
Chairman
Dava Way Association