

From mountain to sea

Community path group information pack



Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 This pack contains guidance, information, contact details and links to further help with the aim of supporting appropriate and effective community-led action on paths in Aberdeenshire. Our intention is that this pack informs those who are establishing a new path group as well as those who are already active with their local community path group. It is a guide to setting up and running a paths group and planning path work.
- 1.2 Our aim is that the pack is kept relatively brief. In order to do this some information has been put in appendices and also links are provided to further information. The information contained in the pack is certainly not intended to be a rigid scheme, communities and situations will vary greatly. It is a guide that we hope can be adapted to your circumstances.
- 1.3 Aberdeenshire Council's vision for outdoor access is:

"Aberdeenshire Council aims to facilitate access to a network of well-maintained and welcoming paths and to protect access rights to enable residents and visitors to enjoy the area's diverse countryside and settlements"
- 1.4 The benefits of a well-planned, maintained and accessible path networks are important for our health and our economy. Paths can also be a focus for community involvement. Not everyone will want to be closely involved in running or managing a group, but by organising community events to help with particular aspects you will raise awareness and encourage pride of place and a sense of ownership. This in turn is likely to encourage more responsible behaviour and generally benefit community cohesion.
- 1.5 Aberdeenshire Council does maintain some, but not all paths in Aberdeenshire. Our paths maintenance is prioritised with an emphasis on paths that the Council owns. Many paths, including some Core Paths for example, are on private land and are not the responsibility of the Council to maintain. We all need to work together – the Council, landowners and communities - to ensure there is a good quality path network in Aberdeenshire.
- 1.6 There is a growing network of volunteer paths groups across Aberdeenshire who are engaged in practical work to keep paths networks in their area in good condition. Aberdeenshire Council wish to encourage and support this movement hence the production of this information pack.

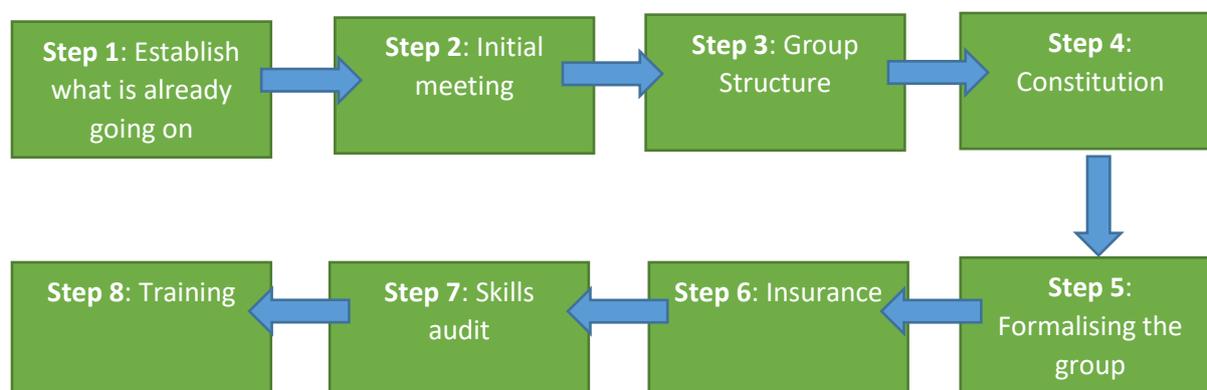
Section 2: Structure of this Pack

2.1 The following 4 sections are a guide to the setting up and work of a community paths group. There are also appendices with further information.

- **Section 3** covers how to set up a path group (page 3)
- **Section 4** covers making your initial plans (page 7)
- **Section 5** covers project implementation - the practicalities of path maintenance and construction (page 11)
- **Section 6** reminds paths group that once path work is completed there are ongoing responsibilities (page 14)

- **Appendix 1** provides an example risk assessment for path work
- **Appendix 2** provides a list of tools that paths groups have found useful
- **Appendix 3** is a volunteer registration and induction form
- **Appendix 4** provides useful contacts

Section 3: Setting up a community path group



3 Section 3: Setting up a community path group

3.1 Set up step 1: Establish What Is Already Going On

Before starting to make plans for your local paths, try to find out if anything is happening already and whether there have been past attempts that you might learn from. To do this we recommend that you:

- contact Aberdeenshire Council to find out if there are any plans to develop the paths in your local area now, or in the near future and also if there are any existing path groups;
- make contact with your local Community Council. They may also be able to help with knowledge of past, present or future plans - you can find details of Community Councils in Aberdeenshire here: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/community-councils/community-councils/>
- establish if there are groups or individuals in your area who are working on their own plans for paths. News of this might be available via social media, or local press.
- look at the Core Path Plan for your area to see what paths currently exist <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/paths-and-outdoor-access/core-paths-plan/core-paths-plan-maps/>.

3.2 Set up step 2: Initial meeting of interested parties

Once you understand the current situation in terms of path groups and have identified a need, you need to try to find others interested in the same goals. This second step could take a variety of forms. We would suggest some form of initial community meeting which is advertised in local networks – social media, through the Community Council, public notices in local press etc. In our experiences, there is a

higher chance of long-term success if groups that can spread activities between a number of interested and motivated individuals.

3.3 **Set up step 3: Group Structure**

It is important to have a well-structured and organised group so as to inspire confidence in your activities. Everyone involved in the group should have an equal say, however the group's work will run more smoothly if different individuals take on specific roles. As a minimum, each group should appoint:

- a Chairperson
- a Secretary
- a Treasurer

3.4 **Set up step 4: a Constitution**

It should be noted that voluntary groups are not legally required to be formally constituted, as such, this could be classed as an optional step. It may be one that a group takes at a later date than its initial inception. However, we would advise having a constitution for the following key reasons:

- many funders, including Aberdeenshire Council, will only give financial support to formally constituted groups
- it sets out the group's objectives in a clear format
- it enhances your group's identity
- it provides rules to ensure that the group is run and managed appropriately
- third party liability insurance may only be available to a constituted group

Aberdeenshire Council can provide advice on this and example constitutions from existing volunteer environmental groups. Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action are also well placed to advise on this aspect and you may wish to consider taking independent legal advice.

3.5 **Set up step 5: Formalising the group**

If a group wishes to further boost its identity and make it more attractive to a wider range of funding bodies, it may wish to take the next step and go for an identified formal structure. This may be something a group decides to pursue at a later date than its initial set up. There are a number of possible formal structures for a community group. Organisations like Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action are well placed to advise on suitable structures. Some examples for path groups include:

- Direct affiliation to Community Council
- Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)
- Company Limited by Guarantee
- Community Interest Company

All the above differ in their requirements and benefits. One of the most popular structures is that of a SCIO which offers a good balance of structure, formality, effort required to set up & maintain and protection for trustees

3.6 **Set up step 6: Insurance**

It is essential to arrange public liability insurance at an early stage. Your group will need minimum of £5 million public liability insurance to undertake work on Aberdeenshire Council ground and other landowners may well insist on this too. The Conservation Volunteers are one of the organisations which can arrange affordable insurance for paths groups for example, although there are a number of others. Aberdeenshire Council may reimburse the annual cost of basic third party insurance cover for formally constituted paths groups. If/when you start doing physical works to paths, you would be advised to consider what other types of insurance you may need – accident cover for volunteers for example. If you are looking for Aberdeenshire Council to cover these types of insurance costs then discuss this with us prior to taking out any policies.

3.7 **Set up step 7: Skills audit**

Once your group is established it is worth undertaking a skills audit of the members. Members may have skills such as accounting, web design, fundraising which, while not obviously relating to ‘shovels and gravel’, can be very helpful in running a group and delivering successful projects. This is a process you can revisit as the group and its projects evolve.

3.8 **Set up step 8: Training**

Following a skills audit, you may identify gaps in your knowledge or skills you lack to deliver your projects. Paths for All deliver a range of courses during the year, and if numbers are sufficient, they may be able to provide a customised training programme for you group or a number of groups in the shire. The Scottish Outdoor Access Network SOAN/SATIN also deliver networking and training days throughout the year which are aimed at community group volunteers as well as those employed in access in addition to offering the SATIN website which technical information <https://www.satinonline.org/Home>

3.9 *Set up note 1: the legal aspects of public access and path works*

We would suggest that all group members are broadly familiar with the legal framework relating to public access in Scotland and also the Scottish Outdoor Access Code <https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/>. Aberdeenshire Council, as the Access Authority for the area, can advise in this regard. Some key things to keep in mind:

- Everyone has a right of responsible access over most land and inland water in Scotland for recreation and other purposes. Access rights extend to horse riding, canoeing and cycling but do not include motorised access. Local Authorities have a duty to uphold these rights and powers to keep paths open. Read more about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code at www.outdooraccess-scotland.com
- Cyclists, horse riders and wheelchair users have access rights too. Not every path can be made accessible for all users, but where it is practicable, path

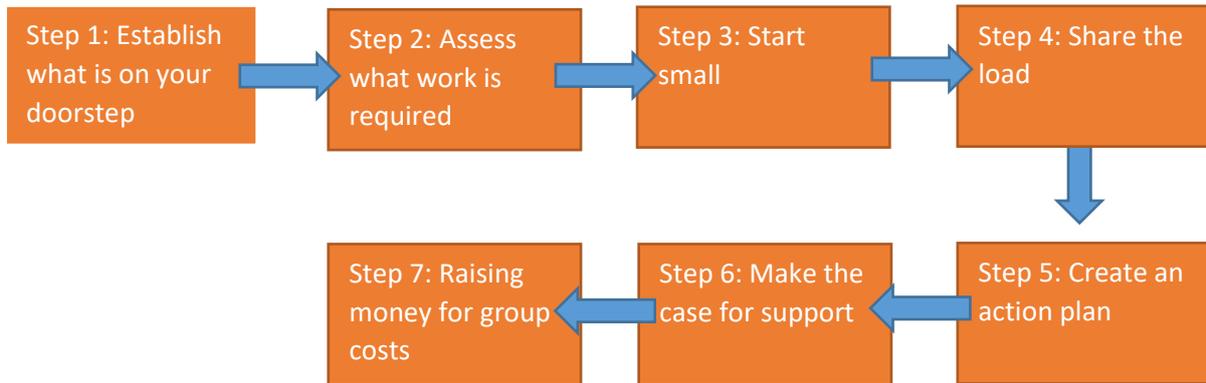
maintenance and path improvements should be planned with multi-use in mind. Think gap or gate and not stile or fence.

- You must **always** seek landowner consent before planning any works on private ground. We often find that local knowledge is the best place to start in identifying landowners. However, the Scottish Land Registry can help in identifying land owners for a reasonable cost.
- There may be opportunities for paths groups to undertake works on Council owned land but this **must** be by agreement.

3.10 *Set up note 2: General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)*

GDPR came into effect in 2018 and aims primarily to give control to individuals over their personal data. This means that there are rules about how and when electronic data can be held which community groups must adhere to. More details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation>

Section 4: Making Plans



4 Section 4: Making Plans

4.1 **Making Plans Step 1: Establish what is on your doorstep**

When starting to make plans for path works, you must first find out what is already there; to do this we recommend that you look into:

- whether there is an existing promoted path network in your local area
- what routes local people and visitors use
- where would people like to go?
- do you have landowner support?
- are there places people would like to go but can't find a route?

A good starting point is to approach us at Aberdeenshire Council who can quickly establish if there are recorded rights of way, core paths or promoted path networks in your local area. Use outdoor.access@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Some routes, known only to the local community, may not be mapped, recorded or promoted; therefore it is useful to consult with a broad range of people (local, visitors, tourism providers etc.). This can be achieved through word of mouth or asking for comments on a map made available in local library, schools, cafes, supermarkets etc.

When consulting on path locations and preferred routes, it is advisable to have a map of the area to hand - a line on a map is considerably easier to interpret than a verbal or written description.

Hosting a public meeting is a great way of gathering interested people together to hear their thoughts and opinions. It also provides an opportunity to get them to draw on the map, or to sign up to help. It will also be of benefit to speak with landowners, they might suggest or have comments regarding routes on their land.

Some existing community paths groups, in addition to consulting with their Community Council, have undertaken surveys of their local residents to identify priorities. Free survey software such as Survey Monkey can be very helpful.

4.2 **Making plans step 2: Assess what work is required**

Carry out a path survey to establish which routes your group wish to work on and to identify the work that needs to be done to improve them. Excellent advice and information on types and methods of survey can be found in the documents linked below. These documents give lots of detail beyond just path surveys and are helpful for all aspect of work planning.

- Paths for All – Managing you community paths guide
<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/resources/resource/community-paths-guide>
- Upland Path Management - Standards for delivering path projects in Scotland's mountains <https://www.nature.scot/upland-path-management-standards-delivering-path-projects-scotlands-mountains>
- Lowland Path Construction - A Guide to Good Practice Paths for All: <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/community-paths/cmp-resources>

It's possible you could bring in expert consultants to carry out this element of work for you if, for example, your area is large and/or has a large number of paths. They could further help scope necessary work.

4.3 **Making plans step 3: Start small**

Unless members have relevant experience, it is better to start small. Choose a task you know will make a difference and you're sure you can complete. Create a list of straightforward tasks that need doing, get the group together as regularly as time permits and work through those tasks.

Job satisfaction is quickly found in clearing an overgrown path or making a clogged ditch run again. These small achievements help to build momentum and attract new volunteers to join in.

Tackling larger projects is exciting and rewarding in the long term, however it is essential to deliver small victories for your group in parallel so as to ensure that momentum and interest does not drop. Consistency in delivering previous projects is important when seeking larger grants.

4.4 **Making plans step 4: Share the load**

It is important that your group has more than one active member; individual activities are fantastic, but nobody can do it all alone and there are great social benefits from working together. Undertake activities which play to the strengths of your group and volunteers and don't be shy in delegating tasks. Understand your limitations - many tasks can be tackled by volunteers with hand tools, other tasks

lend themselves to power tools or bigger machinery: such tasks are best given over to skilled contractors.

4.5 **Making plans step 5: Create an action plan**

To ensure that your group continues to move forward, it is important to plan your tasks and give a reasonable timescale for completion. Discussing and creating an 'action plan' for your group on a regular basis is highly recommended. This will help your group to establish:

- what needs doing
- who does what
- when it needs to be done

Creating this and reviewing it regularly will ensure that all group members are clear on how each task will be achieved, by whom and to what timescale. Some tasks can run concurrently, others need to follow a logical sequence.

4.6 **Making plans step 6: Make the case for support**

Whatever the size or scale of your path project, gaining the support of others is essential. Their support may be financial or donations in kind, including labour, materials, equipment or treats to keep your volunteer workforce happy. It may also be support in terms of providing permissions – such as permission from a landowner or Planning Permissions for example. Making 'a case for support' will help your group to share your message concisely with all potential and existing supporters and will reduce the work required in each correspondence or application. Think about the benefits of your proposals in broad terms, not just that a path is improved but that it will allow access for more users, benefit health, benefit the local economy, allow for active travel etc.

4.7 **Making plans step 7: Raising money for group costs & small scale activity**

Funding for specific projects is covered in the Section 4. However, one of the most challenging things to find funding for is the small scale costs that can be incurred just running a group or for very small scale activities where funds may just be needed for a cup of tea and some snacks for a work party for example. Fundraising within the local community or crowdfunding type activities can be a way to address this. Sales of handmade goods/food locally and setting up a donations webpage are examples of what can be done. Torphins Path Group create a calendar every year with local walks identified that raises these types of funds.



The 2019 Torphins Paths Group Calendar is now available

Featuring views of walks around Torphins, *it is an ideal Christmas gift* for friends and relatives with memories of the village and its surroundings.

Give your friends and neighbours the gift of the *walk of the month* with links to web resources to encourage outdoor activities of all kinds.

All proceeds go to support development of the path network around Torphins.

Calendars are available at Platform 22 or by clicking on the link here:

[Click here to purchase a calendar](#)

4.8 *Making plans note 1: Health and safety*

Health and safety should be fully embedded in the ‘culture’ of any paths group. It is important that volunteers undertaking path surveys or practical path work do so safely. The following are the main issues to keep in mind:

- Carry out risk assessments and use them to guide all work aspects
- first aid- somebody trained to deliver first aid as well as the kit itself
- lone working policy
- clothing and personal protective equipment
- weather
- working around the public
- appropriate tool use and maintenance
- welfare facilities

Appendix 1 provides an example of a risk assessment used in a path maintenance session.

4.9 *Making plans note 2: Valuing volunteer time*

Recording your volunteer hours is an essential exercise, particularly when seeking external funding or grants. Your volunteer time has a value and this can often be used to attract match funding (‘in kind support’) or for demonstrating your groups commitment to a project when applying for grants. Volunteer Scotland provide a short guide to calculating the cost equivalent of volunteer hours:

[https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/254583/guidance -](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/254583/guidance_-_calculating_the_economic_value_of_your_volunteers.pdf)

[_calculating the economic value of your volunteers.pdf](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/254583/guidance_-_calculating_the_economic_value_of_your_volunteers.pdf). By recording your hours and adding them together with the rest of your group’s efforts you will soon see this is a useful tool.

4.10 *Making plans note 3: Maintenance versus improvement*

When thinking about path works, for the purposes of planning we tend to find it is helpful to separate proposed works into two types – works to maintain a path or works to improve it. Maintenance is essentially about keeping the status quo – the routine works that are required to a path to keep it in good condition. Improvement

is a change from the status quo – changing the path surface, changing a paths route or installing new infrastructure for example.

Section 5: Time for Action

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We would strongly encourage groups to refer to Paths for All's very simple 'Community Paths Guide' in relation to physically carrying out works. It can be found here: <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/resources/resource/community-paths-guide>

What follows are some key considerations in relation to carrying out a specific piece of work or project. It is **NOT** an exhaustive list or indeed a step by step guide as all projects are different. All the steps identified above are relevant in getting you to this stage.

5.1 *Taking action note 1: Volunteers or professional contactors?*

Deciding if you are going to carry out the works with volunteers or using paid professional contactors is a key consideration in terms of the process to follow. The most important factors in this decision tend to be the scale and complexity of the task and the availability of volunteers along with their skills and experience.

Using volunteers will take you down a route of planning and managing the task yourselves and ensuring that the work is done to an acceptable standard. Health and safety will be a prime consideration, both for the volunteers doing the work and also for other path users.

Using paid professional contractors will require you to scope a job, tender for the work, apply for funding and liaise with the contractor.

Both routes will of course require you to gain permission from the landowner.

5.2 *Taking action note 2: routine maintenance and adopting a path*

As pointed out above, the best starting point for any group wishing to carry out works may be to tackle routine maintenance type jobs – for example cutting back scrub, unblocking ditches or picking up litter. It may be that you approach the landowner and see if you can effectively 'adopt' a path and thus help to both monitor it (walking it regularly) and maintain it. A calendar of monitoring and some simple hand tools (which the Council can provide to constituted groups – see below) could be all that is required for this. As described above, this can be the easy win that allows your group to grow and flourish.

5.3 *Taking action note 3: tools of the trade*

Paths groups may need to procure their own tools for path maintenance tasks. Aberdeenshire Council can make small grants available to appropriately constituted paths groups for the purchase of hand tools so long as the group has a suitable and secure place to store them.

For vegetation management much can be achieved with secateurs, loppers and bowsaws. Potholes and drainage issues can be tackled with spades, shovels and mattocks.

Appendix 2 lists hand tools other groups have found useful. Before you start work each day the group leader should undertake a tool talk to remind volunteers how to use the tools safely. You should also keep a record of how these tools have been used.

Aberdeenshire Council Ranger Service has a supply of basic tools for vegetation clearance and can be contacted if a group would like to organise a simple vegetation management session in association with the Ranger Service

5.4 *Taking action note 4: A feasibility study?*

For projects where larger amounts of external funding are likely to be required, it may be beneficial to get a feasibility study carried out by a suitably qualified contractor. This tends to make accessing larger funding streams easier. Initial funding can be sought for this element with a view to accessing the larger amounts once it is complete.

5.5 *Taking action note 5: Path specification, construction and surfacing*

If you are looking to upgrade a path then it is clearly important to know what you are aiming to achieve and what path specification and construction techniques are required to get you there. Paths for All's Lowland Path Construction Guide is invaluable in fully describing the various aspects of this:

<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/resource/lowland-path-construction-guide>

5.6 *Taking action note 6: Signposting*

Another potential easy win for a paths group could be to signpost some of the paths in your area. 'Signposting' doesn't always need to involve physical signs, it could just be ensuring that a path entrance is clear and obvious – i.e. regularly maintained. However, putting in place signs and way-marking can be beneficial and well received. As with all aspects of this guidance, landowner permission is key.

Path groups should be aware that 'promoting' a route by signing it does mean that the group has a responsibility to ensure the path is usable and safe. The NatureScot Good Practice Guide to Signage for Outdoor Access provide further information on path signage: <https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/signage-guidance-outdoor-access-guide-good-practice>

Aberdeenshire Council may be able to provide entrance signage where you are proposing to sign a Core Path. The Council's own Sign Shop is an excellent source of signs at reasonable cost contact outdoor.access@aberdeenshire.gov.uk for more details.

5.7 *Taking action note 7: Planning Permission*

Planning permission and/or approval from government agencies (such as SEPA or NatureScot) may be required where path upgrading is proposed. Please seek advice from Aberdeenshire Council unless you are sure formal permissions are not required. If you require planning permission or other forms of approval, there will be a cost. Costs might include necessary survey of trees or for protected wildlife for example.

5.8 *Taking action note 8: Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM 2015)*

These are the main set of **regulations** for managing the health, safety and welfare of construction projects. Path works are classed as construction projects for the purposes of CDM

CDM regulations clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in a construction project including clients, designers, contractors and workers. These roles may not be so obvious in a path construction project where the client can also be the designer or the designer can also be the contractor but the responsibilities are the same. It is important that you are familiar with the requirements of CDM whatever your role is in a path project. More detailed information is available in the form of a brief guide which can be downloaded from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg411.htm>

5.9 *Taking action note 9: Estimating costs*

<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/resource/estimating-price-guide-for-path-projects>

Paths for All provide indicative costs for materials in their document 'Estimating Price Guide for Paths Projects' linked above. However, be aware that there can be some local variations, not only in costs but on materials available. It's worth exploring local suppliers. Aberdeenshire Council operate three quarries which can provide type 1 and quarry dust; the most used path building materials. If you are a formally constituted community group and set up an account with the Council you are eligible for a discounted rate for materials.

5.10 *Taking action note 10: Seeking funding*

As the available funding sources are constantly changing, it is difficult to give specific details in this guide. There will be groups or organisations in your area that can provide experience or advice in relation to available funding – the internet is a great source of information too. Good sources of funding advice include

Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action, Aberdeenshire Council, Paths for All and other paths groups. The key in applying for funding is to understand exactly what the goals of the funder are (this will be on their website or on the application form) and to sell all the wide benefits of your project (see Making plans step 6 above).

5.11 *Taking action note 11: Document your effort*

Keep accurate accounts of materials and equipment used in addition to recording volunteer time. Some grants will count volunteer time as match funding. Take lots of photos before and after your efforts. In fact, some grant aiding bodies require frequent photos of the path during construction or maintenance.

Section 6: Ongoing Responsibilities

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6.1 *Ongoing responsibilities note 1: your responsibilities*

Path maintenance isn't a one off event. If you carry out work on a path it is **your group's responsibility** to ensure that that work is carried out to an acceptable standard and that the work carried out remains safe going forward.

If your group gets to the stage of actually upgrading paths, or indeed building new paths, then the path **will be the responsibility of your group**, unless **you** put in place an alternative arrangement.

Where you carry out work, you need to arrange an inspection schedule to make sure the path remains in good order and that there are no emergent hazards. Where a significant event occurs, such as a storm or flood, you will need to check the path.

6.2 *Ongoing responsibilities note 2: building on success*

The best way for your community to celebrate your achievements is by using the path network and continuing to encourage others to use it.

You should celebrate whenever you complete a phase of work or make significant improvements/progress. Let the local press know what you have achieved and what impact you believe it will have. Let the landowner know you have contacted the press. Support your news with a selection of good photographs. As well as for your own satisfaction, this type of publicity will help to source future funding.

Social media has immense value for the promotion of community projects, activities and resources; in many cases it has replaced 'word of mouth' as a promotional tool.

Locally you can raise the profile of your path and group by hosting guided walks or making use of the paths during events or festivals.



Appendix 1 Generic Risk Assessment prepared by
Paths for All used at a Torphins Paths Training Day

Practical Path Works

This risk assessment relates only to the generic features of the defined activity and it may not cover those specific to a location. The assessor must add to the generic list any additional hazards, risks and safety actions needed to suit local circumstances. Similarly, safety controls noted on this generic assessment that are not relevant must be removed from the document to avoid confusion.

Activity being Assessed: Practical Path Works				Location (include grid ref): Torphins NJ 62646 01913	
Date of Assessment: 8th Nov 2018				Date for Revision: May 2019	
Completed by: [REDACTED]				Approved by (if required): [REDACTED]	
Designation: [REDACTED]				Designation: [REDACTED]	
Description of Activity to be Assessed:					
Hazard (potential for harm)	Person(s) at risk?	Likelihood of risk (1-5)	Severity of risk (1-5)	Risk rating (1-25)	Controls (to reduce the risk level)
Slips, trips and falls	PFA staff, participants , members of the public	3	2	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect work area for slip or trip hazards prior to starting 2. Wear sturdy footwear with good ankle support and grip. 3. Advise all participants to wear stout outdoor footwear 4. Make sure everyone is aware of slip or trip hazards on site.

					5. Keep work area tidy at all times, free of slip or trip hazards
Manual handling	PFA staff, participants, members of the public	2	2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train participants in safe lifting and moving techniques. 2. Plan in advance lifting of heavy or awkward loads 3. Take regular rest breaks when repetitive manual handling cannot be avoided. 4. Provide wheelbarrow to carry materials and / or tools
Vegetation clearance <i>(incl. cutting of overhanging branches, clearing thorny or stinging vegetation, hand felling of small trees, contact with stinging insects, removing invasive species, contact with noxious weeds e.g. giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed)</i>	PFA staff, participants, members of the public	3	2	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wear suitable clothing e.g. long-sleeved tops and long trousers 2. Use only tools that are suitable for the work type 3. Wear gloves at all times and use leather gauntlets (if available) when dealing with thorny materials 4. Wear hard hats and eye protection where appropriate e.g. when cutting branches that are above shoulder height or working in dense vegetation 5. Work in a methodical fashion, clearing exist route as work progresses and leaving the site in a

					<p>tidy condition at all times</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Be aware of other path users at all times and post a lookout if required, e.g. hand felling overhead branches or small trees adjacent to path 7. Do not attempt to remove noxious weeds unless trained and equipped to do so 8. Check for stinging insect nests prior to undertaking work 9. Be aware of the typical symptoms of anaphylactic shock syndrome if any worker is stung by wasp or bee incl. rapid heartbeat, clammy skin, rapid shallow breathing, lightheaded/faint.
<p>Contact with stinging/ biting insects and plants (incl. adders, ticks, wasps, bees, midges, nettles)</p>	<p>PFA staff, participants , members of the public</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wear suitable clothing e.g. long-sleeved tops 2. Snakes - Be aware if adders are likely on the site and know how to identify them, leaving them well alone if spotted 3. Bees/wasps - Be aware of the typical symptoms of anaphylactic shock syndrome if stung by wasp or bee incl. rapid heartbeat, clammy skin, rapid

					<p>shallow breathing, lightheaded/faint</p> <p>4. Ticks – Avoid working on sites with known tick populations from May-Sept. Where work does occur, tuck trousers into socks and wear long sleeved tops. Avoid sitting directly on grass e.g. break time/rest and promote checking for ticks upon return to home. Inform GP if any symptom of Lyme Disease occurs within 30 days e.g. flu-like symptoms such as high temp, shivery, aching joints/muscles. Take leaflets on-site to inform participants of risks, preventative measures and/or symptoms e.g. https://www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/LDA002-8-web.pdf</p>
<p>Lone Working <i>(incl. exposure and weather related affects, evening or weekend work, driving)</i></p>	<p>PFA staff, participants, members of the public</p>	2	2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check weather forecast and plan accordingly for journeys in open country. 2. Leave clear information about locations of meetings, travel route, return times with colleagues and include

					<p>instructions in case of late or no return</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Consider driving with doors locked and windows no more than partially open when driving alone 4. Valuables should never be left in view within vehicle 5. Carry PfA emergency telephone numbers and coins/phonecard for public pay phones
<p>Meeting the Public <i>(incl. verbal abuse, slips, trips and falls, lone working, out of hours working, dogs and other livestock)</i></p>	<p>PfA staff, participants, members of the public</p>	2	2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lone workers must have suitable skills and knowledge to enable safe working in predicted work area. 2. Worker must be familiar with location before starting work. Safety critical issues such as crime rates, gang related violence, or social tension must be considered when planning meetings. Take advice from police or community workers. Areas of strong concern must be avoided 3. When meeting people, worker must always identify themselves clearly to avoid confusion. Explain reason for contact at the earliest possible opportunity 4. Respect the privacy of people who do not wish

					<p>to engage in conversation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Do not engage in conversation about politics, race, religion or any other inflammatory subject as this could cause agitation. Ensure only business matters are discussed with strangers 6. If a person gets agitated or aggressive, worker to change the topic of conversation and/or walk away 7. Never approach minors unless a responsible adult is with them. Never allow yourself to be left alone with a minor or other vulnerable person. 8. Report to line manager all acts of aggression and intimidation including aggressive animals. 9. Keep valuables out of site. 10. Do not carry unnecessary amounts of cash. 11. Never give out personal information
<p>Use of Hand Tools (incl. hammers, spades, rakes, saws, tampers, pinch bars, etc)</p>	<p>PFA staff, participants, members of the public</p>	3	2	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake hand tool briefing, before the practical work begins, to reinforce safe use, carry and storage of tools. 2. Tools pre-checked by Paths for All staff before any practical session.

					<p>Any damaged or faulty tools must not be used during activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. During H&S briefing group will be advised to report any damaged tools to PfA staff as required 4. Use tools that are most appropriate for the task 5. Maintain a safe distance from others when working 6. If using a swinging type tool, maintain a distance from others which is at least twice the length of your arm and the tool you are using (typically not less than 4m) 7. Do not wear gloves when using swinging hand tools 8. Be aware of those around you at all times and stop working if someone comes too close 9. Do not use tools if tired or otherwise fatigued 10. Repetitive movements with tools should be varied or broken at regular intervals
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<p>Use of Powered Equipment</p> <p><i>(incl. vibrating plates/rollers, cement mixers, strimmers/brushcutters, mowers, powered barrows, battery powered drills, etc)</i></p>	<p>PFA staff, participants, members of the public</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>6</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of powered equipment is NOT permitted for anyone under 16 years of age 2. Wear PPE recommended for the type of machinery 3. ONLY trained and authorised persons to operate powered equipment on site 4. Post a lookout to halt work or people. Inspect power tools before use and maintain them during use. 5. If a lookout is not available, divert people around the area with clear information signs 6. Spare fuel (petrol or diesel) to be stored in an appropriate container and placed in a visible location out of direct sunlight and away from work area or ignition sources e.g. fires 7. Always allow engine to cool and wear gloves before undertaking any required maintenance 8. Always allow engine to cool and wear gloves before refuelling 9. Stop operating powered equipment when people approach you. Wait until they have passed you, or signal to them to pass and then only restart once they are at a safe distance
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					<p>10. Do not use naked flame or smoke within 10 metres of hot engine.</p> <p>11. Stop and take regular breaks when you are working with powered equipment</p> <p>12. Equipment should always be operated and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's handbook or recommendations</p> <p>Additional when operating a strimmer/ brushcutter:</p> <p>13. Use of strimmer/brushcutter is only permitted by persons who have undergone formal training within the past 5 years</p> <p>14. Do not operate strimmer if there is anyone within a 15metre radius of the strimmer</p> <p>15. Install signs on the entrances to paths where strimming work is taking place to warn the public</p> <p>16. Work in a methodical manner and never lift head of strimmer above waist height</p> <p>17. Stop engine before clearing or maintaining the rotating head</p> <p>18. Make sure equipment is in good working</p>
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					<p>condition and maintained according to manufacturers' operating handbook.</p> <p>19. Adjust harness and handlebar for comfortable use before starting work.</p> <p>20. Make sure any anti-vibration mountings on the power tool are frequently checked and maintained according to manufacturers' operating handbook.</p> <p>21. Take 10-minute break after every tank of fuel used and take 30 minutes break after three consecutive tasks.</p> <p>22. Wear a harness that can be released quickly in the event of hot engine catching on fire</p> <p>23. Wear long sleeves and trousers, sturdy footwear, impact resistant goggles and/or full-face visor, hard hat, ear defenders/plugs and gloves at all times whilst working</p> <p>24. Clear ground of obvious debris before starting work</p> <p>25. Make sure all guards are properly fitted and in good condition</p> <p>26. Wear long sleeves and trousers to avoid skin contact with plant sap</p>
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Airborne particles <i>(stone dust, saw dust, cement)</i>	PFA staff, participants , members of the public	2	2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with back to wind 2. Wear protective glasses/goggles and respiratory dust mask (P2/ P3), when materials are dusty
Underground Services <i>(gas, electricity, telecoms, sewers, water)</i>	PFA staff, participants , members of the public	1	3	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check with site owner and service plans obtained from utility companies before starting any work activity, especially where excavation is required 2. Use CAT detection tool in areas of high risk e.g. near housing, roads, etc 3. Use care and caution when undertaking all excavation works and look out for buried marker tape which might indicate a pipe or cable
Use of Vehicles <i>(driving a hire vehicle)</i>	PFA staff, participants , members of the public	2	3	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Any accidents in vehicles must be reported in compliance with any management procedures 4. All drivers must hold a valid UK driving licence 5. Keep all doors unlocked unless travelling alone 6. Carry out daily checks and weekly checks to ensure vehicle faults are identified 7. The maximum loading weight must not be exceeded 8. Load vehicles in a safe and orderly manner to ensure items are easy to get to and do not

					<p>become dislodged or unstable when in transit</p> <p>9. Keep valuables out of site when stored in vehicle</p>
<p>Weather <i>(incl. heavy and prolonged rain, extreme cold or heat, strong winds, lightning, etc)</i></p>	<p>PFA staff, participants, members of the public</p>	3	2	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check weather forecast before work starts 2. Participants to wear clothing suitable for the weather conditions and work to be undertaken 3. Stop working if weather conditions are such that it may be dangerous to undertake the required task 4. Monitor participants at all times to check for any evidence of exposure to extreme climatic conditions e.g sunburn, excessive sweating, shivering, dizziness, etc.
<p>Contact with soil/plants</p>	<p>PFA staff, participants, members of the public</p>	2	2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wear gloves for work activity, especially when handling thorny plant material 2. Any broken skin/cuts to be protected from direct contact with soil by covering with waterproof plasters. 3. Do not use bare hands to move soil, use appropriate tool or wear gloves

					4. Participants should keep tetanus injections up to date
<p>Pond, stream and wetland work</p> <p><i>(incl. deep or fast flowing water; contact with harmful substances, handling wet materials</i></p> <p><i>Contact with rats urine, faeces and other bio-hazards (Weil's Disease – Leptospirosis); contact with dead animals or water polluted by them;</i></p> <p><i>slips, trips and falls)</i></p>	PFA staff, participants, members of the public	2	3	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash hands with soap and water before eating, drinking or smoking. 2. Ensure workers have a firm stable stance before using tools or handling wet material 3. Care to be taken when entering, leaving or moving in the water 4. Avoid handling dead animals. 5. Cover any cuts with waterproof plasters, avoiding further contact with pond or stagnant water 6. Do not work in water above waist depth. 7. Lone working in water over welly depth will not be allowed. 8. Work will not take place in water where sewage is known to be present. 9. Movement within water will be slow and measured, checking for hidden and buried objects. 10. Inform workers that wet material is heavier than its dry counterpart

Additional Site-Specific Risk Control Measures:

This risk assessment is relevant to a training course being delivered by Paths for All staff, organised in partnership with a Torphins Volunteer Path Group.

The training session will cover participants while taking part in the outdoor part of the training course which will consist of constructing a new path. Tasks will include excavating a tray using spades and mattocks and possible the occasional use of a pinch par to remove larger rocks.

Aggregate will be transported using wheel barrows, they will be filled by shovel the aggregate material into the wheelbarrow. Material will be spread to the desired depth and profile using rakes.

Whin dust will be transported and spread in the same manner and then compacted using a compactor plate.

Around 15 participants and 2 Paths for All members of staff will be present.

First Aid Provision:	1 st Aid at Work: X	Emergency 1 st Aid: <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify):	1 st Aid Providers:
PPE needed:	X Safety Boots	X Safety Wellingtons	X Goggles	
X Gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Leather gauntlets	X Hard hat	X Ear defenders	
X Dust mask	X Hi-vis	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):		

Distribution of Risk Assessment

Partner Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Site Copy	X	Colleagues	X
Contractor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Client	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):	

Emergency Details

Site Postal Address:	In Wooded Area near Monboddo Road, Torphins	Site Post Code:	AB31 4FT
Designated meeting place:	Lochnagar Room" in Mid Deeside Church St Marnan Road, Torphins AB31 4JQ	Nearest Vehicular Access Point:	Monboddo Road, Torphins

Nearest Police:	Tel: 101 or in Emergency call 999	Nearest Fire Control Room:	Fire Station, Airways Industrial Estate, Dyce, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire , AB21 0DT, 01224 771280
Nearest A&E Hospital:	Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Foresterhill Rd, Aberdeen AB25 2ZN	Nearest minor injuries unit:	Aboyne , 13 Bellwood Rd, Aboyne AB34 5HQ
Nearest Doctor:	Health & Resource Centre, St Marnan Road, Torphins, Banchory AB31 4JQ	Nearest toilet:	Mid Deeside Church

Risk Rating Guide

	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood	Improbable	Remote	Occasional	Probable	Frequent
Severity	Negligible	Marginal	Serious	Critical	Catastrophic

Risk Rating	Description	Action
15-25	Unacceptable	Must be eliminated to a lower level by ALARP principles
8-12	Undesirable	Further risk assessment required, ALARP principles to apply
4-7	Acceptable	Can be accepted provided risk is managed. Risk associated with hazard is already considered ALARP
1-3	Negligible	No further action required

Appendix 2 Example of tool list and usage record

This is a list of frequently used tools and equipment used by community path groups.

Funders may ask what use has been made of equipment they have funded in feedback reports or further application for funding.

Date _____

Location used _____

Tool	Number used	Hours used	Total usage
Multi Purpose Wheelbarrow 90L			
Digging spade			
Shovel			
Digging fork			
Grubbing Mattock 5lb			
Hand Post Hole Auger			
Post Driver 170mm diameter			
Pick axe 7lb			
Crow bar			
21" Bow saw			
Aluminium maul			
Land Measuring Wheel			
Heavy duty Aluminium rake			
Nylon Brush Head			
Sledge hammer			
PVC Bucket			
Pinch bar			
24" Bow saw			
Grip action litter picker			
By-pass Lopper 24"			
Premier Lawn rake			
Flexi tub Bucket 42L			
Add additional equipment as appropriate			

Appendix 3 Example of Volunteer induction and registration forms

Name				
Volunteer Position				
Date checklist completed				
Checklist completed by				
This checklist should be completed as part of the induction process and retained on the volunteers file				
	Stage	Action	Date	Comments
1	Volunteer agreement	Ensure a copy of the volunteer agreement has been completed and signed by the volunteer		
2	Volunteer plan	Complete and provide volunteer with copy of the plan		
3	Volunteer role	Ensure the role has been discussed with the volunteer and ensure they are aware of what is expected		
4	Confidentiality agreement	Discuss confidentiality and complete the confidentiality agreement		
5	PVG check	Ensure PGV/Disclosure checks have been completed where necessary		
6	Data protection	Discuss data protection with volunteer		
7	Policies and procedures	Discuss any relevant policies and procedures and ensure volunteer is aware of where to find these if required		
8	Health and safety	Discuss health and safety and provide volunteer with access to any relevant H&S policy and procedures		
9	Training	Discuss any training requirements with the volunteer and ensure they are made aware of how to access these.		
10	Tool talk	As appropriate for the role of the volunteer and the tools available		
10	Buddies and Lone working	Ensure the volunteer is aware of the relevant protocols and mobile phone coverage		

Name				
11	Driving license check	If driving is a requirement of the role ensure that the volunteer has a full valid driving license		
12	Absence	Agree how the volunteer will notify you of their absences and how far in advance they should advise you of breaks due to holidays etc.		
13	Emergency contact details	Emergency contact details provided by the volunteer		
14	Medical issues	Volunteer to advise of any issues which the group should be aware of		

Appendix 4 Useful contacts and resources

£ = funding opportunities

***i* = information resource**

Aberdeenshire Council Outdoor Access *£ i*

Outdoor.access@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Tel 01467 5347738

Paths for All *£ i*

Office 8

Forrester Lodge

Tullibody Road

ALLOA

FK10 2HU

Tel: 01259 218 888

E: info@pathsforall.org.uk

<http://www.pathsforall.org.uk/>

Scottish Natural Heritage *i*

<https://www.nature.scot/>

<https://www.nature.scot/enjoying-outdoors>

OSCR- Scottish Charity Regulator *i*

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/about-charities/search-the-register/register-search>