

## KCDC Path Network – Rolling 5 Year Strategy & Plan

Approved by KCDC Board, 29/01/25

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### Section One

#### **Background**

Kingussie, the capital of Badenoch, is a small, traditional Highland town on the north bank of the river Spey, bounded by the Insh marshes to the south and the Monadhliath Mountains to the north.

Apart from the Sustrans path to Newtonmore, there is limited dedicated off-road walking between settlements in the Strath. Although in 2021, The Speyside Way was extended to go through the town incorporating a road section between Kingussie and Ruthven.

The main opportunity for local walking is on paths to the north of the town, primarily on land owned by Pitmain Estate. The relationship between the Estate and KCDC is mutually supportive.

Many paths are designated Core Paths. KCDC have the support of local landowners in maintaining the current path network.

#### **The vision for our path network**

KCDC's vision is that we establish Kingussie as an exemplar town path network, within the context of the Cairngorms National Park and based primarily on existing Core Paths.

Crucially this path network will begin from the very heart of the town, where people live or stay and will be one where people can enjoy all the health and well-being benefits associated with walking in the countryside.

As far as possible (and where practical and reasonable), the path network should allow inclusive access. Where close to the town, paths should be of all-abilities standards. The path network will meet the requirements of Scottish access legislation with improvements being designed for multi-use. The standards of path build and maintenance will make surfaces attractive to walk and ride on and be based on Paths for All & UPAG construction guidelines with highest standards of reinstatement.

Paths will be signed and promoted through various media, providing up to date and accurate information to encourage use by locals and visitors.

Voluntary path works will be coordinated by KCDC with an ethos of inclusivity, in which a wide range of abilities and ages can be catered for. All contributions commensurate with ability will be welcomed and acknowledged.



## **Aim of the paths sub-group of KCDC**

The aim of the paths group is, as far as possible on a voluntary basis, to plan, coordinate and carry out the maintenance and improvements to the current paths network, including the potential for additional links, particularly from the heart of the town.

Work is undertaken on a voluntary basis with governance provided by KCDC.

This includes the following:

- Carrying out an annual path audit and prioritising path works.
- Monitoring paths and reacting to specific problems as quickly as practically possible (for example: fallen trees).
- Manage and coordinating volunteer path works.
- Carry out training for volunteers.
- Procure funds for path works.
- Prepare applications and reports for funders as required ensuring works fit into regional and national strategies (for example: Green health, active travel, access legislation etc.).
- Oversee third party contracts.
- Liaise with landowners (primarily Pitmain Estate) on path works and joint projects.
- Obtain and maintain path building tools and resources.
- Provide Information and promotion of paths through: signage, brochures, trail head boards, website and social media.

Provide health and safety guidance for all activities. The Health & Safety statement including risk assessments for the activities carried out by KCDC volunteers is on the KCDC website

[www.kcdc.co.uk/health-and-safety](http://www.kcdc.co.uk/health-and-safety)

## **Section Two**

### **Historical context and progress to date**

Since forming in 2006, KCDC has promoted a local path network and, through work of contractors, volunteers and various partners, replaced, improved, and maintained the infrastructure and paths throughout the local area.

### **Funding**

Partnership funding for path works has been obtained from:

Scottish Mountaineering Trust, Cairngorm National Park Authority, KCDC Hydro fund, Cairngorms Trust, Paths for All, Co-op communities, Tesco Bags for Life, Peoples Postcode, and Lottery Communities Fund.

### **Work completed in 2024**

1. Finished the upgrade of path down the southside of Creag Bheag
2. Completed 2 sections of path from end of West Terrace to CB path including a 2 day training course on pitching delivered by OATS with BASTA and removed 13 helibags of redundant fencing
3. Completed 2 sections of Golf Course Circular path between Loch Gynack junction and caravan park
4. Assisted K&VCC in removing Glebe boardwalk and recovered wood for benches and other path construction
5. Extended path from toilets up Ardvonie Park and edged previous section, renovated Tourist Info board
6. Constructed causeway in boggy section of Tom Baraidh to Raitts path just on Balavil estate
7. Sited 7 reclaimed wood benches on various paths and one drystone/reclaimed timber seat
8. Cleared rhododendrons/trees on Witches Hill path, constructed wooden steps and resurfaced most of path
9. Repaired steps and handrail on West Terrace to Newtonmore Rd path
10. Held opening ceremony in April on Creag Bheag for upgraded path and launch of new paths map

### **Work completed in 2023**

1. Golf Course Circular from 6<sup>th</sup> to Gynack including renovating steps
2. New section of path below tennis courts to reduce gradient
3. Creag Bheag, 4 phases; dust to north of summit, along summit ridge, new section below summit on southside, renovate and improve COAT trainees work from 2011 on southside.
4. Assist K&VCC in Glebe including siting 4 benches & seat
5. Gynack woodland, clearing sycamore, storm Corrie debris and snowberry
6. Repair wash out on CB path in Sanatorium woods, paint benches on CB & Insh Marshes Speyside Way
7. In planning; researching quotes for Gynack Road path, meetings- with Balavil re Raitts path & Transport Scotland re Dellmore

## Work completed in 2022

1. Finished 100m section on south side of Creag Bheag below gate (completed Apr 2022)
2. Curlew path (alongside Loch Gynack) ditched and partially resurfaced.
3. Ardbriolach Road segregated path & desire line up from hydro bridge (completed Aug 2022)
4. Tom Baraidh entry point from Ardbriolach Road by twin pillars (completed Aug 2022)
5. Creag Bheag West side photo monitoring (set up Aug 2022)
6. West Terrace above Ardvonie park (completed Sep 2022)
7. Repairs to Golf Course Circular storm damage around stile at access to crags (Dec 2022).
8. Repairs to Tom Baraidh circular by start of Raitts path (Dec 2022).
9. In planning - permissions gained for summit work on Creag Bheag

## Work from 2011 to 2021

- Erection of signposting on six community paths and produced maps with CNPA.
- **Creag Bheag path:**
  - 2011-13: contracts with COAT to build sections of the Creag Bheag path north & south,
  - 2021-22: KCDC volunteers rebuilt a lower section of 280m of south & two sections at St Vincents Place.
- **Golf Course Circular:**
  - 2011: contract with COAT to build section above golf course.
  - 2011: with Community Service, resurfaced sections of the path by caravan site.
  - 2018: replace clubhouse bridge.
  - 2019: steps & handrail by River Gynack.
- **Tom Baraidh:**
  - 2011: with Community Service, resurfacing and created footbridges.
  - 2021: 400m paths surfaced by KCDC volunteers.
- **Gynack Mill Trail:**
  - 2022: path network built, link to Tom Baraidh by KCDC volunteers.
- **Jubilee Walk:**
  - 2019: new section of The Speyside Way built by N Reid (contractor).
- **Curlew – Strathlynn:**
  - 2011: bridge replaced.
  - 2015: path realignment at the west end of Loch Gynack by Pitmain estate (2015).
  - 2019: Allt Gortan Bridge replaced & sections resurfaced.

## Section Three

### Action Plan

The following table identified planned work for the next five years. Work identified in Year 1 is obviously more clearly thought out than in future years.

Year	Path work with KCDC volunteers	In planning
1 (2025)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hydro Bridge/Ardbriolach Rd steps</li> <li>2. Tom Baraidh paths</li> <li>3. West Terr/ Pitmain Frm</li> <li>4. Raitts path bridge</li> <li>5. Raitts path Allt Cealgach stepping stones</li> <li>6. Golf Course Cir, by boardwalk</li> <li>7. Craig Bheag summit landscaping &amp; North side</li> <li>8. Future washouts on Jubilee Way prevention</li> <li>9. Golf Course Circular/crags offshoot</li> <li>10. Site benches</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Onsite appraisal of routes above West Terr &amp; Tait's Brae/Caravan</li> <li>• Golf Course Circular segregated path alongside Gynack Road</li> <li>• Dellmore path development (liaise with Transport Scotland)</li> <li>• Review all previous path work for condition</li> <li>• Continue pressure on CNPA on Speyside Way Jubilee/Ruithven gap</li> </ul>
2 (2026)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remainder of Creag Bheag to West Terr path</li> <li>2. Routes above West Terr</li> <li>3. Caravan site/Tait's Brae</li> <li>4. Remainder of Golf Course Cir to Caravan site</li> <li>5. Remainder of Raitts path</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lynchat return path options</li> <li>• Nuide Farm Ruthven connection options</li> <li>• Removing redundant fencing (in agreement with golf club &amp; Pitmain)</li> </ul>
3 (2027)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Climbing Crags to Craig Bheag path</li> <li>2. Tom Baraidh/Acres Rd</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tromie Tramp options</li> <li>• Paths around Tromie Bridge</li> </ul>
4 (2028)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lynchat return paths.</li> <li>2. Nuide farm/Tromie Tramp</li> </ol>	
5 (2029)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tromie Tramp etc.</li> </ol>	

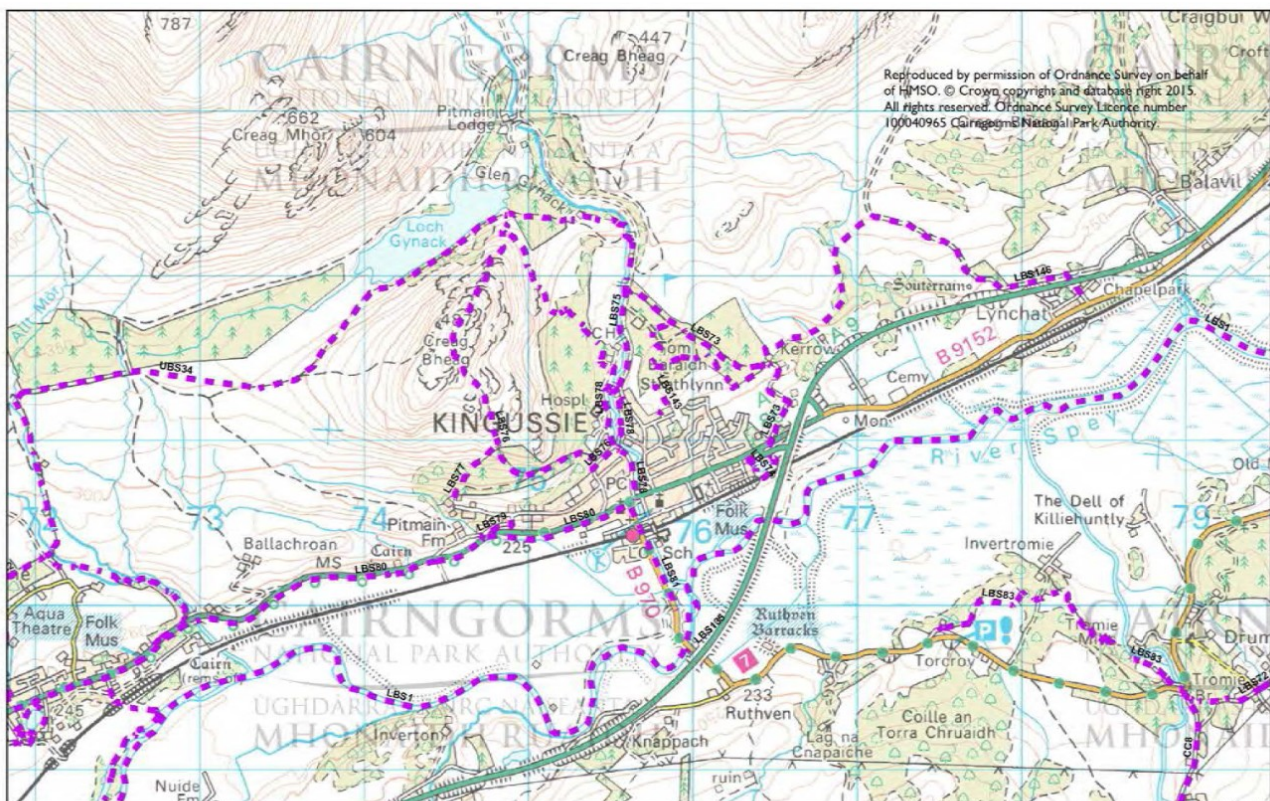
## Section Four

### Paths Audit

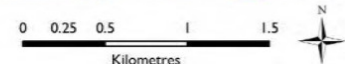
Last updated: winter 2024

The paths included in this audit include the following (there is considerable crossover):-

- 14 Core Paths in and around Kingussie identified by Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) on Map 17 of <https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CorePathsPlanFinal150727.pdf>.
- Six paths listed on the Cairngorms Paths - Kingussie Paths Leaflet <https://www.kcdc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/kingussie-paths-leaflet.pdf>.
- Many of the alternative routes and regularly used offshoots associated with the above paths.
- Potential paths identified to be developed in the next five years.



**Core Paths Plan Map 17  
Kingussie**



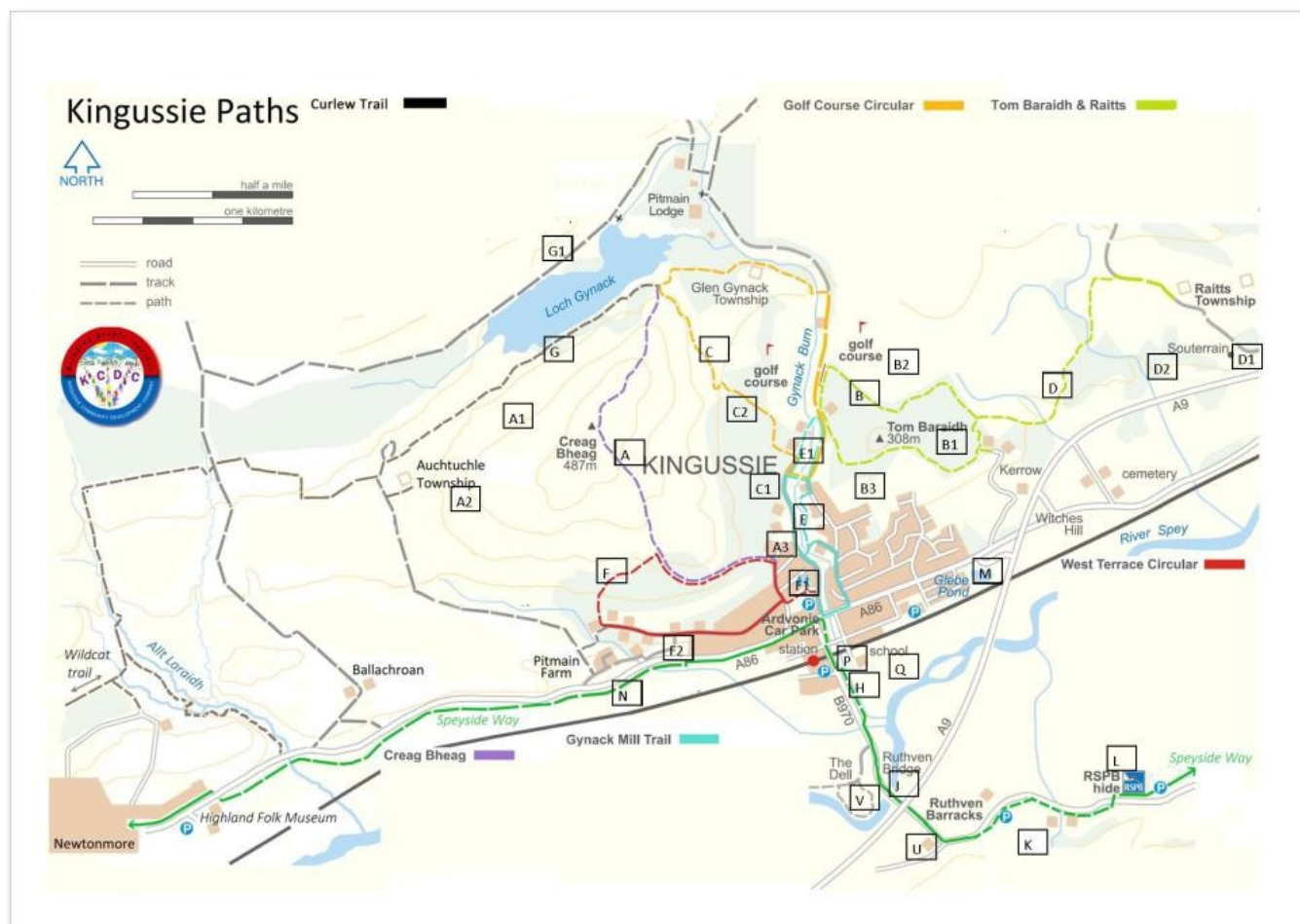
KCDC volunteers work on many of the paths with the agreement of the landowners however other paths (e.g. those on the RSPB Insh Marshes reserve) are maintained by other organisations but are included in this document to try and give a more complete picture of paths in the area and context to paths maintained by KCDC.

General maintenance and minor localised repairs are not included.

## Path Usage

Path usage is determined by discussion with regular walkers and by using “heat maps” such as those provided by [Strava](https://www.strava.com/heatmap).

The series of tables that follow detail most of the paths in regular use by the general public in the Kingussie area and reference the map shown below.





## Creag Bheag

<b>Path Name:</b>	Creag Bheag		
<b>Map Descriptor:</b>	A		
<b>Brief description:</b>	Forest track and hill path from Tait's Brae over summit of Creag Bheag to junction above Loch Gynack		
<b>Usage:</b> (High, Low or Medium)	High (both visitors and locals)		
<b>Works required (description)</b>			<b>Priority</b> (1-5 = high to low)
a) summit ridge, follow up to previous work particularly spot turfing			1
c) repairs to north side of the built path			1
<b>Notes:</b>	Work best carried out in spring/summer		

## Alternatives/Offshoots associated with Creag Bheag

Map Descriptor	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority
A1	Auchtuchle township to summit	L	Being monitoring for spreading from Aug 2022	4
A2	Woodland block on Curlew trail to summit	L	Being monitoring for spreading from Aug 2022	4
A3	St Vincents Place to Gynack Road	M		

## Tom Baraidh Circuit

<b>Path Name:</b>	Tom Baraidh Circuit	
<b>Map Descriptor:</b>	B	
<b>Brief description:</b>	Circular woodland path around internal perimeter of Tom Baraidh WoodB with several entry points	
<b>Usage:</b> (High, Low or Medium)	High (both visitors & locals - in particular dog walkers)	
<b>Works required (description)</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1-5 = high to low)	
a) surfacing in gaps between previous work on north side	2	
b) surfacing on some entry points	3	
c) surfacing all remaining circular path	4	

## Alternatives/Offshoots associated with Tom Baraidh Circuit

Map Descriptor	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority/notes
B1	Radial paths within TB circuit	L	none	5
B2	Moorland paths to north	M	none	5
B3	Acres Road to TB	H	? surfacing	4

## Golf Course Circular

<b>Path Name:</b>	Golf Course Circular	
<b>Map Descriptor:</b>	C	
<b>Brief description:</b>	Low level circuit of road & path from Ardvonie car park via caravan site to Loch Gynack junction around golf course and return by Ardbriolach Road	
<b>Usage:</b> (High, Low or Medium)	High	
<b>Works required (description)</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1-5 = high to low)	
a) segregated path alongside Gynack Road from Duke of Gordon Hotel to Caravan park	1	
b) segregated path between bridge and twin pillars	5	
c) unworked sections on western flank of Creag Bheag junction/boardwalk, between 2 sections of 2024 work, pitching/caravan	2, 3, 3	

## Alternatives/Offshoots associated with Golf Course Circular

Map Descriptor	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority
C1	Paths in Sanatorium woodland from caravan site to top of Tait's Brae	M/L	light touch drainage and surfacing with locally gained material post felling	2
C2	Crags access from style	L	light touch drainage and surfacing with locally gained material post felling	3

## Raitts & Lynchat

<b>Path Name:</b>	Raitts & Lynchat	
<b>Map Descriptor:</b>	D	
<b>Brief description:</b>	From Tom Baraidh woodland through fields, moorland and juniper plantation to archaeological features (derelict township)	
<b>Usage:</b> (High, Low or Medium)	Medium/Low	
Works required (description)		Priority (1-5 = high to low)
d) definition & surfacing on various sections		3
e) replacement of bridge 410m in form start		1
f) replacement of steppingstones on Allt Cealgach 857m		2
g) rerouting/boardwalk/? of wet area passed gate at 1241m		2

## Alternatives/Offshoots associated with Raitts & Lynchat

Map Descriptor	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority/notes
D1	Township to Souterrain and carpark	L		
D2	Return path to Kingussie	N/A	Feasibility study of potential routes and discussion with landowners	



## Gynack Mill Trail

<b>Path Name:</b>	Gynack Mill Trail	
<b>Map Descriptor:</b>	H	
<b>Brief description:</b>	Hazel woodland path by river Gynack with several entry points on to Ardbriolach and Gynack roads and 2 bridges	
<b>Usage:</b> (High, Low or Medium)	High	
<b>Works required (description)</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1-5 = high to low)	
Replacement of steps from Hydro bridge to Ardbriolach Rd	1	

## Alternatives/Offshoots associated with Gynack Mill Trail

Map Descriptor	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority
E1	Path adjacent to Ardbriolach Road	M		

## West Terrace Circular

<b>Path Name:</b>	West Terrace Circular	
<b>Map Descriptor:</b>	F	
<b>Brief description:</b>	From Ardvonie car park via West Terrace up side of Sanatorium Woodland to join Creag Bheag path returning by woodland track to Tait's Brae, on quiet road without pavements, waymarked path and forest track	
<b>Usage:</b> (High, Low or Medium)	Medium	
<b>Works required (description)</b>		<b>Priority</b> (1-5 = high to low)
Drainage and surfacing on section from end of West Terrace		2

## Alternatives/Offshoots associated with West Terrace Circular

Map Descriptor	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority
F1	Desire line from Ardvonie toilets to top of steps	H	Monitor work to assess for degradation of downhill edge	4
F2	West Terrace to Newtonmore road	L		
F3	West Terrace/Pitmain Farm	L	Assess for improvements	3
F4	Woodland path on edge above West Terrace	M	Assess for definition of path following housing developments at end of West Terrace	2



## Loch Gynack Path (Curlew Trail)

<b>Path Name:</b>	Loch Gynack Path (Curlew Trail)	
<b>Map Descriptor:</b>	G	
<b>Brief description:</b>	Path from four ways junction of golf course circular & Creag Bheag path above Loch Gynack to Newtonmore. Mixture of built paths and estate tracks.	
<b>Usage:</b> (High, Low or Medium)	Medium	
<b>Works required (description)</b>	<div> <div>Priority</div> <div>(1-5 = high to low)</div> </div>	
monitoring following ditching and resurfacing work during 2022 in section by Loch Gynack	3	

## Alternatives/Offshoots associated with Loch Gynack Path (Curlew Trail)

Map Descriptor	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority
G1	Track to north of Loch Gynack	L	Estate managed track	

## Other Paths

Map Descriptor	Path	Description	Usage	Work Required	Priority
H	Jubilee Way	Built path from school towards Dell	H	Wash out in October 2023, future overspill to be prevented	2
J	End of JW to Ruthven Barracks	On road, Ruthven Rd B970	H	Sustrans/ Cycling Friendly Kingussie reviewing	1
K	Tromie Tramp	Mixture of farm tracks and paths		Feasibility study of potential routes and discussion with landowners	3
L	RSPB Inch Marshes reserve		H	Maintained by RSPB, Speyside Way section by CNPA	N/A
M	Glebe Ponds	Circular board walk and path around pond	M/L	KCDC to maintain for 4 years section replacing boardwalk by laid path	3
N	Kingussie to Newtonmore Sustrans path		H	Maintained by BEAR Scotland	N/A
P	Spey Access Point				N/A
Q	Spey Meadows	all ability path	L	Development by J Macpherson & R Ormiston	N/A
U	Nuide Farm Ruthven connection		N/A	Feasibility study of potential routes and discussion with landowners	4
V	The Dell/ Dellmore	Path loop popular with dog walkers		Path development by Transport Scotland as mitigation for A9 dualling. Permission requested to site 3 benches	1