



**SELECT COMMITTEE  
OF  
TYNWALD COURT  
OFFICIAL REPORT**

**RECORTYS OIKOIL  
BING ER-LHEH TINVAAL**

**PROCEEDINGS  
DAALTYN**

**PUBLIC FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND  
GREEN LANES  
(PETITION FOR REDRESS)**

**HANSARD**

**Douglas, Thursday, 3rd February 2022**

**PP2022/0019**

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**Members Present:**

*Chairman:* Mrs S L Maltby MHK  
Mrs D H Caine MHK  
Mr R W Henderson MLC

*Clerk:*

Miss F Gale

*Assistant Clerk:*

Miss P Convery

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## Select Committee of Tynwald on Public Footpaths, Bridleways and Green Lanes (Petition for Redress)

*The Committee sat in public at 11.34 a.m.  
in the Legislative Council Chamber,  
Legislative Buildings, Douglas*

[MRS MALTBY *in the Chair*]

### Procedural

**The Chairman (Mrs Maltby):** Good morning and welcome to the public meeting of the Select Committee of Tynwald on Public Footpaths, Bridleways and Green Lanes. I am Sarah Maltby MHK, and I chair this Committee. With me today are the other members of the Committee Daphne Caine, MHK and Bill Henderson MLC, along with our Clerks.

5 This Committee was established to consider a Petition for Redress of Grievance presented at Tynwald Hill in July of last year. Today, we will be hearing from the petitioner, Mr David Buttery and finding out more about the reasons behind the Petition.

Before we begin, please can we all ensure that our mobile phones are off, or on silent? For the purposes of *Hansard*, I will be ensuring that we do not have two people speaking at once.

### EVIDENCE OF Mr David Buttery, Petitioner

10 **Q1. The Chairman:** Mr Buttery, thank you for attending today. Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about your interests in the Island's footpaths?

**Mr Buttery:** I am David Buttery, Manxman, and I walk a lot.

15 I probably walk two good walks a week, every week, and mountain bike two or three times a week. Particularly over the last three years we have covered the majority of the footpaths in the Isle of Man and it has been a concern that there is no consistency of maintenance on the footpaths. Some bits are really bad and other bits are quite good, but the problem as I see it is that there are different agencies responsible for the maintenance of the footpaths. For instance, with the DoI, the footpaths will fall within their greater budget and if they have more pressing needs then the footpaths will suffer because they are going to prioritise the TT course.

20 So what I would like to see is a single agency responsible for footpaths, green lanes – the non-vehicular environment – with a consistent standard of care across the board. I think what I would like to begin with is the nature of what would that Department be? Would it be a Department? Would it be a charity? What would be the best way of achieving this?

25 **Q2. The Chairman:** So was it anything in particular that led you to present the Petition in the first place? Anything that stood out to you as being a great concern?

30 **Mr Buttery:** Most of it has been referred to. There was a submission by Catriona Livingstone which is really comprehensive. She leads a walking group, she walks far more than I do, and she has covered a lot of that.

35 There is a litany of problems: broken bridges, subsidence, mud and just even simple stuff like the vegetation not cut back. If you are out there with a £250 GORE-TEX jacket on, you do not want it shredded because somebody has not cut the brambles back. I am not going to be the one with the £250 jacket, but we are bringing people here to walk and it is not a great advert for the Isle of Man.

**Q3. The Chairman:** The DoI already has statutory responsibilities for the public rights of way network. Why do you think that this is not working?

40 **Mr Buttery:** As I mentioned before, I think it is to do with the allocation of their resources. They would probably love to do a good job, but if they have got something else more pressing that they see as more ... It is how they prioritise it. But they do not have a great track record. They have not done very well lately, have they, to be honest?

45 So I think it would be better handled by a separate agency with a ring-fenced budget, an agency that *just* does footpaths, it just does that, and this is the money they have got every year to deal with it. There would need to be some kind of performance indicator, some benchmark where we know if they are doing any good or not. Is this thing working? There is no point in just setting it up and letting them go. It needs to be monitored.

50 **Q4. The Chairman:** So would any other existing Government Departments, in your opinion, be better suited to taking on this duty? If not, why not?

55 **Mr Buttery:** I think there are two options: (1) you could go for something like Manx National Heritage, which is a charity with a board of trustees. They are in effect a non-executive, so they formulate policy and strategy and they feed that down to the working group that deal with it, which would, I would imagine, be drawn from existing Departments. The advantage of that is that you do not have quite the layers of bureaucracy that you have got within Government. But the disadvantage would be that it would probably take a while to set that up. It is a bit of an unknown quantity, really, it would take a long time and we have still got people, mostly from Government, who will be running it.

60 So it might be a much simpler thing to do to use DEFA and have a sub-department of DEFA. They have got the structure there, they are pretty good at what they do, their work is first class. If you see what they have done in the glens, they are really good. So, that way, you are not reinventing the wheel and you could maybe draw people at DoI into that. I do not know who in DoI deals with it but you could maybe take in the people who deal with it in DoI.

65 I do not quite understand how Government Departments are structured, but I would see it as a sub-department with a head of that sub-department and its own budget.

I do not know if that makes sense. Does that make sense?

70 **Q5. Mrs Caine:** Yes, you are talking about maybe a division, (**Mr Buttery:** Yes, okay.) that is still within DEFA as you are suggesting.

75 Can I just take you back when you mentioned roaming the Island that you are finding no consistency of maintenance and then you highlighted the work of DEFA in glens was particularly good. Are there any other areas that you find are better than others?

**Mr Buttery:** DoI have done the bigger stuff, they have done the Heritage Trail, which I think was subcontracted to Stephen Christian, between Douglas and Peel. That was excellent, it took a while, but that was an excellent job, they were really good at it. But there is stuff on the uplands that they are responsible for that is atrocious. I have been up to my chest in it!

80 **Q6. Mrs Caine:** I think DEFA are also responsible for some of the uplands and we have had some evidence from local authorities that some local authorities have no responsibility at all for footpaths. Some local authorities have limited footpaths that they maintain, that have applied and been rejected to look after additional footpaths within their area, whereas in the south of the Island that local authority has a budget and is looking after all the footpaths.

85 So looking around the Island, are there any areas that stand out as being better than others? Or is it the piecemeal nature that you are worried about?

**Mr Buttery:** It is a bit random, really, there is not really any consistency to it. I would not say anywhere is better than any others. There are some great bits and there are some terrible. We went up and followed the Silverburn River and it got to a point – I do not know whose responsibility that one is, I think that might be DEFA. But that had all fallen in. It was a beautiful walk – or it could have been – that was absolutely lethal. There was about a 30-foot drop on it.

90 Then there are other bits. DEFA have just done the footpath down through the glen at the Dhoon and they have done a tremendous job on it. Well, the bit they have done, they have done a tremendous job. They have got a lot more to do but it is really well put together; it is safe, it is accessible.

**Q7. Mrs Caine:** I think the issue is, though – for instance, Dhoon Glen, which I know very well – just recently there were several trees down and part of the footpath has had a bit of a landslip. I suppose the authorities DEFA and DoI are battling climate events and more significant rainfall, particularly, and that is having an impact. Also, the coastal footpath is one that we hear a lot of criticism about, that is being promoted.

100 Do you have any experience of that?

**Mr Buttery:** Yes, the bit from Meary Veg down to Santon, there are lumps of that ... There has been bridge work in there and that has all fallen in.

105 So I do not think it is really about just identifying ... You will get the walking groups who can identify and do report these problems back. I do not think there is any problem with reporting the problems back, I think it is just a case of getting a consistent standard of maintenance. I think you need to split it between maintenance and strategy.

110 So you have got your dream jobs, I would love to see those bridges at Glen Wyllin and the one across the main Peel Road, it would be great. But they are big jobs and they are really expensive. I think the important thing is get the maintenance right first. Look at what you have got, fix what you have got, get it signposted and walkable. Get it usable. Focus on doing the small stuff first.

115 **Q8. Mrs Caine:** Do you think there would be any benefit with that routine maintenance, the cutting back, being devolved to the local authorities with each responsible for their patch? But then the capital schemes, the rebuilding of Silverburn River, the big infrastructure things that need repairing on the major walking routes could be within a central body.

120 But do you think the maintenance could be devolved to the local authorities?

**Mr Buttery:** Yes, you could devolve the maintenance between several groups, but it would have to come under the administration of a single group. I think that is the important thing. If you leave them to it, if you just said, 'Oh, well, that's the responsibility of the local authorities' – what is to make them do it? They might choose not to, they might say, 'We have got other things to do. We need a bus stop building' – or whatever it is.

125 I think, yes, do it, but it has to be overseen by a single group. You could use volunteers, there are lots of opportunities for volunteers to do stuff – building walkways, building bridges, or just cutting the hedgerows back. But there are a few issues with that, it is not quite as simple as ... Beach Buddies is pretty simple, they just go and pick stuff up and it is great, but if you are going to turn members of the public loose with a strimmer or a chainsaw, you might find you have got

a few insurance issues going on. So you have got to think about what you can do. Who can achieve what?

135 I think the most important thing is you have got to have a single structure overseeing it all. You have got to have some responsibility that is identifiable, because what you have got within Government Departments is a sort of collective failure going on and nobody ends up being responsible for anything. You are trying to find somebody who is responsible and it is all a hall of mirrors going on. You need somebody driving this thing.

140 **Q9. The Chairman:** So there are many competing priorities within Government for funding and resources. What would you prefer to see de-prioritised in order to support the creation of a single agency for footpaths, to prioritise the maintenance of footpaths?

145 **Mr Buttery:** Prioritising the same with their operational prioritising or setting up a public group together?

**Mrs Caine:** De-prioritise.

150 **Q10. The Chairman:** Yes, what would you want to be de-prioritised in order to support the creation of a single agency for footpaths?

**Mr Buttery:** I do not really understand.

155 **Q11. Mrs Caine:** What would Government have to stop doing in order to do footpaths? Do you think there are things that Government is doing, that the footpaths should take priority?

**Mr Buttery:** Oh, if you have got to allocate resources? That is a whole different area.

160 It is quite easy to say, 'Oh, the Promenade.' I do not know enough about how the budget is spent or how they allocate it to be able to say. I do not think it is really my job to say, 'You should stop spending on this and you should spend it on that.'

People do that sort of stuff all the time and it is always everybody's little pet project, isn't it? 'Why haven't you fixed my road? There are all potholes down my road?' 'Why are you building footpaths when I can't park my car without disappearing down a manhole cover?'

165 I do not know that I would be advised to comment on that, really.

**Q12. Mrs Caine:** Okay, but in terms of footpaths, they should be provided with adequate budget to be maintained properly?

170 **Mr Buttery:** Well, I am sure it would be possible. The two main Departments are DEFA and DoI, they do most of that at the moment. What proportion of their budget is spent on footpaths? There is your starting point. So you say, 'We spent x amount last year; and we spent x amount.'

Okay, that is the start for the budget, so let's go out and have a look, let's get a priority list of maintenance. What is really pressing? What is dangerous? What is impassable? Let's work on that and go forward on that basis.

175 **Q13. Mr Henderson:** Thank you very much, David.

I just want you to clarify for us, what really hacked you off to present a petition? What was it you were noticing that you thought, 'Right, I've absolutely had enough of this, I'm coming to Tynwald Hill with my papers?'

180 **Mr Buttery:** I could give you a list if you are interested?

**Mr Henderson:** Yes, the top three or four.

185 **Mr Buttery:** Overgrown paths where the vegetation needs cutting back. Deep ruts caused by vehicles, but motorbikes mostly, and rainfall. Footpaths which exit on to busy main roads – there are plenty of those on the Ballamodha straight, for instance, where you go out on to a road with no pavements. Port Soderick, where you come in off Meary Veg because you cannot walk round Port Soderick cliffs and you are on to the Old Castletown Road which has got no pavements, with cars going like the clappers.

190 We are local, we understand this, we know what to expect. Imagine if you had come here on holiday and you think, ‘Oh, I’ll walk this lovely coastal path.’ The next thing, there are cars tearing past you on the main road! It is dangerous; it is not good.

195 Broken stiles, blocked gates, broken stream crosses, broken boardwalks, unfenced livestock – we had that going on where you end up in a field full of Highland cattle and you do not know what is going to go on next. Deep mud – plenty of that goes over the top your boots. Flooded paths – the old railway line going towards Kirk Michael, by the Devil’s Elbow, is *absolutely* impassable. I think *once* I got through it, when we had not had any rain for about six weeks. It is like the Somme.

200 Impact to vehicles on the ground surface. Property owners posting prohibitive signs on public paths to discourage walkers. Property owners *removing* signs that indicate paths – that is another one. Kissing gates that are too narrow for amply proportioned people to get through – a bit of that goes on. (*Laughter*)

205 **Mr Henderson:** You mean such as myself, David? (*Laughter*)

**Mr Buttery:** Broken fencing, I have mentioned that. Slippery surfaces. There is loads of it.

210 **Q14. Mr Henderson:** Okay, you mentioned something interesting before. If some sort of central agency, or whoever, instead of just looking at the coastal footpath as the main thing to be picking at, they should actually be prioritising where the dangerous stuff, or a hazard to walkers, should be in an almost traffic-light system to make an assessment of any particular walk so that hazards dangerous for health and safety are fixed first.

215 **Mr Buttery:** Yes, that would be a great place to start, because it is easy to assess. There is a system to report faults on the footpath network, you can geolocate it, and they would presumably have somebody that goes out and checks it. But they do not really have to, you can take a picture with your phone. You could send that in and it is pretty obvious what is what.

220 The temptation is that they just come along and stick a load of barriers around it. That is Douglas Corporation, it is not the DoI, but down on Port Skillion where you come down the main steps to Port Skillion beach, that has all been undermined by the sea, so that has collapsed now. So if you want to get round the lighthouse, if you want to walk your dog up around the lighthouse, you cannot do it. You get to the bottom of those steps and all they have done is ... The time it has taken to go and get a lot of barriers and stick all the barriers up, stick the signs up and do all that, they could just get down there with a load of concrete and fix it.

225 Prioritise getting these things fixed, do not prioritise closing them off!

**Q15. Mr Henderson:** Thank you for that.

230 So, part of your complaint is in fact the *state* of the footpaths, not just for cutting back, but the actual mud, landslips, sunken parts of footpaths and so on? Could you say categorically in front of this Committee that you notice a regular maintenance programme going round, even if it is a small one? Or would you say there has been more of a lack of a maintenance programme in addressing all these things over the years?

235 **Mr Buttery:** Yes, it does seem to be a bit random, you get some bits that are really nicely done and they do a fantastic job, and then other bits ... I mean, we have found bits, I think it was up

round St Mark's or somewhere, and we were trying to follow the path on the map and it just disappeared down into a bog, and there were the remnants of a boardwalk that had been put in there. I bet there had been nobody over that for 15 or 20 years and, of course, what the landowners do then, if you do not walk it, they take all the signs away, nobody uses it, and the next thing you have lost yourself a public right of way. There is far too much of that.

**Q16. Mr Henderson:** So, do you think really an issue to start with would be an assessment of what is in existence –

**Mr Buttery:** Sorry, say that again.

**Mr Henderson:** Do you feel that perhaps there should be an assessment of what footpaths are there now, so that DoI are fully aware of the state of things anyway?

**Mr Buttery:** Yes, that would be a good place to start and it would be a way to benchmark what work has been done. What is the workload? What are we looking at here? They could prioritise that and then at the end of the year ... I don't know ...

So, targeting, how to target your maintenance. The first thing would be a reduction in the number of closed paths. How many of these paths are shut? Let's see how many of those we can get open this year. Reduction in the time: how long have they been closed for? Do they keep a record of that? I do not know how this is managed. I do not know if there is any record-keeping of it.

But start with that: how many have we got that are shut? How long have they been shut for? Let's get those done and then have a benchmark. How many metres of new path have we put in? Or, how many repairs have we done? There *has* to be a system of being able to measure this. If you do not know what success looks like, you do not really know what you are doing, do you?

And also failure. If there is a failure somewhere, somebody has got to put their hands up for that, 'Oh, I employed the wrong contractors, I shouldn't have done, they have made a mess of it.' That sort of thing. There has got to be responsibility with it as well.

**Mr Henderson:** Okay, thank you, David.

**Q17. Mrs Caine:** I would be really interested in an Island survey of all the paths – the state they are in, how many have been closed and for how long. It would be very informative in terms of a maintenance programme for the existing network. But I wonder if you feel that the new body – if there was to be a single authority to look after footpaths – should also look at creating new footpaths or better routes, when you mentioned footpaths ending on busy main roads, for instance, or sections of the coastal footpath not on the coast, that sort of thing.

So would you anticipate that a single authority, *as well* as getting a better handle on routine maintenance and structural repairs to footpaths, should also look at enhancing the network?

**Mr Buttery:** Yes, that would be where you would want it to go. You need to put your house in order first, but once you have got that and you are successful at that, then that is where you need to be going with it. Think about reopening sections that have fallen out of use.

I mentioned the bridges. For me, the bridges would be great, and doing that run from Peel up to Kirk Michael on the old railway lines is stunning. It is an absolutely outstanding piece of footpath, compared to anything. I was up in Northumbria and there is nothing like that up there. It is absolutely brilliant.

So, a couple of bridges. At the moment you can walk it because you can get down where the bridges have been taken away, but there is a huge number of people out on bikes now, loads of people on mountain bikes, and horse riders. It would be nice to be able to get across that bridge. So that is where they need to be going with it.

290 I think that I would see, in terms of a steering group, like a user group. So, if you have a user group drawn from people who just *use* the network – that is hikers, mountain bikers, motorcyclists, horse-riders, maybe the four-by-four lot – they would steer the maintenance. So that would be tied in, really, to do with maintenance – but strategically long-term stuff I think then you would draw a lot more people, you would need ... I do not quite know how you would put it together, but a kind of steering group made up of landowners, people involved in tourism, cafe owners or anybody, like they did ...

295 Did you ever see that Lake District plan? When they had the foot-and-mouth outbreak, there was a real problem in the Lake District, they were in for an economically bad time. So they put together a plan to revitalise the Lake District as a centre for tourism and it was *hugely* successful. You cannot get a room in the Lake District, summer or winter, they get booked up to 80% or 90% accommodation capacity. It is because they had a really good plan and it involved *everyone*.  
300 Anybody who had a stake in that got to say what they thought they needed, or how they thought it should be done. It is worth a read, it has been *astorishingly* successful.

It could certainly be a great thing if we are serious about tourism in the Isle of Man, something along those lines, because I think the footpaths are probably the third biggest driver of tourism, after the TT; and the railways are really big for tourism. It is a growing market, as the  
305 demographic ... If you look at how people are ageing, the age groups, most people who I see out walking are like my age, they are 50, 60, 70-odd years old. There is going to be a lot more of them. They are all out there on their big pensions – or, in my case, their small pensions. (*Laughter*)

**Q18. The Chairman:** I just wanted to know what your thoughts are on the principle of ‘right to roam’. What are your feelings?  
310

**Mr Buttery:** I would rather we steered clear of that right now. What I do not want this to be seen as is a sort of campaign to take back footpaths from landowners, otherwise they will all be leaning on their MHKs to say, ‘We don’t want a load of lefty ramblers with their dirty dogs wrecking our land.’ We will just leave that one for now, I think.  
315

Maybe in the future we will address that. But, for now, the main priority is let’s just get this network fixed.

**Q19. Mrs Caine:** If we did not recommend the creation of a single agency to look after footpaths, is there any other model that we could recommend that you would support?  
320

**Mr Buttery:** I do not know. How do they do it in the Lakes?

I do not quite know how they oversee the whole thing in the Lakes, but one of the groups that they use is called Friends of the Fells, so they have a *very* active volunteer group. I mean, Scafell  
325 Pike is the biggest mountain in England, I think, and they get 100,000 people a year walking up that, so it gets wrecked. These guys, Friends of the Fells, are there putting big boulders in and it is being constantly maintained.

But in terms of overseeing that, I do not know, I think there are only those two options: you either have a sort of National Trust/Manx National Heritage organisation with a board of trustees  
330 feeding down to the people that do the job; or you get a division of a Department.

I think the simplest way to do this is going to be to take a division of a Department and transfer responsibility to that division, and transfer the budget as well and whatever people they want to draw in from the other Departments. I think Graeme Watson is up next week. He is the guy for that, I think, he has got some ideas on that, he is pretty good. I would recommend you ask him.  
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**Q20. The Chairman:** The last question I have got here is, do you have any experience of using the Definitive Map? What are your experiences of it; or not?

**Mr Buttery:** I use them a bit. I generally just use the Ordnance Survey.

340 The girl I go walking with, she uses the one on her phone, which I cannot get to grips with at all. It does not show enough for me, I like to see the big thing. That big-scale Ordnance Survey map is *really* good, but there are bits that do not exist. You go and follow those, the signs have all disappeared and you end up in a bog somewhere.

345 There was one we went on where they had got permission to divert the path. So the original path went through the farmyard, which was probably fine when there was an old Manx farmer in there, but now somebody has bought the place and it has all been done up, and they do not want people trudging through what is now their front patio, or whatever the hell it is. So there is a sort of barbed-wire corridor. It looks like that picture of the internment camp.

350 That is not good! That does not sell us, does it? It is not a great look when you have got to walk through some sort of barbed wire channel to follow a footpath. That sort of thing needs to be addressed, really. And this was the DoI, they just handed it over, 'Oh, yes, you can do that.' Well, no, you cannot do it actually, how about that?

355 **Q21. Mrs Caine:** That would have to get Tynwald approval to change on the Definitive Map. But there have been a few times the DoI have come to reroute footpaths, mainly for landowner reasons, I think, rather than walker reasons, although sometimes it is because it is too flooded or muddy to drain.

360 I was thinking on your comment that you have been walking all these 50 years-plus. Have you noticed that recently the standard and the maintenance of footpaths has deteriorated drastically? Is this the worst time? Have we had a decade of neglect that was not the case previously?

**Mr Buttery:** Yes, it has got worse.

365 **Q22. Mrs Caine:** Is it specifically the last few years?

**Mr Buttery:** Yes, I think the first one we really noticed was doing the End 2 End Mountain Bike Race, we used to go down the Dowse which runs from the top of Beary Mountain up by the transmitter, that comes out down at St John's. That got worse and worse and worse, to the point ... It was the rain that had washed it out, but it never got fixed. They have done some work on it since then, I have not been down it for years, but they have fixed it. That was the first one I noticed.

370 I think the couple of really bad winters we had, where you have got a huge volume of water going down these paths, what it does is it just takes all the small stones out first and then what you end up with is football-sized boulders. There were, I think, three lads hospitalised in the Manx 100 the other year trying to get down that one that comes out at the back of the Glen Mona.

375 **Q23. Mrs Caine:** That has been fixed, I think, now.

**Mr Buttery:** It had not the last time I went down there, but that was about a year ago so maybe they have fixed it since then.

380 **Q24. Mr Henderson:** Could I interject – and pardon me, Daphne.

The erosion to the boulders-type thing on the footpaths, you mentioned about rain wash causing a lot of it, David. But would you say motorised vehicles, especially scramble bikes, have got a lot to do with that as well in some areas?

385 **Mr Buttery:** Not so much on those. The Millennium Way where it goes up from St Luke's is a disaster, but I think most of that is rain. Certainly the bikes have disturbed it to begin with, the motocross bikes will be the first ones that have damaged that. Then it has never been repaired so it has got deeper and deeper and deeper. But the most damage you notice from the motocross bikes is where they have been let up on the tops, where the ground coverage is really thin. It does not take much to wreck that and then they cut a rut, and then the next guy goes a little bit to one

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side of it, and the next one. The next thing is you have got about 50 metres of ruts right the way across. So there is definitely a case for managing that.

395 We do not want to just deter these guys from coming over. There are a lot of them that come over here to ride on the Island because they cannot do that in the UK. But there needs to be more control over where these guys are allowed to go. I do not know whether you can fence them in on to a particular track, or whatever. But those bikes do a huge amount of damage. It is like 50-60 horsepower going through the back wheel.

400 If you go after the End 2 End, the year we had 1,500 riders in that – 1,500 mountain bikers – a week later you would not know there had been anybody there. There is very little impact. But half a dozen motorcycles going through there tears the place up. So that is something that needs to be ... I know they *did* do it, they banned them off the tops, didn't they? But quite whether they banned them enough, I do not know.

405 **Q25. The Chairman:** Is there anything else you would like to add today? Is there anything else that we have not covered?

**Mr Buttery:** No, I think we have covered most of it.

410 I just really think that the best way to do this thing is to use DEFA. It is what they do, they are pretty good at it. I have seen what they have done on some of the mountain bike trails up there, and they even went to the trouble up on the top of the Sloc of using the right kind of rock. They did not just go and get a load of rock from the quarry, they used the stuff that is native to that area. They are good.

415 I think that would be my preferred option. Let those guys do it; give them the budget and let them get on with it.

**Q26. The Chairman:** You did mention about the way they communicate as well. You said that was something that you felt was helpful as a walker, how they show what they have been doing and the progress, and you felt that was useful.

420 **Mr Buttery:** I have noticed since I put this Petition in that they have been popping up all over Facebook with, 'We have done this' and 'We did that.' The DoI actually put a piece on the other week that they had opened another footpath. So maybe just the thought of it, the fact that you are shining a light on them, has maybe galvanised them into action.

425 But, yes, it is not my decision, but I feel that DEFA would be the best option. It is the simplest, they are already there, we do not have to start anything new. They are there, however they structure these things, I would go for it.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much.  
430 Thanks for coming in, we appreciate your time.

**Mr Henderson:** Thanks David.  
If you do think of anything else, or anything else comes to light, by all means send it in.

435 **Mr Buttery:** Yes. I have got a copy of what Catriona Livingstone sent in and when I have read it, I realised she was actually a bit of a bigwig in the Los Angeles planning department, so when you read that it reads really well ...

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. We will just continue in private now.

*The Committee adjourned at 12.10 p.m.*