Right to Roam Timeline

History of Access · https://scotways.com/ken/right-to-roam-timeline/

The right of responsible access to land and inland water throughout Scotland was groundbreaking when it came into operation in February 2005, but it didn't just happen. It took centuries.

Here's a list of the different bills, Acts of Parliament and some key events leading to our amazing access legislation.

1845 ScotWays predecessor - The Association for the Preservation of Public Rights of Roadway in and Around Edinburgh was created. James Bryce would become a Director in future years.

1865 The Open Spaces Society was created and one of its supporters was James Bryce MP.

1884 start of the "Pet Lamb" case. A cause célèbre for a right of access.

1884 James Bryce MP introduces Access to the Mountains (Scotland) Bill Clause 2 -" no owner or occupier of uncultivated mountains or moorlands in Scotland shall be entitled to exclude any person from going on such lands for recreation or scientific or artistic study, or to molest him in so walking."

1887 2,000 people march on Latrigg, Keswick, Cumberland, protesting the closure of paths to the top.

1888 Access to the Mountains (Scotland) Bill introduced by James Bryce

1888 Mountains, Rivers and Pathways (Wales) Bill supported by James Bryce.

1892 The first federation of groups of ramblers took place in Glasgow, with the formation of the West of Scotland Ramblers' Alliance.

1892 Access to the Mountains (Scotland) (No.2) Bill 26 May 1892. On this occasion, a second reading occurred and the bill was accepted by Government but bogged down at the committee stage. Bryce said in the Commons "The scenery of our country has been filched away from us just when we have begun to desire it more than ever before."

1892 The Tory Government introduce their own access to the countryside bill, a diluted version of Bryce's but still with the essential wording. A general election call in June 1892 stopped it from

going further.

1894 Local Government (Scotland) Act made rights of way the direct responsibility of local authorities. Wording for the duty of the local authority is the same as the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

1896 On the path up Winter Hill north of Bolton, Lancashire, there was a mass trespass on 6 September. A memorial stone says “Will You Come O’ Sunday Morning? On this Sunday 6 September, 1896 10,000 Boltonians marched by this spot to reclaim an ancient right of way over Winter Hill. The path is now dedicated as a right of way for the enjoyment of all.”

1898 Access to the Mountains (Scotland) Bill. The last time Jame Bryce introduced the Act.

1900 Access to the Mountains (Scotland) Bill Introduced by Annan Bryce, younger brother of James Bryce.

1905 Federation of Rambling Clubs formed.

1906 Access to the Mountains (Scotland) Bill introduced by Annan Bryce.

1908 Access to the Mountains (Scotland) Bill was introduced by Annan Bryce and supported by Charles Trevelyan. Debated at length in the House of Commons, extended the provisions to the whole of the U.K., got a second reading, An impasse was reached and the House agreed to proceed no further.

1909 Access to the Mountains Bill introduced by Annan Bryce.

1924 Countryside Access Bill introduced based on Bryce’s original 1884 version.

1925 Law of Property Act gives the public the right to walk and ride on certain commons and protect commons from enclosure and encroachment. It thus created the first right of access to land in the U.K. - the Central and Southern Lakeland fells.

1930 Access to the Mountains Bill.

1931 Access to the Mountains Bill.

1931 National Council of Ramblers’ Federation was formed.

1932 500 ramblers stage a mass trespass on Kinder Scout in the Pennines. The leaders are arrested and jailed.

1935 Ramblers’ Association formed.

1937 Access to the Mountains Bill 8 July 1937 introduced by Arthur Creech-Jones

1938 Access to the Mountains Bill gets a second reading good, makes it through the committee stages and becomes …

1939 the Access to Mountains Act. The first Act to deal with outdoor access, but it made trespass a criminal offence in certain cases and placed limits on access. Not a good act, but it was never used and didn't apply to Scotland.

1939-45 Government encourages "walking in war-time" programme.

1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act repeals the Access to Mountains Act 1939 and introduces procedures for creating access to land in England and Wales.

1958 A Royal Commission recommended the public should have a right of access to all common land.

1967 Countryside (Scotland) Act introduces procedures for creating access land in Scotland powers little if ever, used.

1978 Access to Commons and Open Country Bill introduced by Arthur Blenkinsop

1980 Access to Commons and Open Country Bill introduced by David Clark

1982 Walkers (Access to the Countryside) Bill introduced by Andrew Bennett on the 50th anniversary of Kinder Scout Trespass.

1983 Access to the Countryside Bill introduced by Andrew Bennett.

1992 Scottish Natural Heritage 'Enjoying the Outdoors' consultation launched.

1993 Letterewe Accord agreed between the Ramblers, Mountaineering Council of Scotland and estate owner Paul van Vlissengen.

1994 Freedom to Roam (Access to Countryside) Bill introduced by Margaret Ewing.

1994 National Access Forum was established.

1995 Enjoying the outdoors a programme for action: summary of Scottish Natural Heritage's access report published.

1996 National Access Forum agrees the Access Concordat.

1996 National Access Forum (Inland Water) was established.

1997 New Labour Government asked Scottish Natural Heritage to make proposals for new outdoor access legislation.

1998 Scottish Natural Heritage sets out its proposals in Access to the Countryside for Open Air Recreation.

1998 Consultation launched on Access to the Open Countryside in England and Wales.

1999 Scottish Parliament re-established.

2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act receives Royal Assent, granting walkers in England and Wales the right to roam over mountain, moor, heath and down

2001 Draft Land Reform Bill published.

2001 Foot and Mouth Disease strikes. The effects of the disease were felt much wider than just the farming community which ultimately helped to shape the Land Reform Bill.

2003 Land Reform (Scotland) Act receives Royal Assent

2004 Scottish Outdoor Access Code was created.

2005 Access Rights come into operation on 9 February 2005.

Why not read A Brief History of Access Rights or The Coming of Access Rights?