

DUCHESS WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE COMMITTEE

15 February 2017

NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the **DUCHESS WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE COMMITTEE** will be held in the **LOMOND SCHOOL, STAFFORD STREET, HELENSBURGH** on **WEDNESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2017** at **10:00 AM**, which you are requested to attend.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director of Customer Services

BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES

2. MINUTE (Pages 1 - 4)

The Minute of the previous Duchess Wood Committee meeting held on 22 November 2016.

3. FRIENDS OF DUCHESS WOOD REPORTS

Reports by Friends of Duchess Wood (to follow).

4. ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY

(a) Branching Out Proposal (Pages 5 - 8)

Update by Sara McLean, Organiser Branching Out.

(b) Dog Event - 2017

5. LOWER CLYDE GREENSPACE (Pages 9 - 12)

Report by Executive Director – Development and Infrastructure Services.

6. WIAT FUNDING APPLICATION - UPDATE

7. ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Report by Amenity Performance Manager (to follow).

8. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

DUCHESS WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE COMMITTEE

Councillor Aileen Morton (Chair)

Contact: Theresa McLetchie - Tel: 01436 657621

**MINUTES of MEETING of DUCHESS WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE COMMITTEE held
in the LOMOND SCHOOL, 10 STAFFORD STREET, HELENSBURGH
on TUESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2016**

Present: Councillor Aileen Morton (Chair)

Charlie Cairns – Lower Clyde Green Space
Stewart Campbell – Chair, Friends of Duchess Wood
Alastair Macbeth - Secretary, Friends of Duchess Wood
Johanna Urquhart – Principal, Lomond School
Josie Slater – Youth Representative, Lomond School
Morevain Martin – Third Sector Interface

1. APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

Apologies for absence were intimated from:-

David Lewin
Ailsa Cunningham

2. MINUTE

The Minute of the previous meeting which was held on 23 August 2016 was approved as a true record.

Matters Arising

The Chair drew attention to the success of the recent Dog event held in the Duchess Wood Sunday 9 October and made the suggestion of a similar event to be scheduled for early in 2017.

Decision:

The Committee agreed that this would be given further discussion at the February 2017 meeting.

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY

Johanna Urquhart highlighted that the recent Community Orienteering event had been well attended and outlined plans for a *climbing event* to be held at the same time as the orienteering event in 2017.

Discussion took place about the new fixed orienteering marks that Lomond School had installed in the wood. It was felt that it would be nice to publicise these and how members of the public might make use of them. Lomond School will consider how best to launch/publicise in the Spring.

The Chair suggested that an invitation to attend a future meeting be proffered to both Ruth Cairns, Community Development and Youth worker and Gillian Simpson, Third Sector Interface to provide more information on the GIVE youth volunteering programme.

Decision:

The Committee agreed:-

1. To note the updates, and
2. That Lomond School will consider a possible "launch" event for community orienteering in the spring.
3. That both Ruth Cairns and Gillian Simpson would be invited to attend a future meeting to provide general information on the GIVE youth volunteering programme

4. FRIENDS OF DUCHESS WOOD REPORTS

The Committee considered a report which provided an update and outlined the recent work undertaken by Friends of Duchess Wood (FODW).

Discussion followed and Alastair Macbeth tabled the Annual Financial report. In addition, Stewart Campbell drew attention to several other issues which included:-

- Erection of a willow fence at the Ponds
- Damage to the culvert and the need for the investigation of the cost of remedial work

Johanna Urquhart advised the Committee of the recent appointment of Keith Robertson, the new Facilities and Estates Manager at Lomond School.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note and endorse the actions which were noted within the report.

Reference: Friends of Duchess Wood by Stewart Campbell, Chair Friends of Duchess Wood (dated November 2016, submitted).

5. FIVE-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN - OCTOBER 2016-SEPTEMBER 2021

The Committee were advised that the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee had approved the finalised 5-year Management Plan at the Area Committee meeting held on 11 October 2016.

Decision

The Committee agreed:-

1. That the Management Plan would be amended to reflect that this was the final version which had received approval at the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 11 October 2016; and
2. That an electronic version of the Management Plan would be emailed to Committee members.

6. WIAT FUNDING APPLICATION

Charlie Cairns updated the Committee on the progress of the Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) application. He highlighted that a more detailed mapping exercise would need to be undertaken by the sub-group in order to progress the application. The final version of which would accompany the application.

The Committee discussed the possibility of exploring further funding avenues and it was agreed that the WIAT application was the most appropriate one.

Stewart Campbell updated the Committee on the status and progress of the forthcoming Duchess Wood *thinning exercise* scheduled for 8th and 9th December. He advised that if this exercise proved to be a success, then it could be taken forward as a woodland management measure. Simon Lockwood, Lockwood Forest Services would be able to advise further on this.

He highlighted that there would be the opportunity for the public to purchase wood for fuel on Saturday, 10 December and this would be advertised accordingly. Also, the FODW have 50 Scots pines and other mixed saplings which will be planted in due course.

Decision

The Committee agreed:-

1. To note the update on both the WIAT application and the Duchess Wood Thinning Exercise; and
2. That Charlie Cairns would make contact with the sub-group members to schedule a further meeting(s) in order to progress and submit the WIAT application.

7. ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL MAINTENANCE AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

There was no representative from Amenity Services and the Chair asked the Committee for any issues which she would relay to the Amenity Performance Manager.

The Committee highlighted the following:-

- Remedial work which was need at the bridge/culvert
- Issue of overhanging trees at the garages which were still to be resolved.

Decision

The Committee agreed that the Chair would review the issues which had been pointed out with the Amenity Performance Manager to determine if it was realistic for these to be progressed.

8. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Chair opened the meeting for Any Other Business and the following issues were raised:-

Alastair Macbeth commended the current model of the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee and suggested that this was taken forward to a public meeting which was being held on 13 December by Helensburgh Community Council.

The Committee agreed that they did not have any objection to this. However, in the present climate of reduced budgetary funding, caution should be exercised as Argyll and Bute Council could not provide a resource to accommodate similar requests to other local groups or organisations who may wish to replicate this model.

Stewart Campbell highlighted operational issues with the existing camera trap in the Duchess Wood. He asked if there was any relevant expertise within the Committee who could assist him in this matter. It was noted that despite technical difficulties, the camera has captured deer and fox as well as smaller animals in the Wood.

9. MEETING DATES FOR 2017

The Committee gave consideration to the proposed meeting dates for 2017.

Decision:

The Committee agreed the meeting dates for 2017 as follows:-

Wednesday, 22 February 2017	-	Lomond School
Tuesday, 16 May 2017	-	Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre
Tuesday, 22 August 2017	-	Lomond School
Tuesday, 21 November 2017	-	Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and to Johanna Urquhart for hosting the meeting.



**Proposal for Duchess Woods Steering Committee
Meeting 22nd February 2017**

Request for agreement to use Duchess Woods as a Branching Out venue.

Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT) delivers Branching Out across the localities in Argyll and Bute under agreement with NHS Highland and Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), also working in partnership with NHS Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT), and in each area forms new partnerships with community woodland groups, community transport providers and other third sector organisations as required.

Branching Out is funded on a rolling basis until March 2019. Funders are The Transforming Self Management Fund (The Alliance), the Integrated Care Fund, Forestry Commission Scotland, Argyll & Bute Council 3rd Sector Fund, locality Health and Wellbeing Funds. The funding for Helensburgh and Lomond plans to deliver 3, 12-week programmes this year and the same again next year. Each programme budget includes all costs to run the programme and also a contribution / donation of £600 to the venue provider.

One 12-week programme is designed to take up to 12 participants, referred via the CMHT, once a week into their local woodland to undertake activities designed to improve mental health and physical wellbeing. Activities include green woodworking, shelter building, camp-fire cooking, conservation, walks, mindfulness, environmental art and crafts, sculptures, wildlife ID and surveys, foraging, bushcraft, archery, music and much more. The day runs from 10am until 3pm and always includes a meal cooked from scratch on the campfire and Kelly kettle use. Participants are also put forward to achieve their John Muir Discovery Awards.

Branching Out is an award winning FCS project and has been running for a few years in the central belt and operates under Forestry Commission policy and protocol, which cover all the activities.

<http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/health-strategy/branching-out>

It is staffed by fully trained Branching Out Leaders and support from the CMHTs – usually Occupational Therapists and / or CPNs and support workers.

Duchess Woods would provide an ideal central location in Helensburgh for our first programme, which we hope will start in April 2017. We will also be developing “Moving On” programmes for participants who have graduated the programmes. During the latter stages of the 12-week programmes and the moving on programmes, participants get more involved with the aims and aspirations of the woodlands and get involved with strategic projects that might be organised to improve the diversity and / or infrastructure of the woodlands which benefit the venue, adds value and increases community participation.

Contact details for Branching Out Argyll

Sara Maclean

Branching Out Argyll Coordinator

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Branching Out Argyll Newsletter January 2017

The Story So Far

Development work for the project took place in 2015 involving ACT, Forestry Commission Scotland and Community Woodlands Association to bring Branching Out to Argyll. We would like to thank Di Oliver for all her hard work scoping the project and achieving the successful funding applications, which have allowed the project to take place.

ACT set up a steering group representing all the stakeholders, and Sara Maclean was appointed project coordinator in May 2016 to take forward the rollout of 3 years of funding.

Achievements to date:

- 3 years funding
- 16 Leaders trained
- 3 Programmes completed in Mid Argyll, Cowal and Bute
- 1 Programme underway in Oban
- 23 Participants achieved John Muir Awards
- 9 Leaders completed shadowing
- Leaders Day held
- Short film completed



Participant feedback

"I never expected anything could have had such a profound effect upon my daily outlook and attitude."

"Personal level – this is the best thing that's happened in the last 2 or 3 years for me. "

"I look forward to Thursdays so much – keeps me active and off the booze."

"I don't get up any other mornings, it makes me feel that I'm worth something – I love it".

"I am with people who I feel comfortable with"

"I feel accepted"

Spotlight on Partnership working

With ACT as the umbrella organisation, each programme involves the set up of a locally-based, integrated team comprising staff from **NHS Highland** Community Mental Health Teams, support workers, Branching Out Leaders, Community Woodland groups and other Third Sector organisations who provide services.

The Mental Health professionals are key individuals who have provided excellent support to and engagement with the project.

One stated, *"Branching Out ticks every box in an Occupational Therapists calendar of goals that can be achieved with our clients with the support of all our support staff and Leaders combined. I am also loving this experience on a personal level - getting to be involved in teaching, encouraging and facilitating development in people's personal lives."*

Interloch Community Transport, based in Kilmun, Cowal has also been a key partner in the Bute and Cowal programmes providing a supported door-to-door service for clients who might otherwise struggle with travel. They remarked on the 'transformation' in the outlook of clients over the 12-week programme.

Project Blog

Something magical happens when you take a group of people into woodland. Labels, anxieties and worries melt away as everyone works together to fulfil the basic needs of shelter and food. These activities underpin every session and we have learned that apparent 'down-time' - like when we all stop for tea - is one of the most valuable and sociable aspects of Branching Out. It is truly rewarding to work with and see a real difference in people; we all learn new things from each other and the sense of camaraderie puts a smile on everyone's faces.

We have made a short film, available here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXE1Pb2xeCs&feature=youtu.be>



The Strategic View

A lot of work goes on in the background to promote Branching Out and get buy-in from all the partners. Each locality presents its own challenges to find the right location, bring on board the organisations and put the paperwork in place. We have some fantastic resources in Argyll & Bute and amazing people taking the project forward in every area. Branching Out Argyll is a fine example of best practise in service integration, meeting the outcomes of every partner.

Aims

The aim is to build enough skills and capacity across the region to make Branching Out sustainable so that it can be taken forward at a local level long after the funded period is over.

Monitoring Outcomes

For consistency we will be using the Edinburgh Warwick scale to evaluate the programmes, and have systems in place to incorporate learning as we go.

Planned for 2017...

- **Bute and Cowal** – 4 programmes
- **Oban, Lorne and the Isles** – 3 programmes
- **Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay** – 4 programmes
- **Helensburgh and Lomond** – 3 programmes
- **2 Participants gatherings**
- **1 Leaders Event**
- **Continued development of "Moving On" for participants**

Newsflash!

Shadowing opportunities available for Leaders now.
Tuesdays – Oban and Lochgilphead.
Get in touch to book your date.

Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust

www.act-now.org.uk 1 Kilmory Industrial Estate, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8RR
Email: branchingout@act-now.org.uk Tel [ACT]: 01546 602755 Sara Mob: 07788 289537

With thanks to all our partners and funders.



Branching Out
Positive Mental Health Through Nature



ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve
Committee****DEVELOPMENT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES****22 February 2017**

Lower Clyde Greenspace

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee with an update on the working relationship between Argyll and Bute Council and Lower Clyde Greenspace in respect to Duchess Wood.
- 1.2 As of 31 March 2017 there will no longer be an agreement in place between the council and Lower Clyde Greenspace. This is related to a management and operational decision taken by Council as part of budget saving measures.
- 1.3 As arrangements with Lower Clyde Greenspace are due to cease, support for activity related to Duchess Wood will instead be picked up by the Helensburgh and Lomond Economic Development Officer.
- 1.4 A handover to this effect has taken place, with all relevant background material having been passed to the Development Officer, who will regularly attend Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee meetings from 1st April 2017 onwards.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are invited to note the content of this report.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

**Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve
Committee**

**DEVELOPMENT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

22 February 2017

Lower Clyde Greenspace

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee with an update on the working relationship between Argyll and Bute Council and Lower Clyde Greenspace, in respect to Duchess Wood and the proposed changes as of 31 March 2017.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Members are invited to note the content of this report.

5.0 DETAIL

5.1 A management agreement is in place between Argyll and Bute Council and Luss Estates, as owner of Duchess Wood, which seeks to support the careful management of what is Argyll and Bute's only statutorily designated local nature reserve.

5.2 The current Duchess Wood Management Plan will run until 2021 and outlines measures for the effective management and monitoring of this important area of woodland.

5.3 The Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee meets on a regular basis in order that a collective approach is taken to the appropriate management of the woodland. To date, the council has been represented on the committee by an Elected Member, an Amenity Services Officer and through officer support via what was previously referred to as the Lower Clyde Greenspace Partnership.

5.4 Due to a management and operational saving decision taken by Council, the agreement with Inverclyde Council, formally through the Lower Clyde Greenspace Partnership will cease on 31 March 2017. It is therefore intended for the Helensburgh and Lomond Economic Development Officer to attend Committee in place of the Lower Clyde Greenspace officer from 1 April 2017, and a handover has been undertaken to this effect.

5.5 The Helensburgh and Lomond Development Officer has been in post since September 2016 and sits within the Transformation Projects and Regeneration Team. The Development Officer is tasked with delivery of physical regeneration components listed within the Helensburgh and Lomond Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP). Current projects include joint working with the Ministry of Defence to explore principal areas of focus and related actions as an initial step to ensuring the successful and sustainable integration of new service personnel and their families, as part of the Maritime Change Programme. The post holder is also responsible for the administration of the shopfront repair grant programme in Helensburgh town centre and for the development and delivery of the expansion of the Helensburgh Outdoor Museum.

5.6 In addition, the post holder offers support to community groups across the area. Current projects include feasibility analysis to inform a potential viewing platform in Arrochar, and support is being provided to Rosneath Peninsula West Community Development Trust with a view to prioritising their ambitions and identifying areas where additional support might be best placed.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The Helensburgh and Lomond Development Officer will continue to work across the area to support communities in their ambitions to deliver regeneration projects and as such will pick up the work currently undertaken by Lower Clyde Greenspace in respect to Duchess Wood.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1	Policy	Duchess Wood is designated as a Local Nature Reserve.
7.2	Financial	Officer resource.
7.3	Legal	None
7.4	HR	None
7.5	Equalities	No equal opportunities implications.
7.6	Risk	None at present.
7.7	Customer Services	Working with local people

**Pippa Milne, Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure
Policy Lead, Sustainable Economic Growth, Councillor Aileen Morton**

February 2017

For further information contact:

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