

**Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve – updated Management Plan**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report seeks noting and approval from members of a new management plan for the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve (LNR). This management plan will form the framework for desired enhancements within the woodland over the next 5 years, and recognises the existing maintenance provision that is in place.

The Management Plan sets out a range of preferred actions designed to help manage the woodland for the linked benefits of biodiversity and public enjoyment. Simultaneously it recognises that to achieve this there will be a need to access external funding sources, and as such seeks no additional revenue or capital funding from Argyll and Bute Council.

Partnership working is a key pillar of the Management Plan, and any external funding would be sought through continued partnership working. There are therefore no financial implications for the Council.

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Duchess Wood was the first declared Local Nature Reserve in Argyll and Bute, and is a significant environmental resource. The LNR already benefits from a maintenance schedule supported by Argyll and Bute Council, as approved by the Area Committee in February 2011. As detailed in that Report, maintenance is carried out in partnership with other groups, notably the Friends of Duchess Wood, Lower Clyde Greenspace and other bodies.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee note and approve the management plan appended to this report

**4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 The management plan has been drawn together by the Duchess Wood LNR Management Committee, comprising representative of Argyll and Bute Council, Lower Clyde Greenspace, Friends of Duchess Wood and Scottish Natural Heritage. It is worth noting that the bulk of the work drawing this plan together was undertaken by the Friends of Duchess wood, notably their Chairperson Stewart Campbell, to whom the LNR Committee are grateful for the time and work committed.
- 4.2 This management plan is an update to one presented to the Area Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012. The LNR Committee agreed an update was needed to reflect, and hopefully take best advantage of, the new range of forestry grants available from the Forestry Commission (Scotland). Thus the lifespan of this Management Plan closely mirrors the planned length of the available grants.
- 4.3 The management plan lists a range of aims and objectives for the LNR over the next 5 years. Overarching these aspirations are a recognition that a robust facility already exists, and that any additional works would require both to be maintenance neutral, and to be funded by non-Council sources.
- 4.4 The resulting management plan focuses on biodiversity improvements, increased community involvement and externally funded infrastructure improvements. This plan has been approved by the LNR Management Committee.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Approval of this management plan will allow this partnership working to continue, and allow any necessary funding applications to be targeted at external organisations not always open to local authorities.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy; none
- 6.2 Financial; the lifespan and timing of the new Management Plan is intended to help take best advantage of appropriate external funding sources. The plan itself recognizes that this external funding is critical. Officer time towards this plan has been, and will continue to be, from existing resources and thus places no additional financial burden on Argyll and Bute Council.
- 6.3 Legal; none
- 6.4 HR; none
- 6.5 Equalities; none
- 6.6 Risk; none
- 6.7 Customer Service; none

**Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure – Pippa Milne**  
**Policy Lead - Councillor Ellen Morton**  
12<sup>th</sup> September 2016

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## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1  
Appendix 2