

Duchess Wood Maintenance Budget

Summary

Following work by Councillor Al Reay several years ago, a one-off fund was created to allow for maintenance required on an exceptional basis.

Funds currently available for works within Duchess Wood comes to a total of £13,500. This is made up as follows:

£3,500 – funding returned from Lower Clyde Greenspace

£10,000 – from Council over the life of the agreement, to be absorbed within existing budgets

Past Works

Over the last few year a number of major costs have come up as a result of safety issue such as culvert construction and dangers tree removal. Costs for these items are as follows:

1. £1,000 for culvert worked carried out.
2. £2,125 removal of pruning/dangers trees at the following locations:
 - a. Rear 7 Duchess Drive
 - b. Rear 9 Duchess Drive
 - c. Rear 50 MacLead Drive
 - d. Rear 13 MacLead Crescent
 - e. At bridge top of Paterson Drive

Total previous spend on contractors: £3,125

There have also been a number of trees removed, the trees adjacent to local housing have been inspected, emptying litter bins, clearing fly tipping, and Knotweed treatment have been carried out by Council staff. These works have been absorbed within Grounds Maintenance budgets therefore no charges have been allocated to Duchess Wood.

It has been decided that none of these costs will be taken off the budget of Duchess Wood therefore a budget of £13,500 is available.

Future Works

In the future, any works carried out by contractor will be invoiced to the Duchess Wood Budget. Works carried out by Council staff will be absorbed by Grounds Maintenance budgets where there are low material costs involved; however, this may have to change in the future as budget cuts continue within the Council. Prior to any changes regarding Council charges the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee will be informed.

The overall budget of £13,500 is made of two parts:

1. The £10,000 from the Council was made available to ensure appropriate levels of maintenance in of the wood, particularly in relation to safety requirements. As maintenance costs are clearly going to become an issue in the future these funds will not go far if a major cost item comes up such as bridge repair/replacement.
2. With regards £3,500 of funds that came from Lower Clyde Greenspace, this was also expected to be used for general maintenance, and will supplement the Council budget.

There is currently an outstanding job to be carried out at the garages beside Strathclyde Court which will have to be carried out by a contractor. No cost is available at present but obviously this will have an impact on the identified budget available.

There is also a further issue that should be pointed out that may have financial implications. One of the adjoining properties to the wood has recently sent in letter from their insurers highlighting the potential nuisance by tree roots action. This may result in other works not considered as maintenance issues in the future and bring further cost and restraints to this small budget when it comes to works like this.

Conclusion

A clear recording system has been put in place for this fund so that both the Council and the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee can see what is available and what has been spent. In future, an annual printed report will be provided at the meeting closest to end of financial year (31st March). Further verbal updates can also be provided on a quarterly basis if required.

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