

## **Duchess Wood LNR Events Policy**

### **The following paper outlines the suitability, or otherwise, of the use of Duchess Woods LNR for organised events**

As a Local Nature Reserve, and a site holding a Core Path, Duchess Wood is subject to the terms and conditions relating to access to the countryside as laid out in the Land Reform Act (Scotland) 2003. As a support to this legislation, a Code of Conduct for people accessing the countryside was produced and it is an overarching principle of the management of Duchess Wood that users will adhere to the terms and principles of the Code of Conduct, which can be viewed at <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/>. Of particular relevance is para 3.60, relating to events.

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### **1. Events and/or activities which can be accommodated within Duchess Wood LNR**

**Community Events** – those events organised by charities, not for profit organisations, community or voluntary groups that directly benefit the residents and stakeholders

**Commercial Events** – those events that do not fall into the above category and have a commercial gain for the business. To be allowed, such events should be able to demonstrate some form of return for the community e.g. healthier lifestyles, young people connecting with the environment

**Education Events** – guided walks, classroom visits etc which directly lead to an enhanced understanding of the environment in general and Duchess Wood in particular.

**Commercial dog walking** – this already occurs commonly within the LNR, and practitioners are bound by existing laws, regulations and good practice relating to access to the countryside

**Filming** – there may be value in promoting the woods as a venue suitable for filming. Such use would require to be subject to standard assessment criteria.

**Use of Woods for Regular Classes** – for example fitness classes, tai chi etc. This should be encouraged as not requiring specific permission up to a set maximum number of participants (say 10). Any more than this set number of participants should be subject to standard assessment criteria set out below.

## **2. What events are not encouraged?**

Proposals for events within Duchess Wood will be viewed within the context of the woodland being a Local Nature Reserve, and a place where the public can exercise responsible access to their environment. In this respect further guidance on responsible access can be gained from the Scottish Natural Heritage website, but generally events involving any means of motorised transport will not be suitable. Similarly, any events involving large scale use by one user group (for example, runners, walkers, horseriders, cyclists) will be assessed in terms of their impact on the wider woodland using community.

There are a number of events that we should not accept, these include but are not limited to:

**Private Events** – e.g. private parties, weddings or corporate events

**Car Boot sales**

**Bonfires**

**Barbecues**

**Religious Events**

**Political Events**

## **3. Approval criteria**

The following criteria will be used to determine whether approval will be given to a specific event when the Council is the organiser and/or the land/site owner:

- Security and public safety
- Effect on the fabric of the area and the damage limitation
- Effect of event on regular users of public spaces, stakeholders and local residents
- Timing of the event / frequency of the event
- Size of the location, numbers attending or estimated numbers
- Impact on transport infrastructure to support the event – e.g. parking, road closures
- Quality of the event to the area
- The creation of opportunities for local participation of people living within the immediate area
- The ability of the organisers to effectively plan, manage and control the event and adhere to best practice standards

#### **4. Application time scales**

Where possible we will try to be flexible on the time scales used for applications as we appreciate that some events may be as a result of cancellations or demand. However we ask that the following guidelines are adopted. During busy summer months, we cannot guarantee that applications for events outside these timescales can be managed:

- **Small events (less than 40 people)** – at least 6 weeks
- **Medium events (40 to 150 people)** – at least 2 months
- **Large events (more than 150 people)** – 6 months at least, more if possible due to the complex nature of the event

#### **5. Wet weather policy**

The Council reserves the right to cancel or close any event which, after consultation with the event organiser, is considered to carry unacceptable levels of risk or potential site damage due to inclement weather. The Council will not be liable for any losses sustained as a result of such a decision being made.

#### **6. Finances**

For any medium scale or large scale event, as defined above, a bond will be payable to cover the costs of any reinstatement to the woodland infrastructure as a result of the event. The bond will be returnable after the conclusion of the event and a site inspection, and subject to agreed damage costs estimated by the Council. Bond monies would be paid to Argyll and Bute Council and held in a balance account code dedicated to Duchess Wood. In the event of bond monies being retained due to damage being caused, this balance account code would be available to Argyll and Bute Council but ring-fenced for maintenance of Duchess Wood.

Small scale events will not be subject to a bond, but will still be held liable for any unreasonable damage incurred as a result of their event. In the events of small donations being offered, these should go towards the Friends Of Duchess Wood and again be for making good of any limited damage/unsightliness that may have resulted from the activity.

It is suggested that the financial arrangements discussed above remain in place for 1 year, when they will become subject to review.

#### **7. Information to be provided by event organiser**

All event organisers, regardless of the size of the event, will be asked to provide the following paperwork before their event is approved:

**Public liability Insurance Certificate**- this covers the event, activity and the general public.

**Completed risk assessment form** – It is the event organiser's duty of care to carry out a risk assessment and reduce any risks before the event begins. The aim of the risk assessment is to consider any

foreseeable risks of the event as a whole and then implement controls to ensure a safe event before it begins..

**Event Manager** - All events must have a designated Event Manager or point of contact who is responsible for co-ordinating the event.

### **8. Appropriate Point of Contact**

An appropriate person within Argyll and Bute Council should be identified for this purpose. In the event of the initial enquiry being made to any other partners represented on the LNR Management Committee, they should be directed to the appropriate person at the earliest opportunity. This person would then be expected to liaise with the LNR Committee, or some working group derived from it.

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