

**Duchess Woods Local Nature Reserve Committee (DWLNRC)
highlight/exception report to Community Planning Group**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this Paper is to update the Helensburgh and Lomond Community Planning Group regarding activity undertaken by the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee (DWLNRC).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Area Community Planning Group:

- 2.1 Note that the Duchess Woods Local Nature Reserve is a contributing Partner of the Community Planning Group and that the Friends of Duchess Wood voluntary group undertakes a substantial amount of the actual day to day work in the wood;
- 2.2 Note the report provided below: If further detail is desired the full minutes of meetings of the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee are published on the Council website, and;
- 2.3 Consider whether there are any specific tasks or issues which it wishes the Committee to undertake or review.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve (DWLNR) was created as under the original 15-year Management plan drawn up by Luss Estates, the landowners, and Dumbarton District Council, of which Argyll and Bute Council is the successor authority. The Council discharge this responsibility through the Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee (DWLNRC). The Committee is working to a management plan covering the period between 2012 and 2016 which incorporates both maintenance and development of the Woodland, and is seeking to further strengthen the current partnership arrangements regarding the responsible usage of the Duchess Woods.

3.2 One strand of strengthening the partnership arrangements is the reporting now being undertaken to the CPG.

4. IMPLICATIONS

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| 4.1 | Policy | Reporting by the DWLNRC to the Community Planning Group assists in delivery, reporting and monitoring of aspects of the SOA and the Community Plan |
| 4.2 | Financial | None. |
| 4.3 | Personnel | None. |
| 4.4 | Equalities | None. |
| 4.5 | Legal | None. |
| 4.6 | Risk | None |
| 4.7 | Customer Service | None |

For further information, please contact Stephen Doogan, Area Governance Officer
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Theme	Issue and Actions	Comment
Education, skills and training	<p>Green Gym – There have now been eight formal Green Gym events and while participation was lower than expected, this can be attributed to lack of publicity and poor weather. With the improved summer conditions it is hoped that uptake will significantly improve, and this appears to be the case.</p> <p>Education – The Education Service wish to continue to support and have representation on DWNLRC and the committee have accepted the nomination of Eileen Kay (Local Youth Service Worker) as the Education Service Nominated representative.</p> <p>Lomond School are interested in using the Woods as an outdoor nursery. The committee supported this idea in principle subject to a more detailed proposal being brought forward.</p>	<p>The Committee agreed that when confirmation is received of further funding being available from the Forestry Commission that a fresh application should be made to allow the programme to run again.</p> <p>FODW also run regular weekend work parties, these are advertised locally.</p> <p>Eileen has responsibility for the upper end of Primary schools in the area, and for pupils transitioning between primary and secondary. This often involves outdoor activities and family days so she is very much an appropriate nomination.</p>
Events and awareness raising	<p>A number of events have taken place in the last few months, and the need for a revised events policy was recognised this has now been drafted, and will be adopted.</p> <p>It was highlighted that there was a need to liaise with the local GPs to promote the use of the Green Gym.</p> <p>The events being run as part of the John Muir Events will include a Bug Life event suitable for children, local schools will be participating in this.</p> <p>The flower walk will be launched on Saturday 24th May and supporting leaflets have been drafted.</p>	<p>It was recognised that there would require to be exemptions for small community and educational events which would require notification rather than permission</p> <p>The Friends of Duchess Wood have been co-ordinating a number of events including the launch of a Flower Walk, with a John Muir-themed Walking Theatre Company play and a Bug life event.</p>
Maintenance and infrastructure	<p>Japanese Knotweed - This is an ongoing issue, however the benefits from recent treatments are now showing and the knotweed is much less dense in the treated areas - this will be continued.</p>	<p>An Action Plan for the remaining areas of Japanese Knotweed is being considered.</p>

	<p>Litter bins- The emptying of these has now been resolved and normal service is in place,</p> <p>Trees inspection – A tree inspection will be conducted at the end of the summer in order to identify winter works required.</p> <p>Monthly work parties and volunteers continue to do litter picks and repair fences as appropriate. Specific work has been undertaken at Thurgood Bridge which was successful - completed in part by the Community Payback Team.</p> <p>There is continued liaison with the Employability team as to work which may be undertaken. There are a number of options which can be presented and these are currently being defined.</p> <p>New noticeboards and way markers are being planned</p>	<p>Flyposting was noted as an issue and it was confirmed that FODW can remove such items</p> <p>A future meeting will be held between the Employability team and Committee members</p> <p>There is a query with Planning as to the need for a permission for the Information Boards funded by Babcocks, it is hoped that this will be resolved in early course</p>
Other Issues	<p>A memorial plaque commemorating the significant contribution of Councillor Al Reay has been installed in the woods on the route of the flower walk.</p>	