
CLYDE MUIRSHIEL PARK AUTHORITY



Report to: Joint Committee
On: 2nd September 2016

Report by
Head of Planning & Housing: Renfrewshire Council

SUBJECT: Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Strategy 2016-2021

1.0 Purpose of Report:

- 1.1 The report presents the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Strategy 2016-2021 and seeks approval to use this Strategy as the basis for further activity and development of the Park.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Joint Committee:
- (i) Approve the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Strategy 2016-2021.
 - (ii) Agree that in light of the terms and actions set out in the Park Strategy that Officers carry out a review of the Procedural Standing Orders and Minute of Agreement of the Park Authority and report the outcome of this Review to a future meeting of the Joint Committee

3.0 Background:

- 3.1 Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park is currently working to a strategy that was first adopted in 2008. Within this context following a Management review of the Park's resources and governance, a new Strategy has been developed to identify key strengths and future aspirations for the Park.
- 3.2 As previously agreed by the Joint Committee the priorities for future Park development are Leisure Activity and Health, Education and Outdoor Learning,

and Environmental Management. These priorities form the basis of the Park Strategy for the next 5 years.

- 3.3 The associated Action Plan incorporated within the Strategy identifies the means by which objectives will be achieved and sets out corresponding timescales. The Action Plan objectives will form the basis of work plans for individual staff members.

4.0 Next steps

- 4.1 Following approval of the Strategy and in order to progress effective change, a programme of consultation and engagement will take place to inform the delivery and implementation of the key objectives and activities as set out in the Action Plan accompanying the Park Strategy.
- 4.2 At the same time, Officers from the constituent authorities will undertake a review of the Procedural Standing Orders and Minute of Agreement that relate to the management and governance of the Park and report the outcome of this to the Park Authority Joint Committee in due course.

Members wishing further information regarding this report should contact:
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Park Strategy 2016—2021





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Introduction

The Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Strategy seeks to define the activities that deliver the best outcomes for our park. It sets out how the park can most effectively use its current resources and outlines opportunities for further growth.

The strategy identifies three priorities which focus activity in the Park over the next 5 years. These priorities are:

- Leisure activity and health;
- Education and outdoor learning, and;
- Environmental management

The strategy compliments the wider aspirations of the Joint Committee authorities particularly in relation to community inclusion, health and wellbeing and skills development.

The associated Action Plan sets out the objectives for each priority and a series of realistic actions to be delivered over the next 5 years.

About the Park

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park covers an area of 265 sq km across three local authorities; Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council and North Ayrshire Council.

In 1996 the three authorities established a Joint Committee - referred to as “the Park Authority” – for the purposes of discharging relative functions in relation to tourism, recreation and conservation across the park area. This is formalised in a Minute of Agreement and established in terms of Section 56(5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

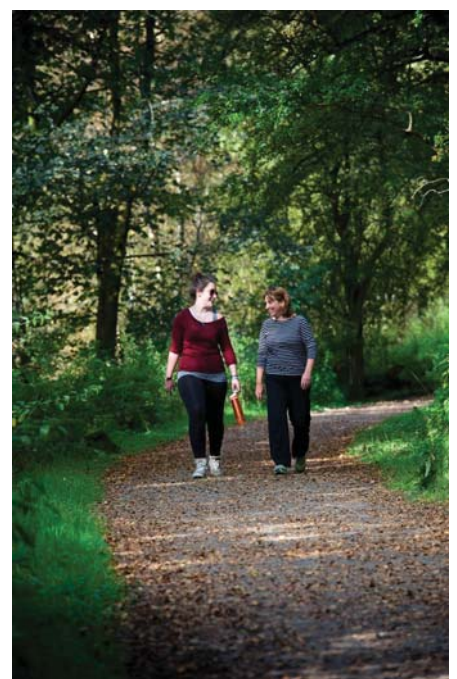
Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority manages sites at Muirshiel, Greenock Cut, Lunderston Bay, Barnbrock and Castle Semple. Two of the sites (Muirshiel and Castle Semple) are designated Country Parks. Visitor numbers across the Regional Park have continued to increase in recent years, with 7% growth between 2012 and 2016 (606,649 to 649,465 annual visits).

Landscape and Character

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park encompasses publicly and privately owned land. A significant amount of the grassland and moorland is productive with managed farms and livestock. There are important semi-natural woodlands and pockets of commercial plantations, both offering habitats for a variety of wildlife. The majority of the Regional Park is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in reflection of the area’s important biodiversity.

The landscape is an important draw for wildlife enthusiasts, hill walkers and other recreational users. Visitors are also drawn to the area’s rich heritage, with the Regional Park housing a number of scheduled monuments and listed features.

The Park Authority recognises landscape and character as unique assets that contribute to the area’s popularity and regional importance. The Park Authority will seek to maintain these assets and where possible work collaboratively to further benefit park visitors.



Key Strengths

The Regional Park is a well utilised, recognisable resource. The Park's outdoor areas, amenities and expertise facilitate leisure and activity which is popular and highly regarded.

The Park hosts a number of water sports clubs providing a range of training and leisure activity for all ages. Large scale annual events such as Pedal in the Park, Castle Semple Rowing Regatta and the Classic Car Show attract high visitor numbers and increase the park's notoriety as a successful event venue.

The Park has forged strong working relationships with national organisations e.g. the Royal Yachting Association, Scottish Disability Sport, Scottish Canoe Association and Spinal Injuries Scotland to support and contribute to a series of specialist events and activities. The Park's expertise in providing accessible and inclusive activity has been recognised at a national level through the Sailability Centre of Excellence accreditation in respect of the work it does with individuals with additional support needs.

The Park has strengthened its role in health activity and works closely with the NHS Board, Forestry Commission Scotland, the Scottish Government and local charities to deliver specialist courses for mental health service users. The award winning Branching Out programme is professionally recognised and the Park has been successful in securing funding to sustain this activity.

Future Aspirations

The Strategy and associated Action Plan seeks to build upon the strengths of the Park to make full use of its assets. In the coming years it will be increasingly important to be receptive to change and embrace opportunities for improved ways of working.

The Park will use innovative methods of consultation to enact positive physical change. The Park will engage with communities, partners and other stakeholders to establish common goals and integrated plans for development. The outputs of this exercise will be implemented via the Strategy Action Plan.

The Strategy also seeks to affirm the Park Authority's commitment to the long term future of the park. The subsequent Action Plan seeks to guide activity with a focus on simplifying work streams, maximising end user benefit and capitalising on income generation opportunities for sustainable financial stability.





Priority: Leisure Activity and Health

Vision

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park provides visitors of all ages and abilities the opportunity for quality recreation. Using its unique assets the Park will facilitate a high quality programme of leisure activities which contribute to the health agenda.

Key Points

People and communities benefit from good quality outdoor facilities and activity. They encourage healthy lifestyle choices and contribute to health and wellbeing outcomes. Engaging with the environment and participating in activity presents opportunities for learning, developing new skills and confidence building.

Outcomes

- Outdoor leisure activities will attract participants from a wide area and the park will be recognised and respected as a high quality provider;
- The Park will be more accessible and enjoyed by more people;
- The Park will become a key resource for those seeking to improve their physical and mental health and well-being, and;
- The Park will continue to be at the forefront of accessible sport development and provide an education hub for clubs and centres all over Scotland.

Objectives

- Outdoor leisure activities will be resourced and developed in line with market demand, where appropriate maximising income generation;
- Increase partnership working with health services to facilitate health improvement activities;
- Develop the Park's assets, infrastructure and resources by capitalising on available opportunities for growth, and;
- Continue to develop accessible sport and provide good practice information

Priority: Education and Outdoor Learning

Vision

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park is an increasingly popular and productive venue for formal and informal education and outdoor learning. More people will participate in learning opportunities and will develop a better appreciation of the area's natural and cultural heritage.

Key Points

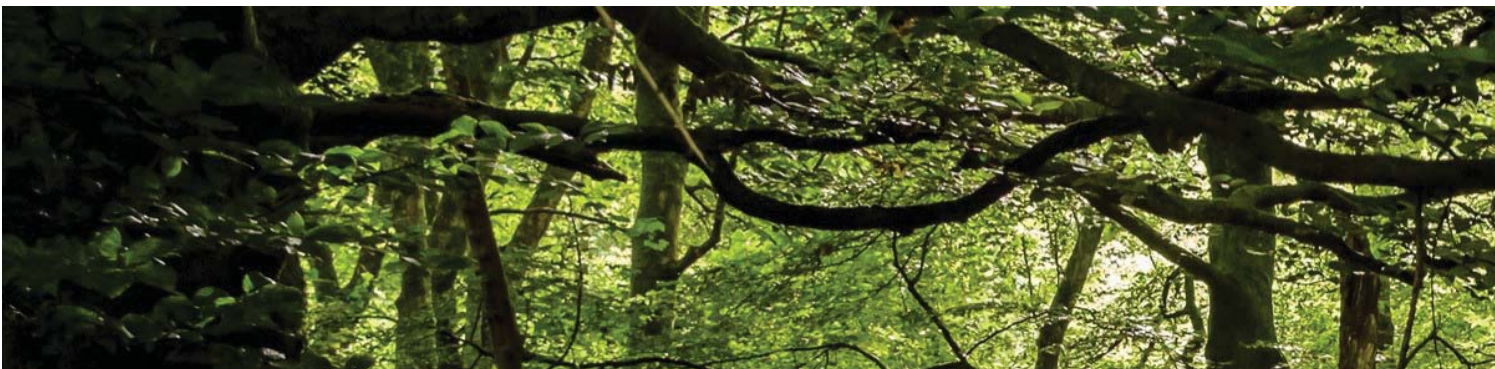
Visitors of all ages use the outdoors as a place to explore and learn. Outdoor learning plays a key role in the delivery of the curriculum and facilitates discovery and deep understanding.

Outcomes

- Delivery of a programme of educational activities for young people in line with the curriculum for schools and further education establishments;
- Increased participation in formal and informal outdoor learning opportunities, and;
- Information and learning tools will be readily available and freely accessible at park locations and online.

Objectives

- Promote the park as a platform for learning;
- Deliver, monitor and review a programme of informative events and activities for visitors of all ages, linking into curriculum outcomes where appropriate, and;
- Maximise the scope for learning through digital resources.



Priority: Environmental Management

Vision

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park is an attractive and ecologically important visitor destination with increased biodiversity value. The Park embraces opportunities for positive environmental change.

Key Points

For centuries the park's landscape has been managed for pleasure and for profit. Visitors are encouraged to appreciate the blend of flora and fauna and the distinctive, nationally important habitats they create.

Outcomes

- Woodland, moorland, wetland, loch and coastal areas are effectively managed and where appropriate enhanced;
- Biodiversity is effectively conserved, and;
- Best practice is shared and utilised.

Objectives

- Enhance natural heritage whilst safeguarding key species, habitats and landscape character, and;
- Work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders involved in the provision of outdoor management.



Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Action Plan

<i>Priority Activity</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Timescale for delivering objective (short, medium or long term)</i>
Leisure Activity and Health	Outdoor leisure activities will be resourced and developed in line with market demand	Maintain standards for related governing body accreditation	ST
		Provision of Duke of Edinburgh awards	ST
		Develop accessibility within the park and its activities	MT
		Develop cycling within the park and surrounding area	MT
		Public certified activity courses (RYA, BCU etc)	LT
		Bespoke courses for client organisations	LT
	Continue to work in partnership with health services to facilitate health improvement activities	Development/specialist activity days	LT
		Specialist events (Multiclass Regatta, Pedal in the Park)	LT
		Facilitate volunteering opportunities with community care groups	ST
		Facilitate health walk programmes	ST
	Capitalise on opportunities to improve the park's assets and infrastructure	Develop and deliver Eco therapy programmes	MT
		Carry out a review of assets to ensure they are yielding maximum benefit	ST
		Seek appropriate funding opportunities	MT
	Maximise income generation via commercial activity	Embrace opportunities for change where there is benefit to the park and its visitors	LT
		Ensure commercial activities are competitive and market driven	MT

<i>Priority Activity</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Timescale for delivering objective(short, medium or long</i>
Education and outdoor learning	Promote the park as a platform for outdoor learning	Facilitate school, college and university visits	Short term
		Raise awareness of the park and its resources through marketing and promotion via professional networks	Medium term
	Deliver, monitor and review a programme of informative events for visitors of all ages, linking into curriculum outcomes where appropriate	Deliver learning activities to groups, including schools, youth organisations and summer groups	Short term
		Establish clear links between educational activity and Curriculum for Excellence	Short term
		Contribute to Eco Schools programme	Long term
	Use the park's digital resources to maximise the scope for learning	Maintain the park's online profile, expanding reach where possible	Short term
		Provide a contemporary suite of accessible digital information	Medium term

ST (short term) up to 1 year	MT (medium term): 1-3 years	LT (long term): 3-5 years
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<i>Priority Activity</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Timescale for delivering objective(short, medium or long term)</i>
Environmental Management	Enhance the park's natural heritage whilst safeguarding key species, habitats and landscape character	Deliver a comprehensive regime of inspections and maintenance whilst undertaking and contributing to environmental surveys and information gathering exercises	Short term
		Manage conservation volunteering activity	Short term
		Undertake local conservation projects and input to regional schemes where appropriate	Short term
		Engage staff in training and CPD opportunities to maintain and improve upon skill level.	Short term
		Seek funding for environmental management projects	Medium term
	Work collaboratively with other stakeholders involved in the provision of outdoor management collaborate	Consider opportunities for cooperative outdoor management where there is benefit to the park and its visitors	Long term

ST (short term) up to 1 year	MT (medium term): 1-3 years	LT (long term): 3-5 years
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